

## Four Fair Board Members Retire

Written by Debbie Gregory  
Tuesday, August 27, 2013

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Four long-time Macon County Fair Board members announced their retirement last week at the meeting on Thursday night, August 22, including President Ray Goad, Vice President & Fair Manager Steve Walker, Treasurer Sally Wells and Board Member Debbie Mason.

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“I have been involved with the Macon County Fair for over three decades,” Ray Goad told the Macon County Chronicle. “I have been fortunate to be a part of a group of outstanding individuals who had the vision to work together to create the Macon County Fairgrounds. I think most everyone would agree that our facilities are not only among the top in the state, but have also provided much needed meeting and event space for many community dinners and activities.”

Ray said that it’s hard to believe that just a couple of weeks ago the Macon County Fair celebrated its’ 31<sup>st</sup> birthday. “While I will always be proud of everything the fair board has been able to accomplish with the help and support of so many, I also realize it is time to turn things over to a new generation. I hope the Macon County Fair will continue to be successful and that future board members will one day have the same sense of pride that I and so many others do. I have seen the fair go from a field to the fairgrounds and I am proud to have been a part of this.”

Steve Walker has been involved with the fair for 31 years and he has also seen it grow from just a few acres with a fence around it, to a facility that provides services for the community

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throughout the year. "The buildings offer the opportunity for the community to have meetings, parties, weddings, etc.," Steve said. "They can enjoy these at a very affordable cost. This was a goal and a dream for the early Fair Board. I am glad to see this become a reality."

Steve said the week of the Macon County Fair is a very tiring time but a very rewarding time as well. "I really enjoy seeing our county come together at the Fair," he continued. "It is like a big family reunion. I love to watch the people visit with their friends, see old friends and make new friends. I like to see them participate in the various events and activities. The people is what makes the Macon County Fair a success."

"Most of all I have enjoyed working with the past and present Fair Board Members and Fair Committees. I have made some great friends. You are a friendly, loyal, dedicated and hard working group of people. You are indeed an asset to Macon County and I applaud you."

He says that after 31 years of service to the Macon County Fair, he has decided to retire from the board. "Someone stepped aside and gave me this great opportunity and it is time for me to return the favor. This is not an easy decision but one that we all will face. It has been a great experience and I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve on the Macon County Fair Board. I love the fair and I have enjoyed being a part of this outstanding organization."

Walker says as he reflects back on some of the Macon County Fair themes, they seem to be a fitting exit. "I have seen the "Fair Grow From Generation to Generation", and I know there will be "Brighter Days Ahead". "The Macon County Fair has made some great growth over the past 31 years. I look forward to seeing this growth continue. Best of luck in the future. Thanks for the memories."

Sally Wells' work with the Macon County Fair Board began 31 years ago when the first Macon County Fair began in 1983. "When I attended the first meeting with a group of very dedicated people wanting to re-organize an agricultural county fair, after an absence of over 40 years," Sally said, "I was with folks like the late J.E. Blankenship Jr., the late C.A. "Uncle Abe" Breeding, the late Martha Wilburn and Bill Speck. The County Executive was Hillas Swindle and the by laws of the new Macon County Fair were signed on January 1, 1983."

Sally told the newspaper that the Macon County Fair has grown from two trailers, use of the National Guard Building and the Macon County Saddle Club arena. "Today we have many well equipped buildings on the over 40 acres of county owned land that the Fairgrounds sets on today. The facilities are some of the best in the mid-state and the grounds are fenced in,

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landscaped and kept in good shape with the profits from each year spent for maintenance, and improvements and used year round by Macon County residents.”

“I became a director shortly after the 1983 organization, secretary-treasurer in 1984 and treasurer in 2010. These duties have been done to the very best of my ability, with complete honesty, care and respect,” noted Sally.

“As of December 31, 2013, I retire as director and treasurer of the Macon County Fair. It has been a fulfilling and challenging time with much enjoyment working with all of the dedicated fair people – directors, chairmen, fairgoers, and the many volunteers it takes to conduct the week long event. Many friends have been made and I treasure all of them – it has been great! The fair has been a joy for me and I wish I could name everyone that has helped me, but I am afraid I would miss someone.”

Sally said that she certainly does wish for the future fairs to be successful and continue to grow. “Keep up the good work. Debbie, Ray and Steve have been the best people in the world to work with. Thank you so much.”

Debbie Mason would like to thank everyone for allowing her to serve on the Macon County Fair Board for several years. “I feel that I have made lots of good friends throughout the years and I wish the best of luck to the board and the Macon County Fair – the place of laughter, smiles, bright eyes and families enjoying time together. Thank you for everything!”

County Mayor Shelvy Linville said, “I regret that these four Fair Board members are retiring. They have done an excellent job and I appreciate what they have done over the years. On behalf of the county and the fairgoers, I think they have been a wonderful asset to the Macon County Fair. They have been very dedicated to making the fair the best it can be and they will be hard to replace.”

The Macon County Chronicle would like to thank Ray Goad, Steve Walker, Sally Wells and Debbie Mason for all their hard work and dedication to the Macon County Fair. We certainly appreciate everything you have done throughout the years to make the Fair what it is today!