



Drew Sniezek
Communications Manager

IT TAKES A *Village*



ast fall, my family grew as we welcomed a baby boy. Adjusting to life as a family of four has been interesting to say the least. Some days, we are the picture perfect little family making memories attending the circus or a Drake basketball game.

Other days, it feels like a miracle if we get out the door for daycare drop-off and make it to work on time. The phrase, “It takes a village” is definitely true for me. I lean on my parents, sisters, friends, daycare teachers, and coworkers not only for help but advice on a regular basis.

The Blue Ribbon Foundation is no stranger to that village mentality. This newsletter is filled with examples of ways Iowans support our mission.

Listed in this issue are names of people who financially supported the T.A.G. Team and Back the Barns projects. These dollars go directly towards improvements to Ye Old Mill and the Livestock Barns – both iconic structures on the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

Individuals and businesses alike attend the Corndog Kickoff Benefit Auction. Giving as a patron or providing an auction donation is a unique way to show support. The event truly kicks off the start of the Iowa State Fair. Guests enjoy a fun evening while raising money for future renovations.

Our village also is made up of 600+ volunteers who give the gift of time. There are opportunities throughout the summer where our staff relies on the extra sets of hands to get the job done. Volunteering is the perfect chance to meet fellow Fair fans who enjoy giving back and add some friends to your own village.

The list of villagers continues as we encourage all creative Fair fans to enter the T-Shirt Design Contest. We also need the help of community members to recognize the outstanding volunteers across our state by nominating a potential “Iowan of the Day.”

As we get closer to summer, the Blue Ribbon Foundation relies on our village of supporters. You not only give financially, but many give your time and continue to be our biggest advocates. You trust the Blue Ribbon Foundation and our mission to preserve the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds.

Thank you for supporting our work as we strive to make things better for the next generation of Fairgoers who will make Iowa State Fair memories, just like my little family...assuming we can make it out the door.

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NOTED!

• SAVE THE DATES

Corndog Kickoff:
Saturday, July 13

Iowa State Fair:
August 8-18

- Thank you to all Iowans who contribute to the Corndog Checkoff on their Iowa tax forms. Checkoff contributions are anonymous; therefore, we are unable to recognize those individuals. Although the gifts are nameless, they are extremely significant and greatly appreciated.
- **Dining Delights** gift cards needed! The Corndog Kickoff will feature a restaurant gift card pull. Help support your favorite place by purchasing a gift card (value of \$25 or more) and donating it to Dining Delights. Gift cards can be mailed to the Blue Ribbon Foundation any time before July.

CALL
515-262-3111 Ext. 371

EMAIL
Info@BlueRibbonFoundation.org

MAIL
P.O. Box 57130
Des Moines, IA 50317

BACK THE BARNS

Campaign

The Iowa State Fair is passionate about agricultural education and supporting students through livestock shows. Youth that raise and show livestock gain life skills like responsibility, time management and animal husbandry.

Spending time in a show ring leads to leadership development skills like critical thinking, decision making and even public speaking. Participating in a livestock show at the Iowa State Fair will no doubt give these youth an advantage later in life.

Please consider joining the Blue Ribbon Foundation's "Back the Barns" campaign. Your support of the barn restoration project will guarantee the tradition of showing livestock at the Iowa State Fair continues to thrive.

The sheep barn continues its second phase of renovation with restoring the terra cotta, repairing the masonry, updating restrooms, remodeling the office, repainting and resurfacing the lower roof levels.

Over the next several years, the cattle, horse and swine barns will each be part of the \$25+ million renovation. Each structure will have dedicated restorations in areas that are vitally needed.

Members of the Blue Ribbon Foundation's Back the Barns campaign are those generous donors who have pledged \$1,000 per year for 3 years in support of the Iowa State Fair's historic livestock barn restoration project.

As a thank you for joining the Back the Barns campaign, you will receive a commemorative belt buckle. These belt buckles not only represent the rich agriculture heritage of Iowa but are a symbol of your generosity in supporting the next generation of 4-H and FFA youth who will lead our state. Your name will also be listed on a kiosk recognizing donors when the project is complete. Thank you for your consideration!

Thank you to the following donors that have contributed to the program so far:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Greg & Andrea Abel | James & Dagni Falvey | Tom & Robin Jurgens | Jon & Laura Scoles |
| Matt & Dini Anderson | Jeff & Vickie Farver | Doug & Jessemynn Kanis | Sherry & William Sears |
| A-O-K Family Farms Inc. | Brian Feldpausch | David Kasal & Irene Kasal | Keith & Barb Sexton |
| Jerry & Florida Arthur | Tim & Phyllis Fevold | Julianna Kasper | Don & Jennifer Slagle |
| Ernie & Paula Barnes | Randy & Vikki Fischer | William & Sarah Keel | James & Vista Smid |
| Darrell & Lynda Bauman | Larry & Sandra Fleck | Kenneth Kessler | Glenn & JoAnn Smith |
| Larry & Kathy Beaty | Tracy Forbes | James Kopel | Ray & Jan Smothers |
| Richard & Sharon Bender | Randy & Bonnie Forburger | Gary & Diane Laabs | David & Mary Steele |
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| In Memory of Gene | Grochala Gorham | Larry McConnell | C.W. & Kay Thomas |
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| Alice Draper | Dean Hunziker | In Memory of Wilbert & | Edward Wollner |
| Peter & Nancy Dyson | Iowa Mold & Engineering | Coleen Robson | Norm & Marij Wonderlich |
| EPS | J.W. Welding, Inc. | Lynne & Bob Schueler | The Yedlik Family |
| Jason & Megan Fagle | James & Ashley Johnson | Russ & Christy Schwartz | Mark & Jennifer Zahradnik |

STAFF

The Blue Ribbon Foundation staff consists of five full-time employees.

Peter Cownie, Executive Director, oversees the entire operation.

Robin Taylor, Assistant Director, tracks all accounting records, orders Fair merchandise and directs the auction portion of the Corndog Kickoff.

Julianna Curtis, Sponsorship Director, coordinates all sponsorships for the Iowa State Fair.

Meg Courter, Development Manager, organizes volunteers, manages the database and coordinates the Corndog Checkoff.

Drew Sniezek, Communications Manager, organizes giving programs and oversees all communications and event planning.

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: _____



MEET THE 2024 Interns



The Blue Ribbon Foundation is excited to introduce Chloe Hamaker, Lauren McCullum and Jayce Reed as interns for the summer of 2024. They will be busy organizing events and programs such as Iowan of the Day, merchandise sales, Iowa State Fair sponsors and the Corndog Kickoff Benefit Auction.



Chloe Hamaker

Chloe Hamaker – Chloe is a West Texas A&M University junior majoring in Agricultural Media & Communications with a minor in Animal Science. At West Texas A&M, she is a member of the 2024 WT Horse Judging Team, the treasurer of the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Club, and a charter member of the professional agricultural sorority Sigma Alpha.

Chloe is from Van Wert in south-central Iowa. Her family raises commercial beef cattle, corn, soybeans and hay. She has been involved in rodeo and has several competitive barrel racing horses. Chloe has recently started breeding and training her next generation mounts. She was heavily involved in FFA and 4-H, served as the South Central District Iowa FFA Vice President, and showed horses and dogs at the Iowa State Fair throughout high school. Chloe has made many great memories at the State Fair and is excited to make many more this summer. She will serve as the Public Relations Intern.



Lauren McCullum

Lauren McCullum – Lauren is a junior at Iowa State University studying Event Management. She is a member of Sigma Kappa sorority, where she previously served as an Assistant New Member Educator and currently serves as the Vice President of Alumnae Relations. In her free time, she likes to take walks around campus and hang out with friends. Lauren grew up in Massachusetts but moved to Iowa with her family in the summer of 2016. The Iowa State Fair was her first experience as an Iowan, and she couldn't have asked for a better introduction to the community. Lauren was pleasantly surprised at how much she enjoyed the Fair and the role it played in making her feel at home. She is excited to experience the Fair behind the scenes as the Donor Relations Intern.



Jayce Reed

Jayce Reed – Jayce is currently a junior at Iowa State University where she is majoring in Agricultural Business with a Finance Option. She is currently the CALS Council Representative for Collegiate 4-H, as well as serves on the Recruitment and Training Committee for CALS Ambassadors, the New Student BBQ Committee for CALS Council, and is the Banquet Committee Chair for the Agricultural Business Club. In addition, she is a member of the AAEE Quiz Bowl Team and serves as an Agricultural Business Peer Mentor for the Department of Economics.

Jayce grew up on beef and row-crop operation in Albia. She graduated from Albia High School in 2022 where she was active in FFA and served on the Iowa State 4-H Council. Through that role, she spent many days helping with 4-H livestock shows at the Iowa State Fair. She has always loved spending time at the Fair and is excited to see what this summer will bring as the Business Relations Intern.

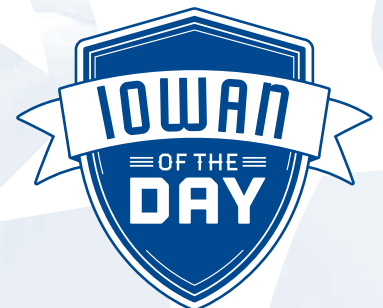
IOWAN OF THE DAY NOMINATIONS

The "Iowan of the Day" award honors an individual whose ongoing leadership and service has an exceptional impact on their community. The candidate's outstanding commitment has resulted in outcomes that support their hometown and the state of Iowa.

Volunteering can be hard work, but it's important work and it benefits everyone throughout Iowa. The Blue Ribbon Foundation is pleased to recognize volunteers' extraordinary efforts but we need your help. Please nominate someone you feel goes above and beyond in their community. The deadline to submit an application is July 1.

Download a nomination form at www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org or contact the Blue Ribbon Foundation at 515-262-3111 Ext. 371 or Info@BlueRibbonFoundation.org. Nominees from 2021, 2022 and 2023 will be reconsidered. All nominees must currently reside in Iowa.

With the support of Cookies Food Products, the Foundation will honor 10 Iowans with a special day of recognition at the 2024 Iowa State Fair. The winners will be celebrated during a presentation on the Anne & Bill Riley Stage, receive \$200 cash, use of a golf cart for the day, VIP parking, gate admission for four, hotel accommodations at the Des Moines Downtown Marriott and four tickets to the evening Grandstand show.





A Piece of the Puzzle

Corndog Kickoff Patron

We like to think the Iowa State Fair is Iowa's million piece puzzle. Agriculture, industry, attractions, contests, food, and people from across the country all coming together to be a piece of the largest event in our state.

Created in 1993, the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation's mission is to renovate and preserve the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds. Our largest fundraiser, the Corndog Kickoff Benefit Auction and Fair Food Grazing Party on Saturday, July 13 will be its own exclusive piece of the larger 2024 Fair puzzle.

With your participation as a Corndog Kickoff Patron, you will guarantee that traditions at the Iowa State Fair continue to grow year after year. Listed are the different Patron levels and benefits. To become a Patron, please send your donation to the Foundation or register online at www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org.

We thank you in advance for being part of this event and supporting our mission. As an Iowa State Fairgoer, YOU and your generosity are a key piece to our success. Your individual traditions and memories fit together with the Iowa State Fair's education, entertainment and competition values – making it a picture-perfect combination.

In a world bustling with electronic gadgets, we encourage you to slow down. Put together a puzzle and plan on attending the Iowa State Fair – both simple ways to enjoy time with family and friends.

Best of Show - \$10,000:

- 24 Exclusive Early Admittance Admission Tickets with 3 Reserved Tables
- Logo recognition in Invitations, Auction Books and Event Banners

Grand Champion - \$7,500:

- 16 Exclusive Early Admittance Admission Tickets with 2 Reserved Tables
- Logo recognition in Invitations, Auction Books and Event Banners

Champion - \$5,000:

- 8 Exclusive Early Admittance Admission Tickets with 1 Reserved Table
- Logo recognition in Invitations, Auction Books and Event Banners

Blue Ribbon - \$2,000:

- 8 Exclusive Early Admittance Admission Tickets with 1 Reserved Table
- Name recognition in Invitations and Auction Books

Red Ribbon - \$500:

- 4 Admission Tickets
- Name recognition in Invitations and Auction Books

White Ribbon - \$250:

- 2 Admission Tickets
- Name recognition in Invitations and Auction Books

CORNDOG KICKOFF AUCTION DONATION

Our live and silent auctions are an integral piece of the Corndog Kickoff. Each year, we have a collection of fantastic items available for bid. The best part is that our auction items are donated by generous people from communities across the state of Iowa. As we gear up for the annual Corndog Kickoff, we need your help finding items to include in the auction. What are we looking for?

- Experiences: Opportunities that give buyers a chance to do something, maybe a day of exploring, creating, hiking, kayaking or horseback riding.
- Travel: Items related to vacations, traveling, and a chance for buyers to get away and make some memories.
- Sports: Memorabilia, tickets and activities that connect to a buyer's favorite teams.
- Music: Autographs, lessons and tickets to events across the state.

Would you consider putting together your own silent auction item? Need an idea?

- Spa Day: Wellness providers in your area may want to donate services like pedicures, manicures, facials or massages.
- Brewery Tour: Local breweries may be willing to offer VIP tours of their facilities along with tastings.
- Food Gift Baskets: You can create themed baskets, such as one for dessert lovers or one with everything needed to make the perfect charcuterie board. Locally-produced food items are always popular.
- Themed Baskets: Create a seasonally themed basket that incorporates items for hosting fall parties, youth birthdays or anything holiday related.

Donating an auction package consisting of a product or service you provide is an excellent way to promote your company. For more information about becoming an auction donor, please contact Robin at 515-262-3111 Ext. 373 or Robin@BlueRibbonFoundation.org.



T-Shirt DESIGN CONTEST

The Blue Ribbon Foundation is sponsoring a T-Shirt Design Contest.

We invite you to come up with innovative designs that capture the essence of the Iowa State Fair. Keep it original and be creative. We can't wait to see your masterpiece!

If your design wins, the T-shirt will be for sale in the official Iowa State Fair Store. Proceeds from the sale of the T-shirt will support our mission of improving the historic Fairgrounds.

To enter, send us your T-shirt design by May 1. A selection committee will choose the top five designs. Those designs will be posted on the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation's website and Facebook page with voting via Facebook "like" or via our website. Voting will be open from May 8-14. The winner will be announced on May 15. The top three vote-getters will receive Iowa State Fair prize packages.

2023 Iowa State Fair T-Shirt Contest winner:
Lily Moestchen - Monticello, IA.

1ST PLACE

- Your T-shirt design is produced to sell at the Iowa State Fair
- 2 T-shirts, 2 gate admission tickets, 2 Fair Value Packs, 2 tickets to the Grandstand concert of your choice, \$50 in food coupons and parking for a select day at the Fair

2ND PLACE

- 2 gate admission tickets, \$25 in food coupons and parking for a select day at the Fair

3RD PLACE

- 2 gate admission tickets and \$25 in food coupons

Entry and Design Guidelines:

- Entries can be submitted to Info@BlueRibbonFoundation.org or by mail to Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation, PO Box 57130, Des Moines, IA 50317. The entry deadline is May 1, 2024.
- The design must contain the words "Iowa State Fair" and represent an aspect of the Iowa State Fair, its facilities or traditions.
- The entry should be accompanied by your name and contact information including mailing address, phone number and email.
- The design may be drawn, printed or digital. Electronic submissions are preferred and files must be saved to 300 dpi and be high resolution in either .AI, .JPG, .PDF, .PNG or .PSD format. Please convert all text to outline. If your design is selected, you will be required to provide the original design in a high-resolution format that is compatible with Photoshop, Illustrator or other professional design program.
- Design dimensions should not exceed 14" x 17".
- The color of the final shirt will be determined by the Foundation.
- Design must be able to be screen printed. A maximum of five ink colors. Preference given to fewer colors.
- Designs will be judged on the following:
 - Concept/originality
 - Striking and memorable
 - Visibility – eye-catching and visible from a reasonable distance
 - Complete – must be ready for print
 - Feasibility – must be easy to reproduce on a T-shirt
- Please note that the Foundation reserves the right to adjust the winning design.

Contest Rules:

- All entries must be original creations that have never been published and do not contain any profanity, trademarks, logos, restricted or copyrighted works of any other person or business.
- The winning design will remain the property of the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation and will not be returned to you nor will you receive any compensation for said design other than the aforementioned prize package. The Foundation may use the winning design at any time after the contest. The winning contestant may display their design in a portfolio or personal collection, but may not sell or reproduce the design for any other purpose once submitted to the contest.
- By submitting an entry and including your name, address and contact information, you are acknowledging your acceptance and understanding of the complete contest rules including that the winning design is the property of the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation.
- More than one entry can be submitted by an individual but they must be submitted as separate entries.
- A panel of judges selected by the Blue Ribbon Foundation will choose the top submissions which will be put to a public vote.
 - Voting begins on Wednesday, May 8 and closes on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. Finalists' designs will be posted on the Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation's website and Facebook page. Voting can be via Facebook "like" or website.
 - The winner will be notified by email at the close of the voting period.
- The Foundation reserves the right to end this contest at any time, effective on the date of the termination notice and is under no obligation to give advance notice of the termination.
- This contest is subject to all federal, state and local laws.
- Current Iowa State Fair or Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Foundation full-time staff, board members or their immediate family members are not allowed to participate.
- At the sole discretion of the Foundation, disqualification, forfeiture and the selection of an alternate winner may result from any of the following:
 - Winner's failure to respond to notification within seven (7) business days after its transmission;
 - The return of an email notification as undeliverable after three (3) attempts;
 - Winner's failure to provide original design files; failure to submit a completely original design; or failure to execute and return a release form.



WE NEED *Volunteers*

More than 750 Blue Ribbon Foundation volunteers selflessly donated more than 5,450 precious hours last year and truly are the backbone of our organization. The time you give helps achieve the Blue Ribbon Foundation's goal of keeping the Iowa State Fairgrounds in tip-top shape for future generations.

Iowa State Fair: When you volunteer at the Iowa State Fair, you interact with Fairgoers, sell merchandise or bottled water, assist with hospitality and work in the BINGO tent. We need your help every day of the 2024 Iowa State Fair. Mark your calendars: August 8-18.

How to Sign Up: We will again utilize the Volunteer Local sign up portal. All details and the portal link will be included in the May issue of **The Buzz**, the volunteer-focused eNewsletter you will receive in your inbox. Shift sign-ups will begin in late May. Stay in-the-know on all things volunteering through the Foundation's website, www.BlueRibbonFoundation.org

Corndog Kickoff: Volunteers are needed for the Corndog Kickoff on Saturday, July 13. The volunteer shifts run approximately four hours in length and include ticket taking, serving food and beverages, merchandise sales, data entry, check-out, etc. Past volunteers will be contacted by email in early May.

Spring Grounds Cleanup and Planting: This is your chance to learn from the Iowa State Fair horticulturists and expand your gardening skills. We need volunteers in April to help weed and prep flower beds. In mid-May, we need help planting flowers throughout the Fairgrounds.

Bench Rejuvenation: Many benches on the Fairgrounds have been updated with new composite material slats. Fair staff have already rejuvenated 300 benches and now need help redoing another 100 before August. If you are handy with a drill, please consider joining this team.

Please call 515-262-3111, ext. 370 or email Meg@BlueRibbonFoundation.org if you are interested in joining any of these volunteer teams. Thank you!



PROJECT *Updates:*

Fall, winter and now into spring, crews stay busy all year long tackling projects across the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Thank you to all our generous donors who have supported the Blue Ribbon Foundation's mission and are making many of these projects possible.

- Hillcrest Dorm received a new roof in the fall. Next year, an update to the ventilation system, windows and restrooms will be completed. FFA members who serve as Grandstand ushers reside in Hillcrest during the Fair.
- Paved handicap parking was added north of Gate 13.
- The Ye Old Mill received new sheathing, fascia and architectural shingles on the roof of the main building. All of the actual boats have been refurbished, along with the mechanical system that operates the ride. The next steps include painting the whole structure, reroofing the tunnel and adding a new rock landscape in the "middle" of the tunnel. Next year, additional interior improvements will be made.
- The Agriculture Building's south and west doors will be replaced, as well as the ramp on the east side of the building.
- The women's restroom by the Administration Building will be remodeled.
- Exterior painting on Pioneer Hall will be completed.
- New lighting in parking Lot C on the northeast side of the Fairgrounds will be added.
- Converting several drinking fountains into water bottle filling stations.
- Plans to add picnic tables and shade structures on the lawn west of the Richard O. Jacobson Exhibition Center.
- The Sheep Barn is in the 2nd phase of renovation scheduled to be completed by Fair time.



T.A.G. Team

Thank you to the Blue Ribbon Foundation supporters that joined the 2024 T.A.G. team. The loyalty of these generous donors proves that Together, we can Accomplish our Goals. These members are making an immediate, positive and direct impact on our historic Fairgrounds.

Members' donations are being used to renovate Ye Old Mill. The improvements include new sheathing, fascia and architectural shingles on the roof of the main building. The side walls of the tunnel will

be repaired where needed and new lap siding is planned for both sides. The whole structure will be repainted and the "inner" portion of the tunnel that you can only see from the Sky Glider will get a new rock landscape.

The Iowa State Fair is a tradition any Iowan can be proud of, and the Blue Ribbon Foundation is dedicated to continuing that legacy.

THANK YOU.

Paul & Crystal Abbe
Blake Anderson
Joe & Connie Baker
Vernon & Corinne Bancroft
Ernie & Paula Barnes
Larry & Kathy Beaty
Richard & Sharon Bender
Lynn & Elaine Bohling
Ken Boyd & Lynn Chandlee
Joe & Bonnie Buman
John & Jill Byerly
Kenneth & Linda Cairns
Gary & Cindy Cheney
Phil & Caren Clevenger
Don Corrigan
Jeff & Meg Courter
Jennings & Karen Crawford
Daniel Cretors
Paul & Kiki Curtis
Erik Davis
Doug & Heather Den Adel
Dale & Susan Derscheid
Gary Dinsdale
Dave & Kelly Donato
Craig & Carrie Dostal
Angie Duncan
Robert & Amy Durian

Douglas & Patty Dyar
Mark & Tammy Ebersberger
Linda Eckard
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Joe Hintzsche
Dan & Cathy Hogan
Allen & Wanda Holm
Julianna Kasper
William & Sarah Keel
Kenneth Kessler
Gene & Danyell Klein
Asa L. & Wanda King
Jim Kopel
Jerry & Vicki Lage

John & Sheila Laing
Mike & Carri Lauterbach
Michael & Anne Long
Ron & Pat Long
In Memory of Rod Lynch
Larry McConnell
Rollie & Patty McCubbin
Andrew McDowell
Doug McKechnie
Jerilynn Mickelson
Martha Miller
In Memory of Sheryl Miller
Judi Manning Mireles
Charles & Connie Moore
Chuck & Mary Morris
Jason & Cara Morse
Ken & Julie Morse
Tony & Denise Mudderman
Burton & Molly Murphy
Larry Nelson
Donita Odland
In Memory of Vivian Orr
Dixie Pencil
Stuart & Laurie Peterson
Matt & Anna Pilcher
Dennis Prather
Martin & Jo Reynolds

Allen & Cheryl Robson
Tricia Rosendahl
Brad & Jodi Sauter
John & Judy Schneller
Jon & Laura Scoles
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Shannon Shepherd
Melvin & Linda Shivvers
Bruce & Linda Simonton
Mike & Janet Sinclair
Staats Awards
Gary & Lisa Stump
Bret & Beth Jensen Thies
John & Carol Turpen
Gary & Judy VanAernam
Chuck & Kathy Van Dike
Jeff & Shelley Wangsness
Kelsey Warfield
Melvin & Kathryn Weatherwax
Bonnie Wetzel
Jarred & Leslie Whitfield
Dave Windisch
Eric Youngberg & Gary Krogh
Louie & Deb Zumbach

MAILBOX

"We are happy to support the Ye Old Mill renovation. Vicki and I went on the boat ride the first time we came to the Fair. I was 17 and she was 15. Don't remember if I got a kiss or not!"

Jerry & Vicki Lage
PERRY, IA

"Count me in for volunteering this summer! Last year, I was dazzled by the level of organization around the merchandise sales at the Fair. Kudos to the Blue Ribbon Foundation staff - you run a great show and make it easy and fun. It was a pleasure to be a tiny part of the volunteer force."

Jill Mead
CLIVE, IA



IOWA STATE FAIR
BLUE RIBBON
FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 57130
DES MOINES, IA 50317

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 4301

DONOR PROFILE: MARTHA MILLER

Having the reputation for spurring growth in her hometown of Pleasant Hill, Martha Miller was someone that the Blue Ribbon Foundation's previous Executive Director wanted in our corner. Martha first met John Putney in 1993 when she was serving as the chairwoman of the Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization.

John asked Martha if she would consider helping raise money to renovate the historic Iowa State Fair Grandstand. As a born and raised "East Sider," Martha jumped at the opportunity to get involved.

"The Iowa State Fair has something for everyone to enjoy," said Martha. "I wanted to be involved with the Blue Ribbon Foundation because I knew they were going to make the Fairgrounds even better by tackling the needed renovation projects."

Martha grew up in Pleasant Hill and has lived there all her life. As a young girl, she could walk to the Fairgrounds and instantly fell in love with the Iowa State Fair. One of her earliest memories is seeing the elephant "Baby Mine" come to the Fair. As she got older, she worked at her aunt's food stand and spent plenty of time at Teen Town.

After graduating from East High, Martha worked as a proofreader for Meredith Publishing Company. Once married, she worked for their family business - Miller the Driller. Continuing her childhood traditions, the entire Miller family would attend the Iowa State Fair each year.

Martha started volunteering for the Blue Ribbon Foundation in 1993 by selling bottles of water and merchandise. It was easy for her to help customers find the perfect souvenir because Martha loved the merchandise herself. The pottery is still her favorite item to collect and

she proudly displays them in her home. She has each piece and plans to pass the collection down to her granddaughter one day. She also collects the official Iowa State Fair charms.

As the Blue Ribbon Foundation organization developed, Martha continued to help staff wherever she might be needed. If a project came up, Martha was quick to show support. She volunteered for the Fairgrounds 5K and has more recently donated to the T.A.G. Team projects. "Ye Old Mill is an icon on the Fairgrounds," said Martha. "I'm so glad that it is getting the upgrades it deserves."

Martha is now 94 and still comes to the Iowa State Fair each year. The Cattle Barn is her favorite building to explore during Fair time. She loves to eat ice cream and anything from the Applishus stand. Martha claims that even the watermelon tastes better when it's eaten at the Iowa State Fair.

While Martha retired from volunteering in 2016, her daughter and son-in-law now volunteer for the Blue Ribbon Foundation. It truly is a Miller family tradition.

"Since the beginning, I have really believed in what the Blue Ribbon Foundation was doing," said Martha. "I continue to give to the Foundation because I can see the results. I have been going to the Iowa State Fairgrounds for such a long time and appreciate all of the improvements but I also know that more can be done."

Thank you Martha for your support of the Blue Ribbon Foundation.

