



IOWA STATE FAIR  
**BLUE RIBBON**  
FOUNDATION

# NEWS

FALL 2025

## Leading Across **Generations**

Earlier this fall I attended a professional development conference where one of the session topics was “Leading Across Generations.” We were fortunate to have representation from the Traditionalist Generation (born 1925-1945) to Generation Z (born 2001-2020) in the room of roughly 150 people.

Amidst laughter, heads nodding in affirmation or shaking in denial, the speaker led us through the various generations, pointing out the characteristics of each era and how they can impact perceptions, working styles, expectations and relations in the workplace. From Millennials wanting older Boomers to retire already to Gen Z showing Gen X how to create a TikTok transition video, the differences are real, whether they come across as frustrating or exhilarating. During the summers, the Blue Ribbon Foundation staff of eight, including interns, covers each generation from Boomers to

Gen Z. (This often leads to some fun lessons and conversations at lunch!)

When you think of these generations through the lens of the Iowa State Fair, I see community and cooperation united in a common cause. A fair seems to transcend so many of the generational differences and simply unites us into an intricate quilt — albeit one that today is long-armed stitched rather than quilted by hand. How many of you have come with your grandchildren, helped them raise their show lamb, or entered a contest with them? While you might be sharing memories of your youthful Fairs when you could drive into the Fairgrounds to park, they’re helping smooth the transition to an online entry system and digital admission ticket.

Our Iowa State Fair is a beautiful blend of tradition and next gen, from its grand exposition-style architecture built during the turn

of the 19th century to an online app with all the schedules, maps and food information you can imagine accessible in the palm of your hand. Maya Angelou’s quote is the perfect statement for how our Fair has always built on the past to create a better future in education, competition and entertainment for all.

“The stories of older generations aren’t relics of the past, they’re seeds for the future we build together.” – Maya Angelou



**Robin Taylor**  
Assistant Director

# 2025 Corndog Kickoff Recap

The Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation cooked up significant fundraising success at the 2025 Corndog Kickoff Benefit Auction and Fair Food Grazing Party. The July 12 "Stir It Up" event raised a total of \$889,713 toward improvements to the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds.

Iowa State Fair supporters gathered for a night of food and fun in the William C. Knapp Varied Industries Building to raise money for various projects around the Fairgrounds. The Blue Ribbon Foundation auctioned off 31 live and 316 silent auction packages. Attendees enjoyed a complimentary photo, food and drink, fireworks, Sky Glider rides and more!

"The success of this year's fundraising event is a testament to the incredible generosity of the Iowa State Fair community and the unwavering dedication of our supporters," said Peter Cownie, Blue Ribbon Foundation Executive Director. "Together, we're not only able to complete immediate improvement projects, but we've built momentum for a lasting impact."

**A special thank you to Corndog Kickoff patrons, concessionaires, auction donors, volunteers and guests for helping make this year's event a success. Mark your calendars to attend the 2026 Corndog Kickoff on Saturday, July 11.**



# Iowa State Fair Highlights

- Thank you for supporting these specific projects in 2025: Ron and Bev Shivers Family Plaza, Variety Star Playground, Horse Barn Phase I, additional picnic tables and seating west of Riley Stage, lighting improvements west of the Administration Building, staircase from the Cultural Center to Fairview Hill, Livestock Pavilion sound system, Expo Hill seating & tables, Pella Plaza enhancements, and a pedestrian gate along East 30th to access Gate 13.
- The Blue Ribbon Foundation sold \$677,500 worth of merchandise during the Iowa State Fair. Top selling items were apparel and the Butter Cow stuffed animal. In addition, more than 33,000 bottles of water were sold. Both fundraisers wouldn't be possible without the help of our outstanding volunteers.
- A big thank you to Painting with a Twist for bringing creativity to the Iowa State Fair! Their painting classes gave Fairgoers a chance to create lasting memories while supporting a great cause. We're grateful for the fun they added to this year's Fair!
- Over two days, the Blue Ribbon Foundation hosted 152 games of BINGO on the Grand Concourse, raising \$7,504.
- The Woodcarvers' Auction raised \$76,610. All proceeds from the auction are dedicated to "Our Fair's Future," the Blue Ribbon Foundation's endowment fund. A special thank-you to Chainsaw Artists Gary Keenan, T.J. Jenkins and Clint Henik for producing such outstanding pieces of art.
- The Blue Ribbon Foundation participated in the final year of the Concrete Statue contest. Thank you, Sticks Inc., for painting our pig. It won 1st place and was sold in the Woodcarvers' Auction for \$2,000!
- The Iowa Horseman's Hall of Fame honors riders, drivers and horse enthusiasts who have made outstanding contributions to advance the horse industry in Iowa. With the Horse Barn renovation, the display needed to be relocated. A brand-new display was installed in the Richard O. Jacobson Exhibition Center lobby.



# Thank You Volunteers!

As we wrap up another memorable Iowa State Fair, our gratitude for the 670 incredible Blue Ribbon Foundation volunteers is stronger than ever. Your time, energy and dedication played a vital role in making the 2025 Fair a tremendous success.

Collectively, volunteers contributed an outstanding 5,280 hours across 1,341 shifts, directly supporting our mission to fundraise for the renovation and preservation of the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds.

Whether you were selling merchandise or bottled water, assisting with Jake's Club and BINGO, or helping share the mission of the Blue Ribbon Foundation, your efforts made a lasting impact. We couldn't have done it without you!

**Thank you for your support and commitment. You are truly the heart of our success.**

Paige Abshire	Arlene Blue	R.D. Core	Dawn Fitzgerald	Tennison Hahn
Sherree Adams	Melinda Blythe	Kate Counter	Shawn Foster-Tait	Trinley Hahn
Tom Adams	Benjamin Bobier	Rebecca Courtright	Chris Fox	Vicki Hahn
JoAnn Adamson	Crystal Bobier	Mary Cownie	Margo Fox	Charlene Haluska
Terry Adamson	Dave Boender	Brenda Cox	Molly Francy	John Haluska
Monica Ade	Kerri Boender	Barbara Crock	Sara Francy	Debbie Hamblin
George Akes	Elaine Bohling	Chris Crowley	Alissa Frey	Rick Hamblin
Savanna Akes	Hank Bohling	Ann Cutts	Drew Fulcher	Julie Hane
Heidi Albaugh	Lynn Bohling	Doug Cutts	Linda Fyfe	Norma Hanke
Mallory Albright	Shelby Bohling	Kristin Davenport	Karen Fynaardt	Cindy Hansen
Amanda Alderson	Mark Bonher	Livia Davenport	Irene Gardner	Georgia Hansen
Lori Alderson	Jo Bond	Savanna Davenport	Kathleen Garlisch	Hank Hanson
Cassie Aldrich	Patrice Bork	Carla Davis	Jan Gaudian	Lisa Hanson
Juli Aldrich	Jean Bowden	Carol Davis	Nathan Geer	Maureen Hanson
Karen Alessio	Connie Bowen	Erik Davis	Stephanie Geer	Shelly Harden
Brad Allen	Jeff Bowen	Carolyn Deacon	Tyler Gegen	Kathy Harms
Robin Allen	Angie Bower	Cindy Deaton	Nick Gerlach	Nola Harper
Tony Alt	Karen Bowersox	Deb DeDecker	Jeff Gilley	Jill Harryman
Grace Amadeo	Pam Bradford	Marty DeDecker	Juanita Gilley	Suzy Hart
Mary Amadeo	Christine Branstad	Sandy DeGoey	Gina Glass	Patricia Hartley
Grace Ambrose	Tess Bredemeyer	Natalee Dermer	Susan Glick	Perry Hartley
Steve Andersen	Hailey Brown	Steve Despotovich	Nikki Goodell	Robert Hartley
Angie Arendt	Kieran Brown	Erika Dethrow	Angela Goodrich	Holly Hartman
Sharon Arendt	Laura Brown	John DeVries	Celeste Goodrich	Ray Hartz
Ervin Arkema	Diana Burch	Julie DeVries	Lavon Goodrich	Olivia Haus
Linda Arkema	Genevieve Burch	Phyllis DeVries	Riley Goodrich	Abby Hawkins
Justin Arnold	Kaylee Burch	Mary Kay Dial	Julie Gore	Sandy Hecht
Kendra Arnold	Lawren Burch	Judy Dillenburg	Beth Grabau	Howard Hecht Jr
Florida Arthur	Ami Burns	Richi Dorr	Joel Grabau	Steven Heinle
Jerry Arthur	Tara Burow	Angela Doty	Melissa Graeve	Abby Henry
Tara Avery	Lori Busma	Cindy Dougherty	Janet Grant	Kim Henson
April Bainum	Anne Butler	Jennifer Duke	Andrea Green	Iran Hernandez
Barb Baker	Jill Byerly	Kristy Dullard	Sally Greenfield	Sheryl Herrold
Paul Barnds	John Byerly	Kris Dunn	Nancy Greening	Roberta Hersom
DeAnn Barnhill	Tom Cameron	Roxanne Dunn	Jess Greenwell	Marcia Hewitt
Jenni Barnhouse	Randy Campbell	Gary Edwards	Cindy Gregg	Andrew Higdon
Andrea Barry	Joyce Carr	Sheri Edwards	Dave Gregg	Chris Higdon
Kate Bason	Peg Carr	Joy Elder	Mary Grieser	Angela Hilbert
Teresa Bazzocco	Darla Carver	Karen Elrod	Bob Griffis	Emerson Hilbert
Sarah Beeman	Mark Carver	Deb Epp	George Griffith	Theresa Himes
Darin Bennigsdorf	Dan Chambers	Elijah Erickson	Kevin Griffith	Joe Hintzsche
Deanna Bennigsdorf	Pam Chambers	Marilyn Erlandson	Tierra Griffith	Rick Hoenig
Lance Bergeson	Kristen Chen	Anne Erlandson	Linda Groenendyk	Sandy Hoenig
Sylvia Bergeson	Sandy Cheney	Brown	Kim Groh	Becky Hoffman
Ron Bergfeld	Jaci Chiovaro	Brenda Etzen	Tracey Guerrero	Dan Hogan
Marilyn Bergman	Zosh Choda	Bree Fancher	Dan Gunderson	Shirley Holm
Gary Bergquist	Diane Claeys	Allison Feldhacker	Lois Gunderson	Brelyn Holst
Sharie Bergquist	Magenta Clark	Ayla Feldhacker	Deb Gunhus	Ginny Hood
Christy Berkenbosch	Caren Clevenger	Lisa Felice	Mark Gunhus	Rylie Hootman
Jane Berry	Teresa Clevenger	Jayne Ferguson	Lori Gutknecht	Carol Horning
Marsha Betlach	Sara Cole	Renee Ferguson	Cindy Haars	Cindy Howard
Steve Betlach	Deb Connor	Shaun Finnegan	Breanna Haberl-	Mert Howard
Andrea Bice	Emily Cook	Linda Finzen-	Kellogg	Rhonda Huegerich
Kim Bigsby	Emma Cook	Mathers	Julie Hagerty	Jeri Hunt
Barbara Birchmier	Sherri Cooney	Niki Fisher	Eric Hahn	Andrea Hyde
Loren Birchmier	Susan Corbett	Sue Fisher	Tahlia Hahn	Pam Iano

Mary Jack  
Owen Jack  
Jody Jacklin  
Todd Jacklin  
Bryan Jansen  
Donna Jansen  
Kurt Jansen  
Susan Jansen  
Karla Jenkins  
Jean Jennings  
Addison Jensen  
Brenda Jermier  
Duane Jess  
Laura Jochems  
Celeste Johns  
Brittany Johnson  
Kim Johnson  
Cheryl Jontz  
Connor Junkins  
Kris Junkins  
Louie Kamerick  
Sheryl Kamerick  
Bill Keel  
Sarah Keel  
Joan Keifer  
Dan Keitzer  
Jan Keitzer  
Cathy Keller  
Dee Keller  
Rudolph Kellett  
Joan Kennedy  
Joe Kenyon  
Saara Khounlo  
Sharon Kingsbury  
Danyell Klein  
Gene Klein  
Becky Klingston  
Lori Klug  
Elizabeth Knautz  
Deanna Knowles  
Mark Knowles  
Dylan Koepnick  
Jason Koepnick  
Joy Koepnick  
Kyndra Koepnick  
Lydia Koepnick  
Teresa Kopf  
Lauren Kratz  
Kyle Kruckenberg  
Susan Kruckenberg  
Tisha Lack  
John Laing  
Sheila Laing  
Brenna Lange  
Dorothy Lange  
Elaine Larsen  
Nikki Lasko  
Brady Latcham  
Joy Latcham  
Tony Latcham  
Deb Layland  
April Leeper  
Miranda Lemons  
Karen Leonetti  
Amy Lindgren  
Mary Beth Lint  
Kris Livingston  
Lori Lockard  
Randleman  
Teresa Loops  
David Loupee  
Amanda Lucero  
LeAnn Lund  
Lori Lunsford  
Amber Lyndon  
Mary Lynn  
Frank Lyons  
Hannah Lyons  
Tim Malek  
Amelia Malone

Tiffanie Marksbury  
Bill Marlin  
Julie Marlin  
Kaci Marshall  
Emily Martini  
Marvin Mason  
Traci McBee  
Robbin McClelland  
Linda McClure  
Loni McCollum  
Gary McConnell  
Linda McConnell  
Larry McCreery  
Michelle McCreery  
Debbie McDaniel  
Connie McDonald  
Beverly McKnight  
Rita McMullen  
Nolan McNulty  
Rhonda Mechaelsen  
Laura Meyer  
Laurie Meyer  
Matthew Meyer  
Theresa Miller  
Angela Milligan  
Janice Mineart  
Gary Modlin  
Lisa Modlin  
Colton Moeller  
Anne Molyneaux  
Erin Moore  
Lindsey Mulhall  
Melissa Myers  
Lisa Naaktgeboren  
Diane Nabity  
Kevin Nabity  
Parvathy Nambiar  
Tammy Negrete  
Carolyn Nelson  
Stacey Nelson  
Tena Nelson  
Tammy Newton  
Traci Nicholson  
Aimee Noehren  
Chad Noehren  
Laura Noehren  
Kim Nordquist  
Todd Nordquist  
Abby North  
Brian Nuehring  
Suzanne Nuehring  
Mark Oehlerking  
Lyndee Ohmstede  
Kandee Olson  
Phyllis Olson  
Teresa Osborn  
Leanna Osterloh  
Kim Palmquist  
Julie Parker  
Monica Parker  
Tejas Patel  
Becky Patterson  
Diane Peiffer  
Greg Peiffer  
Greg D. Peiffer  
Dixie Pencil  
Jane Peterson  
Kirsten Pettit  
Cheryl Phillips  
Greg Phillips  
Cathy Pierce  
Shan Pinegar  
Kathy Pleima  
Randy Pleima  
Chantelle Pliler  
Terri Pollard  
Joe Pollpeter  
Kara Pollpeter  
Craig Pope  
Julia Prendergast

Cheryl Price  
Mark Probst  
Betsey Qualley  
Charlotte Qualley  
Marcine Raatz  
Barb Rasmussen  
Riley Rasmussen  
Kenton Reece  
Rachel Reece  
Nancy Renes  
Carol Renfro  
Brey Rhoades  
Kim Ricketts  
Christine  
Riemenschneider  
Mike  
Riemenschneider  
Kathy Rinkenberger  
George Risinger  
Kurt Roberts  
Holly Robinson  
Sally Robson  
Mario Romero  
Cory Root  
Jenni Rope-Smith  
Amy Roquet  
Rachel Rouse  
Rijah Rouse  
Cheryl Rozendaal  
Nancy Rude  
Maureen Ryan  
Shirley Ryan  
Shawn Sabin  
Matthew Sabol  
Terry Sabol  
Priyanka  
Sadanandan  
Frances Sales  
Don Sandy  
Adriane Sankey  
Tiedens  
Deanna Sargent  
Savannah Sargent  
Ellen Sattler  
Melissa Savits  
Jennifer Saylor  
Gary Schad  
Dawn Schellinger  
Michael  
Schermerhorn  
Stephanie  
Schermerhorn  
Jody Schmaltz  
Donna Schmidt  
Bill Schneck  
Marilyn Schneck  
Karen Schramm  
Sue Schreuder  
JoAnn Schroder  
Marsha Schultz  
Justin Schulz  
Ronald Schulz  
Tara Schulz  
Ashley Shafer  
Kris Sheaffer  
Celia Shedd  
Shannon Shepherd  
Joshua Shields  
Dixie Shipley  
Jennifer Shook  
Jakob Shore  
Angel Siems  
Steph Sieren  
Bruce Simonton  
Linda Simonton  
Brad Simpson  
Jody Simpson  
Dee Ann Sisam  
Rick Sisam  
Alyssa Skaala

Norma Smalley  
Addison Smith  
Carol Smith  
Mike Smith  
Nick Smith  
Stephanie Smith  
Carol Sperry  
Cindy Spiker  
Ed Sprague  
Jo Sprague  
Kristin Spriggs  
Cindy Spurr  
Randy Spurr  
Theresa Staats  
Alan Stalcup  
Leah Stalcup  
Cindy Starr  
Steve Starr  
Ryan Steenblock  
Joyce Steinkamp  
Juli Steppuhn  
Henderson  
Beth Steven  
Dan Stevenson  
Jill Stevenson  
Deborah Stewart  
Suzi Stewart  
Craig Stille  
Shelly Stille  
Lisa Stodghill  
Traviss Stodghill  
Virginia Stone  
Alex Stratton  
Sherry Stuart  
Shelley  
Swartzenduber  
Teri Sweeney  
Angel Swim  
Ryker Swore  
Valinh Swore  
April Talbot  
Joshua Tarbell  
Robin Tarbell-  
Thomas  
Dave Taylor  
Dianne Taylor  
Gary Taylor  
Tamra Taylor  
Teresa Taylor  
Terri Taylor  
Lisa Terranova  
Cindy Testroet  
Joseph Tharpe  
Lisa Tharpe  
Emily Theis  
Connie Thienes  
Curtis Thienes  
Kay Thomas  
Molly Thomas  
Denny Thompson  
Todd Thorson  
Autumn Tiedens  
Gracie Tiffany  
Jonah Trenhaile  
Tiffany Trenhaile  
Courtney Turner  
Darla Tweenet  
Gretchen Umbaugh  
Susan Utt-Smith  
Jackie Van Ahn  
Teresa Van De Boe  
Bonnie Van Den  
Broek  
Brenda Van Der  
Kamp  
Kathy Van Dike  
Lawrence Van  
Heukelom  
Lois Van Heukelom  
Susan Van Hill

Pat Van Lent  
Mary Lou Van Roekel  
Glenda Van  
Woerkom  
Jon Van Woerkom  
Alan Vander Linden  
Sheryl Vander  
Linden  
Ronald  
VanderMeyden  
Leon VanderWeerd  
Margaret  
VanderWeerd  
Marla Veenstra  
Jim Viggers  
Teresa Viggers  
Ann Visser  
Nejra Vodenicarevic  
Emily Voeller  
Michael Voigt  
Connie Vos  
Mary Walker  
Terri Walker  
Angie Walker-  
Springer  
Jennifer Walz  
Michelle Walz  
Jeff Wangness  
Shelley Wangness  
Kelsey Warfield  
Pam Waters  
Robert Waters  
Karen Watkins  
Carole Weaver  
Jennifer Webb  
Randi Webb  
Tycene Weber  
Alan Wedemeyer  
Annette Wedemeyer  
Amy Weiny  
Carol Werner  
Dan Werner  
Norma Wessel  
Kim Wetzel  
Mike Wetzel  
Jason White  
Kris White  
Lacie White  
Michael White  
Laury Whitham  
Deb Wickham  
Deb Wilkins  
Cindy Williams  
John Williams  
Gene Willis  
Mary Beth Willis  
Michelle Willis  
Julie Wilson  
Martha Wilson  
Dave Windisch  
Marcia Wing  
Doug Wirth  
Shelley Wirth  
Traci Wolfe  
Kathy Wolk  
Mary Woods  
Tina Woods  
Jordan Woody  
Judy Woody  
Linda Wright  
Jenna Zarate  
Fred Zeitler  
Danice Zern  
Jack Zern  
Josh Ziegler  
Daniel Zika  
Kevin Zika



# 2025 Iowan of the Day Winners

## **Brenda DeVore – Promise City**

In 2008, Brenda was elected Mayor of Promise City as a write-in candidate and continues to serve in that role today. That year, she also joined the Prairie Trails Museum Board in Corydon and was named Director shortly after. Under her leadership, the museum has undergone three major expansions and now thrives as a hub for local history, education and events. Brenda secures grants, creates family-friendly programs and plans annual Fourth of July celebrations and fall festivals at the museum. Additionally, she publishes the Wayne County Historical Society newsletter. Most recently, Brenda coordinated the 2024 Wayne County mastodon dig in a region north of Lineville. The team of archaeologists, scholars and volunteers uncovered the well-preserved remains of a mastodon from thousands of years ago. Brenda has led efforts to ensure the mastodon returns to the Prairie Trails Museum in 2026.

## **Emily Grell – Danbury**

As a high school senior, Emily has made a deep impact on the lives of fellow Danbury community members and youth attending camps she helps lead. These camps have included the 4-H Camp of Discovery, Schoenstatt Girls Youth Camp, Monona Extension camps and Marian Camp. Emily is an active member of the Danbury Catholic Church, where she goes above and beyond to share her faith and compassion with others. Emily is also a member of her local Mapleton Starspinner 4-H Club, serving as secretary and participating on the Monona County Council. Earlier this summer, Emily was appointed Miss Congeniality at the Monona County Fair. In addition to her community involvement, Emily has served as captain of the high school cross country and track teams and helps plan children's activities at the local library.

## **Barb Runneberg – Algona**

Barb holds the position of Quality and Performance Excellence Director at Kossuth Regional Health Center in Algona. However, Barb's devotion to her community extends beyond her work in healthcare. In 2019, she began volunteering as a member of the Algona Police Reserves. In her current role as President of the Reserve Unit, Barb leads the "Cops for Kids" program, which partners area youth with Algona Police Department officers for a day of holiday shopping. Additionally, Barb volunteers her time to serve with Rotary, Sharing Active Independent Lives and her church. Her empathetic and solution-oriented approach to helping others continues to inspire community members near and far.

## **Donna Koch – Cedar Rapids**

A lifelong educator, Donna dedicated the first fifteen years of her professional life to teaching kindergarten and the next twenty-five years to developing elementary school libraries as a library specialist. Donna's passion for youth education burned brighter than ever in retirement. As a volunteer, she managed her region of the "Reading Is Fundamental" program, which boasted twenty-two volunteers across twenty-two learning centers. Her work also involved securing federal grants and serving as a congressional "Reading Is Fundamental" lobbyist. Donna has served as a Cedar Rapids Library Board member, church librarian, Daughters of the American Revolution State Regent and member of Questers, an organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of historical items.

## **Roger & Mary Sue Chatfield – Keokuk**

Roger and Mary Sue Chatfield have been a dynamic team since their marriage in 1960. While Roger operated their family farm in rural Montrose, Mary Sue taught first grade. In retirement, the couple dedicated extensive volunteer hours to making their community a better place. Roger and Mary Sue helped found Montrose Riverfront, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to beautifying and revitalizing Montrose. Mary Sue enhances fundraising efforts by writing successful grant proposals and organizing community events. Roger contributed his expertise to transforming an agricultural supply building to the Hunold Heritage Center, a local museum. Roger also spent several summers maintaining flower boxes he established around town while Mary Sue wrote weekly feature articles about Montrose for local newspapers. To this day, she is editor of the New Montrose Journal and a correspondent for the Keokuk Daily Gate City and the Fort Madison Daily Democrat. Together, Roger and Mary Sue have made a profound impact on their community.

## **Ruby Thomas – Coin**

Outside of her full-time job in Clarinda, Ruby volunteers as the Coin City Council cemetery sexton. Since she assumed this position three years ago, Ruby has transformed Coin's Elmwood Cemetery from a dilapidated graveyard to a model cemetery whose maintenance other cemeteries study to replicate. When Ruby first became sexton, the city had no real budget or funds set aside for her work. Through a local fundraising campaign, Ruby raised more than \$11,000 for cemetery renovations. This total continues to increase today. Ruby's projects include repairing damaged headstones, resetting tombstones and maintaining the grounds. Her work has impacted families near and far whose loved ones are buried at the Elmwood Cemetery.



## Donna Brown – Cedar Falls

When she wasn't working as a substitute teacher or exercise instructor, Donna served as an active volunteer throughout Waterloo. Though she has since moved to Cedar Falls, she remains a deeply committed volunteer in both communities. Donna has played instrumental roles in a surplus of organizations, including Waterloo First Methodist Church, Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity, The Job Foundation, Northeast Iowa Food Bank and Cedar Valley Sertoma Club. Donna led efforts to develop the Church Row Historic Neighborhood Association, a Waterloo leadership group dedicated to improving the community by working toward common goals.

## Peggy Smith – Baxter

Peggy does everything she can to help her community flourish. When she noticed the disrepair of the picnic tables at the local Sports Complex, she and her husband provided the labor to replace all the wood and bolts. To address the issue of littering along downtown sidewalks, she worked with the Baxter Chamber of Commerce to obtain a grant that financed the installation of new trash cans. Peggy also recently introduced the concept of "Welcome Bags" to the Chamber of Commerce. These gift packages help welcome new residents to Baxter and provide information about the community. In addition to these projects, Peggy organized a breast cancer walk in Baxter that raised \$4,000, which she donated to the Mercy Cancer Center in Des Moines.

## Jean Saveraid – Huxley

For nearly thirty years, Jean led the Talented and Gifted program in the Gilbert Community School District. In retirement, she remains a substitute teacher and adjunct professor at Drake University. Her commitment to youth education has also translated to twenty-four years served on the Ballard School Board, during which she has held the roles of President and Vice President. Jean has volunteered with organizations such as the American Heart Association, Story County Extension, Palestine Luther Church and the Blue Ribbon Foundation. She has also made significant impacts on the Iowa State Fair through her family's dedication to showing horses and her participation in the Fair's Military Tribute Band each year.

## Lou Sipolt Jr. – Altoona

Many Iowans know Lou from his years as a media personality on 95 KGGO, then on Channel 23 and now on Local 5 as the host of "Iowa Live." What listeners might not know is that Lou has dedicated his time and talents to advocating for more than 20 organizations since he moved to Iowa. These non-profit organizations include the American Heart Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa and ChildServe, just to name a few. Some of Lou's most prominent activism has been in support of stronger animal abuse prevention laws across Iowa. Through his "Doggies on Death Row" radio and television series, over 2,000 dogs have been adopted. Lou consistently does whatever he can to leverage his talents and passions in support of all Iowans, humans and animals alike.



Speed Herrig (Cookies Food Products) and Grace Benson (Blue Ribbon Foundation Intern) present Peggy Smith of Baxter with her Iowan of the Day award.



Peter Cownie (Blue Ribbon Foundation Executive Director) and Speed Herrig (Cookies Food Products) celebrate Lou Sipolt of Altoona with his Iowan of the Day award.

# Back the **Barns**

The Blue Ribbon Foundation's mission is to raise funds to maintain our beautiful, historic Iowa State Fairgrounds. We hope you enjoyed the improvements during the 2025 Iowa State Fair, especially around the livestock barns. The Foundation's Back the Barns fundraising campaign remains in full swing.

Horse Barn - Phase I of the project was completed before the 2025 Iowa State Fair. Phase II has started and will be completed in time for the 2026 Fair. The two-year, \$13.1 million renovation includes the following:

- Masonry, sheet metal, and roofing restoration
- Exterior and interior painting
- Repair and replacement of exterior doors and windows
- New concrete floor with radiant heat
- New relocated offices on the west end
- Remodeled existing restrooms and brand-new restrooms to meet current accessibility standards
- Relocated covered outdoor wash rack and new interior wash rack area
- New portable stalls
- Enhanced ventilation
- New electrical service and lighting
- New fire suppression system

Other barn improvements are also planned. The Sheep Barn will receive new portable pens and an upgraded show ring. Outside the Cattle Barn, a new electric substation building will be constructed. In the Swine Barn, the west restrooms will be remodeled, and new restrooms will be added on the east side.

The Iowa State Fair is a proud tradition for all Iowans, and the Blue Ribbon Foundation is committed to preserving and celebrating that legacy. Thank you to the donors who have supported the livestock barn improvement projects to date.

If you have not already, please consider joining the Back the Barns fundraising campaign. As an expression of our gratitude, you will receive a commemorative belt buckle, and your name will be included on a plaque recognizing donors upon project completion.

**Yes! I want to join the "Back the Barns" Campaign!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\$3,000 Membership

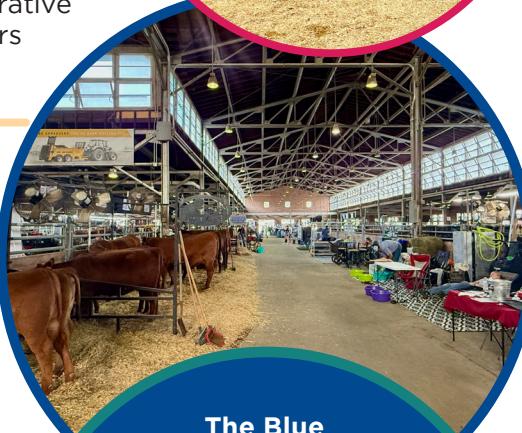
A one-time \$3,000 gift    An annual gift of \$1,000 for a 3-year term

Quarterly gifts of \$250 for a 3-year term

Check  Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Sec. Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



The Blue Ribbon Foundation received a \$450,000 Community Betterment Grant from Prairie Meadows for Horse Barn improvements. Thank you for your continued support of our mission!

# Blue Ribbon Foundation Internships

**The Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation is excited to offer its dynamic internship program for college students once again.**

These hands-on positions provide a unique opportunity to sharpen your organizational and administrative skills while gaining real-world experience in business, communication, event planning, marketing and public relations.

This isn't your average internship. As a Blue Ribbon Foundation intern, you'll be a vital part of our team — working alongside staff, managing key projects, and helping strengthen the Foundation's connection with dedicated donors who support the Iowa State Fair.

A special thank you to our 2025 interns — Grace Benson, Maya Bruening and Madison Price. Their dedication and enthusiasm played a crucial role in the success of the Corndog Kickoff and the Iowa State Fair. From organizing the Iowan of the Day program and planning donor hospitality events, to working with sponsors, each intern contributed significantly to the Foundation's efforts.

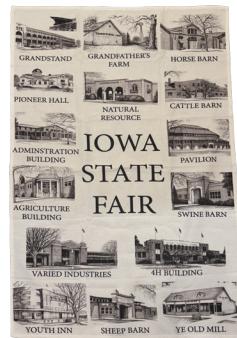
**Do you know a motivated, hard-working college student who loves the Fair?** Encourage them to explore this incredible opportunity. Visit [www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org](http://www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org) to learn more and apply. Applications are open through November 30.



# Iowa State Fair Store

The Blue Ribbon Foundation is committed to preserving and enhancing the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds. You can be part of that mission by shopping our online store. When you visit [www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org](http://www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org), you're not just picking up unique Fair-themed merchandise, you're supporting a great cause.

Be sure to check out our featured items and thank you for helping us keep the spirit of the Iowa State Fair alive for generations to come!



Qty.	Item	Description	Price	Total
	<b>Barn Ornament</b>	Isabel Bloom Ornament. This red barn ornament is a tribute to both the iconic barns of the Iowa State Fair and the beloved barns found on farms across the state.	<b>\$20</b>	
	<b>Butter Cow Jewelry</b>	The Butter Cow resides in the Agriculture Building. Add a miniature version to your jewelry collection with this corded necklace, bracelet or earrings. <b>Bracelet, Necklace or Earrings</b> (Circle choice).	<b>\$20 Each</b>	
	<b>Butter Cow Hat</b>	Navy hat with the Butter Cow and "Iowa State Fair" on a patch.	<b>\$22</b>	
	<b>Club Lamb Ornament</b>	Each year, more than 900 exhibitors show 3,700 sheep during the Iowa State Fair. The club lamb is represented in this year's ornament, but all 16 breeds are showcased with pride.	<b>\$25</b>	
	<b>Fair Food Ornament</b>	On a stick or in a cup, nothing compares to Iowa State Fair food - so let's eat up! This ornament shows the deliciousness of the Fair. Designed by Sticks, Inc.	<b>\$25</b>	
	<b>Socks</b>	Never wear boring socks again with one-of-a-kind Iowa State Fair socks. <b>Designs: Butter Cow, Fair Icons, Pig</b> (Circle design choice.)	<b>\$12 Each</b>	
	<b>Tea Towels</b>	Tea Towel featuring two Iowa State Fair designs: <b>Building or Icon</b> (Circle design choice.)	<b>\$10 Each</b>	
	<b>Sweatshirt</b>	Cream quarter zip sweatshirt with "Iowa State Fair" in block lettering, embroidered on the left chest. <b>Circle Adult Size: XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL</b>	<b>\$55</b>	
	<b>Butter Cow Water Bottle</b>	Yellow water bottle that looks like the Iowa State Fair Butter Cow.	<b>\$30</b>	
Please send with payment to: <b>Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation</b> P.O. Box 57130, Des Moines, IA 50317 or call: 1-800-450-3732			<b>Under \$25 = \$9; \$26 - \$50 = \$10 \$51 - \$75 = \$11; Over \$76 = \$12</b>	<b>Shipping</b>
				<b>Total</b>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard Visa Check Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Mailbox

"Richard Frank wanted all his memorial contributions to go to the Iowa State Fair, as it held a special place in his heart. During the 1970s and 1980s, Rich spent countless hours in the Cattle Barn, raising Maine-Anjou cattle and preparing them for the show ring."

Today, a brick outside the Cattle Barn bearing the name Frank Farms stands as a tribute to his legacy and deep connection to the Fair. The Iowa State Fair has meant so much to our family through the years. Thank you to the Blue Ribbon Foundation for your continued efforts to preserve and enhance this beloved tradition."

*Beth Frank*  
CARSON, IA

## NEED TO CONTACT US?

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# Iowa State Fair Souvenir Online Auction

Since the very beginning, Fairgoers have treasured souvenirs of their visits to the legendary Iowa State Fair. The Blue Ribbon Foundation proudly carries on this tradition by offering unique keepsakes as part of our ongoing fundraising efforts.

This fall, we're excited to showcase a special selection of these items in an online auction featuring memorabilia collected over the years. Highlights include Blue Ribbon Foundation lapel pins dating back to 1993, holiday ornaments, Isabel Bloom sculptures, Sticks plaques, Iowa State Fair staff-issued pins, and much more!

**Online bidding opens Thursday, November 13 at 10 AM and closes Sunday, November 16 at 8 PM.**

Beginning in November, visit our website to view updated photos and detailed descriptions of each auction item. To participate, simply register as a bidder and complete the required form, including a valid credit card number. Winning bidders will receive instructions for collecting their packages.

**Don't miss this opportunity to own a piece of Fair history while supporting the preservation of the Iowa State Fairgrounds!**

