



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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The Great New York State Fair: A Special Way to End the Summer

Senator Patty Ritchie

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

It is hard to believe that Labor Day is just around the corner. However, before we wrap up another great summer in Central and Northern New York, there is still lots of fun to be had, and that includes the Great New York State Fair.

Last year, the Great New York State Fair drew a record 1,161,912 visitors and this year is expected to be the best yet. The fair kicks off Wednesday, August 22nd and runs through Labor Day, Monday, September 3rd.

From nationally known entertainment and the best in local food, to midway rides and educational exhibits—including those highlighting New York's agriculture industry—the fair has something to offer everyone. Here is a sneak peek at what you can enjoy at the 2018 Great New York State Fair:

Celebrating Agriculture: The Great New York State Fair celebrates agriculture every single day. However, Thursday, August 23rd will be "Agriculture Career Day" to encourage more young people to consider farming. Thursday, August 30th will be "Dairy Day," an event that features the ever-popular butter sculpture and other dairy delights. August 28th is "Beef Day", featuring 10 NYS FFA chapters competing for the "Perfect Burger" title with a chance to win prizes for their school chapter.

Tapping into Maple: To celebrate New York's growing maple industry, the fair will host its first ever "Maple Day" on Monday, August 27th. There will be plenty of maple samples, including maple donuts and maple cotton candy. There will also be maple cooking demonstrations featuring maple syrup.

Loving our libraries: For the fifth year, there will be an exhibit to promote New York State libraries. This year's we feature the statewide summer reading celebration "Libraries Rock!" There will be a trivia spinning wheel, book prize giveaways, handouts with great resources and a 10-foot balloon sculpture of an electric guitar.

Saluting those who serve: Thursday, August 30th is Armed Forces Day at the fair, where we honor the selfless sacrifices the brave men and women make to defend our country. A special ceremony gets underway at 11 a.m. and active duty and veterans with a valid military ID will be able to enjoy free admission, as well as a parade at 6 p.m.

High-“light”-ing local tourism: There will be a new exhibit featuring the more than 70 lighthouses that are still standing in New York, including those on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

Family Fishing Days: There will be two days for families to participate in free fishing clinics for anyone with a valid New York State hunting or fishing license at the gate. The special days are Thursday, August 23rd and Sunday, August 26th.

Thrifty Thursdays: Admission at the fair is only \$3 on Thursday, August 23rd and Thursday, August 30th.

The Great New York State Fair has been a summer tradition for more than 175 years. I hope you and your family get the chance to attend and make some great memories while doing so. For more information on the 2018 Great New York State Fair, [click here](#).