



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
Sherree Adams
Tom Adams
JoAnn Adamson
Terry Adamson
Monica Ade
George Akes
Savanna Akes
Heidi Albaugh
Mallory Albright
Amanda Alderson
Lori Alderson
Cassie Aldrich
Juli Aldrich
Karen Alessio
Brad Allen
Robin Allen
Tony Alt
Grace Amadeo
Mary Amadeo
Grace Ambrose
Steve Andersen
Angie Arendt
Sharon Arendt
Ervin Arkema
Linda Arkema
Justin Arnold
Kendra Arnold
Florida Arthur
Jerry Arthur
Tara Avery
April Bainum
Barb Baker
Paul Barnds
DeAnn Barnhill
Jenni Barnhouse
Andrea Barry
Kate Bason
Teresa Bazzocco
Sarah Beeman
Darin Bennigsdorf
Deanna Bennigsdorf
Lance Bergeson
Sylvia Bergeson
Ron Bergfeld
Marilyn Bergman
Gary Bergquist
Sharie Bergquist
Christy Berkenbosch
Jane Berry
Marsha Betlach
Steve Betlach
Andrea Bice
Kim Bigsby
Barbara Birchmier
Loren Birchmier

Arlene Blue
Melinda Blythe
Benjamin Bobier
Crystal Bobier
Dave Boender
Kerri Boender
Elaine Bohling
Hank Bohling
Lynn Bohling
Shelby Bohling
Mark Bohner
Jo Bond
Patrice Bork
Jean Bowden
Connie Bowen
Jeff Bowen
Angie Bower
Karen Bowersox
Pam Bradford
Christine Branstad
Tess Bredemeyer
Hailey Brown
Kieran Brown
Diana Burch
Genevieve Burch
Kaylee Burch
Lawren Burch
Ami Burns
Tara Burow
Lori Busma
Anne Butler
Jill Byerly
John Byerly
Tom Cameron
Randy Campbell
Joyce Carr
Peg Carr
Darla Carver
Mark Carver
Dan Chambers
Pam Chambers
Kristen Chen
Sandy Cheney
Jaci Chiovaro
Zosh Choda
Diane Claes
Magenta Clark
Caren Clevenger
Teresa Clevenger
Sara Cole
Deb Connor
Emily Cook
Emma Cook
Sherri Cooney
Susan Corbett

R.D. Core
Kate Courter
Rebecca Courtright
Mary Cownie
Brenda Cox
Barbara Crock
Chris Crowley
Ann Cutts
Doug Cutts
Kristin Davenport
Livia Davenport
Savanna Davenport
Carla Davis
Carol Davis
Erik Davis
Carolyn Deacon
Cindy Deaton
Deb DeDecker
Marty DeDecker
Sandy DeGoey
Natalee Dermer
Steve Despotovich
Erika Dethrow
John DeVries
Julie DeVries
Phyllis DeVries
Mary Kay Dial
Judy Dillenburg
Richi Dorr
Angela Doty
Cindy Dougherty
Jennifer Duke
Kristy Dullard
Kris Dunn
Roxanne Dunn
Gary Edwards
Sheri Edwards
Joy Elder
Karen Elrod
Deb Epp
Elijah Erickson
Marilyn Erlandson
Anne Erlandson
Brown
Brenda Etzen
Bree Fancher
Allison Feldhacker
Ayla Feldhacker
Lisa Felice
Jayne Ferguson
Renee Ferguson
Shaun Finnegan
Linda Finzen-
Mathers
Niki Fisher
Sue Fisher

Dawn Fitzgerald
Shawn Foster-Tait
Chris Fox
Margo Fox
Molly Francy
Sara Francy
Alissa Frey
Drew Fulcher
Linda Fyfe
Karen Fynaardt
Irene Gardner
Kathleen Garlich
Jan Gaudian
Nathan Geer
Stephanie Geer
Tyler Gegen
Nick Gerlach
Jeff Gilley
Juanita Gilley
Gina Glass
Susan Glick
Nikki Goodell
Angela Goodrich
Celeste Goodrich
Lavon Goodrich
Riley Goodrich
Julie Gore
Beth Grabau
Joel Grabau
Melissa Graeve
Janet Grant
Andrea Green
Sally Greenfield
Nancy Greening
Jess Greenwell
Cindy Gregg
Dave Gregg
Mary Grieser
Bob Griffis
George Griffith
Kevin Griffith
Tierra Griffith
Linda Groenendyk
Kim Groh
Tracey Guerrero
Dan Gunderson
Lois Gunderson
Deb Gunhus
Mark Gunhus
Lori Gutknecht
Cindy Haars
Breanna Haberl-
Kellogg
Julie Hagerty
Eric Hahn
Tahlia Hahn

Tennison Hahn
Trinley Hahn
Vicki Hahn
Charlene Haluska
John Haluska
Debbie Hamblin
Rick Hamblin
Julie Hane
Norma Hanke
Cindy Hansen
Georgia Hansen
Hank Hanson
Lisa Hanson
Maureen Hanson
Shelly Harden
Kathy Harms
Nola Harper
Jill Harryman
Suzy Hart
Patricia Hartley
Perry Hartley
Robert Hartley
Holly Hartman
Ray Hartz
Olivia Haus
Abby Hawkins
Sandy Hecht
Howard Hecht Jr
Steven Heinle
Abby Henry
Kim Henson
Iran Hernandez
Sheryl Herrold
Roberta Hersom
Marcia Hewitt
Andrew Higdon
Chris Higdon
Angela Hilbert
Emerson Hilbert
Theresa Himes
Joe Hintzsche
Rick Hoenig
Sandy Hoenig
Becky Hoffman
Dan Hogan
Shirley Holm
Breeelyn Holst
Ginny Hood
Rylie Hootman
Carol Horning
Cindy Howard
Mert Howard
Rhonda Huegerich
Jeri Hunt
Andrea Hyde
Pam Iano

Mary Jack	Tiffanie Marksby	Cheryl Price	Norma Smalley	Pat Van Lent
Owen Jack	Bill Marlin	Mark Probst	Addison Smith	Mary Lou Van Roekel
Jody Jacklin	Julie Marlin	Betsey Qualley	Carol Smith	Glenda Van
Todd Jacklin	Kaci Marshall	Charlotte Qualley	Mike Smith	Woerkom
Bryan Jansen	Emily Martini	Marcine Raatz	Nick Smith	Jon Van Woerkom
Donna Jansen	Marvin Mason	Barb Rasmussen	Stephanie Smith	Alan Vander Linden
Kurt Jansen	Traci McBee	Riley Rasmussen	Carol Sperry	Sheryl Vander
Susan Jansen	Robbin McClelland	Kenton Reece	Cindy Spiker	Linden
Karla Jenkins	Linda McClure	Rachel Reece	Ed Sprague	Ronald
Jean Jennings	Loni McCollum	Nancy Renes	Jo Sprague	VanderMeyden
Addison Jensen	Gary McConnell	Carol Renfro	Kristin Spriggs	Leon VanderWeerd
Brenda Jermier	Linda McConnell	Brey Rhoades	Cindy Spurr	Margaret
Duane Jess	Larry McCreery	Kim Rickets	Randy Spurr	VanderWeerd
Laura Jochems	Michelle McCreery	Christine	Theresa Staats	Marla Veenstra
Celeste Johns	Debbie McDaniel	Riemenschneider	Alan Stalcup	Jim Viggers
Brittany Johnson	Connie McDonald	Mike	Leah Stalcup	Teresa Viggers
Kim Johnson	Beverly McKnight	Riemenschneider	Cindy Starr	Ann Visser
Cheryl Jontz	Rita McMullen	Kathy Rinkenberger	Steve Starr	Nejra Vodenicarevic
Connor Junkins	Nolan McNulty	George Risinger	Ryan Steenblock	Emil Voeller
Kris Junkins	Rhonda Mechaelsen	Kurt Roberts	Joyce Steinkamp	Michael Voigt
Louie Kamerick	Laura Meyer	Holly Robinson	Juli Steppuhn	Connie Vos
Sheryl Kamerick	Laurie Meyer	Sally Robson	Henderson	Mary Walker
Bill Keel	Matthew Meyer	Mario Romero	Beth Steven	Terri Walker
Sarah Keel	Theresa Miller	Cory Root	Dan Stevenson	Angie Walker-
Joan Keifer	Angela Milligan	Jenni Rope-Smith	Jill Stevenson	Springer
Dan Keitzer	Janice Mineart	Amy Roquet	Deborah Stewart	Jennifer Walz
Jan Keitzer	Gary Modlin	Rachel Rouse	Suzi Stewart	Michelle Walz
Cathy Keller	Lisa Modlin	Rijah Rouse	Craig Stille	Jeff Wangsness
Dee Keller	Colton Moeller	Cheryl Rozendaal	Shelly Stille	Shelley Wangsness
Rudolph Kellett	Anne Molyneaux	Nancy Rude	Lisa Stodghill	Kelsey Warfield
Joan Kennedy	Erin Moore	Maureen Ryan	Traviss Stodghill	Pam Waters
Joe Kenyon	Lindsey Mulhall	Shirley Ryan	Virginia Stone	Robert Waters
Saara Khounlo	Melissa Myers	Shawn Sabin	Alex Stratton	Karen Watkins
Sharon Kingsbury	Lisa Naaktgeboren	Matthew Sabol	Sherry Stuart	Carole Weaver
Danyell Klein	Diane Nabity	Terry Sabol	Shelley	Jennifer Webb
Gene Klein	Kevin Nabity	Priyanka	Swartzenduber	Randi Webb
Becky Klingston	Parvathy Nambiar	Sadanandan	Teri Sweeney	Tycene Weber
Lori Klug	Tammy Negrete	Frances Sales	Angel Swim	Alan Wedemeyer
Elizabeth Knautz	Carolyn Nelson	Don Sandy	Ryker Swore	Annette Wedemeyer
Deanna Knowles	Stacey Nelson	Adriane Sankey	Valinh Swore	Amy Weiny
Mark Knowles	Tena Nelson	Tiedens	April Talbot	Carol Werner
Dylan Koepnick	Tammy Newton	Deanna Sargent	Joshua Tarbell	Dan Werner
Jason Koepnick	Traci Nicholson	Savannah Sargent	Robin Tarbell-	Norma Wessel
Joy Koepnick	Aimee Noehren	Ellen Sattler	Thomas	Kim Wetzel
Kyndra Koepnick	Chad Noehren	Melissa Savits	Dave Taylor	Mike Wetzel
Lydia Koepnick	Laura Noehren	Jennifer Saylor	Dianne Taylor	Jason White
Teresa Kopf	Kim Nordquist	Gary Schad	Gary Taylor	Kris White
Lauren Kratz	Todd Nordquist	Dawn Schellinger	Tamra Taylor	Lacie White
Kyle Kruckenberg	Abby North	Michael	Teresa Taylor	Michael White
Susan Kruckenberg	Brian Nuehring	Schermerhorn	Terri Taylor	Laury Whitham
Tisha Lack	Suzanne Nuehring	Stephanie	Lisa Terranova	Deb Wickham
John Laing	Mark Oehlerking	Schermerhorn	Cindy Testroet	Deb Wilkins
Sheila Laing	Lyndee Ohmstede	Jody Schmaltz	Joseph Tharpe	Cindy Williams
Brenna Lange	Kandee Olson	Donna Schmidt	Lisa Tharpe	John Williams
Dorothy Lange	Phyllis Olson	Bill Schneck	Emily Theis	Gene Willis
Elaine Larsen	Teresa Osborn	Marilyn Schneck	Connie Thienes	Mary Beth Willis
Nikki Lasko	Leanna Osterloh	Karen Schramm	Curtis Thienes	Michelle Willis
Brady Latcham	Kim Palmquist	Sue Schreuder	Kay Thomas	Julie Wilson
Joy Latcham	Julie Parker	JoAnn Schroder	Molly Thomas	Martha Wilson
Tony Latcham	Monica Parker	Marsha Schultz	Denny Thompson	Dave Windisch
Deb Layland	Tejas Patel	Justin Schulz	Todd Thorson	Marcia Wing
April Leeper	Becky Patterson	Ronald Schulz	Autumn Tiedens	Doug Wirth
Miranda Lemons	Diane Peiffer	Tara Schulz	Gracie Tiffany	Shelley Wirth
Karen Leonetti	Greg Peiffer	Ashley Shafer	Jonah Trenhaile	Traci Wolfe
Amy Lindgren	Greg D. Peiffer	Kris Sheaffer	Tiffany Trenhaile	Kathy Wolk
Mary Beth Lint	Dixie Pencil	Celia Shedd	Courtney Turner	Mary Woods
Kris Livingston	Jane Peterson	Shannon Shepherd	Darla Tweeten	Tina Woods
Lori Lockard	Kirsten Pettit	Joshua Shields	Gretchen Umbaugh	Jordan Woody
Randleman	Cheryl Phillips	Dixie Shipley	Susan Utt-Smith	Judy Woody
Teresa Loops	Greg Phillips	Jennifer Shook	Jackie Van Ahn	Linda Wright
David Loupee	Cathy Pierce	Jakob Shore	Teresa Van De Boe	Jenna Zarate
Amanda Lucero	Shan Pinegar	Angel Siems	Bonnie Van Den	Fred Zeitler
LeAnn Lund	Kathy Pleima	Steph Sieren	Broek	Danice Zern
Lori Lunsford	Randy Pleima	Bruce Simonton	Brenda Van Der	Jack Zern
Amber Lyddon	Chantele Pliler	Linda Simonton	Kamp	Josh Ziegler
Mary Lynn	Terri Pollard	Brad Simpson	Kathy Van Dike	Daniel Zika
Frank Lyons	Joe Pollpeter	Jody Simpson	Lawrence Van	Kevin Zika
Hannah Lyons	Kara Pollpeter	Dee Ann Sisam	Heukelom	
Tim Malek	Craig Pope	Rick Sisam	Lois Van Heukelom	
Amelia Malone	Julia Prendergast	Alyssa Skaala	Susan Van Hill	

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 cemetery sextons 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

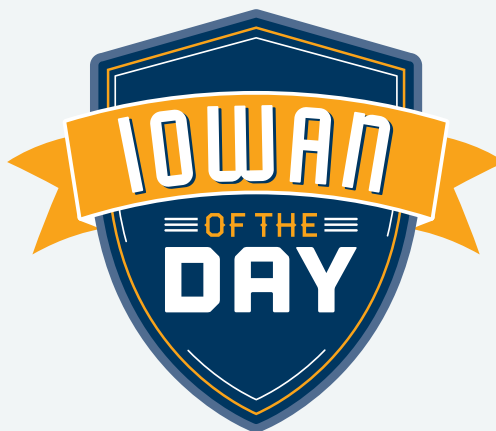
For nearly thirty years, Jean led the Talented and Gifted program in the Gilbert Community School District. In retirement, she remains a substitute teacher and adjunct professor at Drake University. Her commitment to youth education has also translated to twenty-four years served on the Ballard School 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 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, 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
	Barn Ornament	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.	\$20	
	Butter Cow Jewelry	The Butter Cow resides in the Agriculture Building. Add a miniature version to your jewelry collection with this corded necklace, bracelet or earrings. Bracelet, Necklace or Earrings (Circle choice).	\$20 Each	
	Butter Cow Hat	Navy hat with the Butter Cow and "Iowa State Fair" on a patch.	\$22	
	Club Lamb Ornament	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.	\$25	
	Fair Food Ornament	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.	\$25	
	Socks	Never wear boring socks again with one-of-a-kind Iowa State Fair socks. Designs: Butter Cow, Fair Icons, Pig (Circle design choice.)	\$12 Each	
	Tea Towels	Tea Towel featuring two Iowa State Fair designs: Building or Icon (Circle design choice.)	\$10 Each	
	Sweatshirt	Cream quarter zip sweatshirt with "Iowa State Fair" in block lettering, embroidered on the left chest. Circle Adult Size: XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL	\$55	
	Butter Cow Water Bottle	Yellow water bottle that looks like the Iowa State Fair Butter Cow.	\$30	
Please send with payment to: Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation P.O. Box 57130, Des Moines, IA 50317 or call: 1-800-450-3732			Shipping	
			Total	

Under \$25 = \$9; \$26 - \$50 = \$10
\$51 - \$75 = \$11; Over \$76 = \$12

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"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?

CALL

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Des Moines, IA 50317

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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!

