



**IOWA STATE FAIR
BLUE RIBBON
FOUNDATION**

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The Blue Ribbon Foundation is Celebrating 25 Years with the Release of a New Book

Des Moines, IA – The Blue Ribbon Foundation has been a key component of the Iowa State Fair since 1993 when it was established by the State Fair Board to conduct a major capital campaign for the renovation and preservation of the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds. Since its inception, the Foundation has raised more than \$135 million, through individual contributions, state appropriations, in-kind services, and corporate, federal and state grants. The Iowa State Fair and Blue Ribbon Foundation have been on an amazing journey the last 25 years, and it is being celebrated with a new book.

A Great State Fair: The Blue Ribbon Foundation and the Revival of the Iowa State Fair, by William B. Friedrichs, takes you behind the scenes of the roller coaster ride of ups and downs of the Iowa State Fair's long history, leading up to the Blue Ribbon Foundation and the remarkable revival it brought about at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, now bigger and better than ever.

The book describes how for decades, the Iowa State Fair was considered the classic summer exposition—but years of neglect almost destroyed the once grand, turn-of-the-century Fairgrounds. Numerous efforts to save the facility failed, propelling the Iowa State Fair Board to create the Blue Ribbon Foundation, hoping it could raise millions of dollars needed to restore the grounds.

“The projects the Blue Ribbon Foundation has supported would not be possible without our supporters. The generosity that the entire state of Iowa has shown the Foundation is what has made the last 25 years such a success. Thank you for coming along this amazing journey with us, and being a part of the Fair that we all know and love,” said Peter Cownie, Executive Director of the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation.

The paperback book which consists of 172 pages and over 40 photographs and illustrations is the most recent work of author William “Bill” Friedrichs who is professor of history at Simpson College, where he also directs the Iowa History Center. A leading Iowa historian, he is the author of a number of other books and is the editor of the Iowa and Midwest Experience book series at the University of Iowa Press.

Bill will be signing books from 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on August 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20 at the Blue Ribbon Foundation merchandise store located in the Robert G. Horner and Sheri Avis Horner Service Center.

*The Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Since its inception in 1993, the Foundation has generated more than \$135 million for renovations and improvements to the Iowa State Fairgrounds. For more information, please contact the Blue Ribbon Foundation at 1-800-450-3732 or

Info@BlueRibbonFoundation.org.

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