



**BROWN COUNTY
FAIR FOUNDATION**

HALL OF FAME BANQUET 2024

**SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2024 • 5:00 PM
YELDUZ SHRINE • ABERDEEN SD**



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**YELDUZ SHRINE
ABERDEEN SD**

PROGRAM

Social Hour - 5:00 PM

with cash bar

Dinner - 6:00 PM

"Kiss the Cooks"

pork dinner

mashed potatoes & gravy

vegetable, and dessert

Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

George Casanova

Duane Jark

Louie Koch

Gary Meyer

Harold Pleinis

Bonnie Schile

Hitch'n Post (Terry & "Pete" Larson)

Online, Live, & Silent Auction

throughout the night

with raffle and door prizes

BROWN COUNTY FAIR FOUNDATION

Founded in 2022, the Brown County Fair Foundation is a 501c3 tax-exempt organization working to preserve, improve, and modernize the facilities at the Brown County Fairgrounds.

The Brown County Fairgrounds hosts hundreds of thousands of campers, fairgoers, and recreational enthusiasts each year. While county tax dollars serve well to fund annual expenses, such as utilities, insurance, payroll, and some maintenance, additional funds are necessary for the capital improvements required to preserve the fairgrounds as a premier destination for the great variety of events hosted. Whether a large contribution or a few dollars, the Brown County Fair Foundation works closely with the Brown County Fair Board and Brown County Commission to coordinate efforts and maximize the impact of each donated dollar.

The Brown County Fair Foundation accepts donations of any amount for the purpose of grounds and livestock improvements. If you have a specific project for which you would like to support, please contact one of the Board members. If you are interested in leaving a lasting legacy for the fairgrounds, please consult with your tax advisor on estate planning options.



▲ **Brown County Fair Foundation Board Members:** Rachel Kippley, Fair Manager, Vicci Stange, Secretary, Laura Siefkes, President, Chad Locken, Vice President, James Meyers, Pearl Holt, Tom Carlson, Greg Markley. **Sitting:** Duane Sutton, Jeff Kippley, Treasurer, Stu Swenson, Joe Akkerman

THANK YOU

A special heartfelt "Thank you!" to those who donated time and money to organize the Second Annual Hall of Fame Banquet!

Banquet Sponsors include

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Anthem Oats
Fritz Hoppe
Runnings (Aberdeen)
Ken's Gourmet Coffee
Heidi Zeller Crawford
Helm's Marine
Market on the Plaza
Moxie Salon

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Bonnie Schile

Even though Bonnie never served on the fair board, she supported the fair in many different ways. When the Brown County Fair was mainly 4-H, she served as a 4-H Leader for the Rural Lads & Lassies, helping kids with exploring the 4-H's; head, heart, health, and hands. Bonnie was a farm wife and enjoyed camping at the fair. Her children are Keith (Rita) Schile, and Kathy Schad. Granddaughter Morgan (Cory) Schnell, and children Mason, Theodore, and one on the way. Grandson Justin Schile, who is engaged to Lauren Schott (wedding in October). Granddaughter Megan Moelluer (Matt), and children Madison, and Marcus. Grandson Aaron (Bianca) Schad, and children June, and Solenne. Grandson Matt (Melody) Schad, and children Presley, and Wayne.

Bonnie started selling Stanley Home Products in 1976, doing home parties, and was a division leader for 35 years. Shortly after beginning her business with Stanley Home Products, Larry Gerlach decided to have vendors at the fair under the grandstand. The first year, there were 3 vendors and she was one of the first, which she continued to do for the next 40 years! Bonnie always enjoyed the fair, talking to old friends, and meeting new ones. She made the Brown County Fair week a family tradition for the Schile family.



Duane Jark

Duane "Tweet" Jark served on the Brown County Fair Board from 2003-2008. He states that the Brown County Fair is the place to come and meet new people, and visit with friends and family, year after year.

Duane and his wife, Mary Jane, live in Stratford. He is retired from many years as Grain Elevator Manager. They have one son, Larry Jark, and one daughter, Laura Haven.

In Duane's time on the Board, he enjoyed being on the special events committee, taking care of events that included: The Stick Horse Rodeo for Kids, Veggie Races, Kids Picnic, Military Breakfast, and Senior Bingo. During Senior Bingo, coffee and donuts had to be ready to be served at 8:05, or they'd receive a bit of jokingly grief for being late. Duane also helped with 4-H Royalty, and the 4-H BBQ events. He states he enjoyed judging wood science projects, and crops for 4-H and open class. Many of these events still happen today and he tries to stay active and help where he can. He enjoys being a member of the Friends of the Fair.

As Duane reads old reports and stories about the fair, it brings up so many memories. One of those being, that there was no steel post driver, and it reminded him of the time he was driving the blue Ford tractor to drive in the fence posts, and only hit one water line. Another memory was of the bed races, cow chip throwing, and tricycle races. Duane remembers competing in these events, and won the senior division in the tricycle race. All of the special events brought so many people out to enjoy the fair.

Many fond memories were made with the Board members he served with, and many of those people became very good friends, and remain friends to this day. Duane states he is grateful to still be able to spend the week at the fairgrounds visiting with friends and helping where he can. Continuing the tradition of free admission and parking was always something important to him and the Board.

Duane also enjoyed traveling to Fairs and Celebration events, many fun times and stories were made during those trips. His time on the Brown County Fair Board holds many memories, and was a special time in his life.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Gary Meyer

Gary was on the Brown County Fair Board from 1992 to 1998. Gary and his wife, Sharelle, have two children. Lynn (Bob) Heupel of Aberdeen, SD, and Justin (Kerrie) Meyer of Madison, SD. They have six grandchildren: Spencer, Zach, Kyra Heupel and Nathan, Claire, Jack Meyer. They also have two step-grandsons Jeramy (Taylor) and Josh (Josey) Heupel.

Gary was born in Wessington Springs, SD and was raised on the family farm. His love of farm life and working with livestock led him to a career in management positions with livestock feed companies.

Some of Gary's favorite parts of being on the Fair Board were working together with all the Board members to achieve a successful fair, visiting with all those attending the fair, and the "Meet and Greet" with the entertainers. After the Fair, two events he also enjoyed were the Fair Board Conventions and the Fair Board bus trips to concerts. Gary cherished all the wonderful friendships and memories that were made during his six years on the Fair Board.

Gary passed away on May 5, 2009, due to an on-the-job accident while he was living in Pierre, SD. Gary would have been so honored to have known he was being inducted into the Brown County Fair Hall of Fame. His family would like to thank the Brown County Fair Foundation for honoring him by inducting him into the Hall of Fame.



Harold Pleinis

Harold was born in the Roscoe area in 1933. He attended farm school until they moved to Roscoe where he went to school until the 8th grade. He then went to work for area farmers picking rocks, corn, etc... Harold joined the Airforce in 1951, served for 2 years in Florida, then sent to Alaska for another 2 years. After discharge, he moved to Aberdeen where he met his wife of 64 years. They had 5 children. His wife passed away October 2020 from Alzheimers disease.

Harold started his career at the fairgrounds in 1955-56. At that time, Elmer Judy was grounds manager. Eventually, Harold became grounds manager.

Harold recalls working the day the beef building (old sale barn) burned down. He remembers when the old 4-H building was used as a dormitory for 4-H kids who stayed on the grounds during the fair. He was involved with the cleanup and construction of the new beef barn, and saw the hog/sheep barn be built. Harold enjoyed working at Richmond Lake Youth Camp, which held many events, and is still used today.

Harold accommodated Legion Horse Racing throughout his career. He was involved with hiring college kids for summer help, and was also involved with the beginning of the major fair entertainment, which started in 1986.

Harold was known to always be willing and able to help with the Brown County Fair.

His Son-in-law, John Weig, worked with Harold for many years. Harold retired in 1994.



George R Casanova

George served on the Brown County Fair Board from 1990-1995, and took Meet & Greet Pictures backstage from 2005-2015. In 1993, then President of the Fair Board, George helped make the "Brown County Fair Shuttle Express" a possibility. This shuttle service would allow fairgoers the opportunity to still attend the fair without having parking problems on the grounds. That summer brought heavy rains, and the Fair Board had inadequate time to prepare the fairgrounds the way they normally would have. So instead of taking the risk of having trouble parking at the fair, there were seven locations in Aberdeen where fairgoers could get on the Shuttle Express. Passengers of the courtesy shuttle were asked to consider a \$0.50 donation to help offset expenses.

George and his wife, Ruth, began camping at the fair in 1990, and still has his campsite in Cottonwood Campground.

George was born on a farm 10 miles southwest of Aberdeen. He farmed with his dad until 1954. In 1954 he went to work for John Morrell & Co, and worked there for 35 years, retiring in 1989. In October of 1947, he and Ruth were married. They had 6 sons; Steve (Pat) live in Aberdeen, Chuck (Robin) live in Omaha, NE, Tom (deceased 2016), Dan (Karla) live in Rapid City, James (deceased at birth), and Jeff (Paula) live in Aberdeen. Ruth passed away in January of 2022.

George writes that in 1993, it was a very successful year for the Brown County Fair, thanks to all the hard work of the Fair Board members. The budget was \$239,675.00, and the revenue received was \$240,280. 226,000 people attended the fair in 1993. Entertainment line-up included Billy Dean, Ronna Reeves, Confederate Railroad, Mark Chestnut, and Restless Heart. The Lyle Schaunaman kiddie train was built and introduced. Governor Walter D Miller visited the fair, and the Brown County Rodeo was selected by Wrangler, as a top 10 Wrangler Jeans Circuit Series in the Badland Circuit, and they purchased \$500 in rodeo tickets.

1993 was the 100th Anniversary of the Ferris wheel. The Brown County Fair hosted the North Dakota/South Dakota Fair and Celebration convention at the Ramkota Inn on November 18, 19, & 20, 1993, and at the convention, Martin Biegler (the tent man), and George received the South Dakota Association of Fairs and Celebration, Fair person of the year award.

After a summer filled with rain, and a fairgrounds half under water, George asked the Fair Board to repeat the slogan "Rain Rain go away, come again another day". It must have worked, the week of the fair 1993, the weather was perfect.

"Once a Fair person, always a Fair person". George Casanova

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Louie Koch

Louie served on the Brown County Fair Board from 1998-2003. Louie's favorite part of serving on the Board was "working with good people to put on the best county fair in the state." He notes that it could be quite challenging getting bleachers and things set-up for events like the dog show, and bike show, and especially getting everything set up after the rodeo, in time for the next events.

Louie continues to attend the fair and didn't stop volunteering when his time on the Board was done.

Louie and his wife Loretta, who've been married 65 years, have four children. He worked for Hub City transit for 40 years, drove the Aberdeen Central Eagles bus for 27 years, worked at Runnings for 12 years, then worked at Ride Line before retiring.



The Hitch'n Post (Terry and "Pete" Larson)

The Hitch'n Post in Aberdeen, SD writes that they have been involved in some capacity of the Brown County Fair for so many years- that they've forgotten exactly how many (old age). They first started supporting the Dacotah Stampede Rodeo when the YMCA was involved. Helping organize the Dacotah Stampede Rodeo Queen contest. They had the Stick Horse Contest before it was the Stick Horse Rodeo, and have sold fair tickets since 1986, when you bought the button package. The Hitch'n Post had a booth at the Fair when the booths were under the large tent, and then in the Odde Building after it was built.

Terry and "Pete" Larson writes that they've seen the evolution of the Fair from just a small local event to the amazing week-long production that it is known for today. People tell them how they wait all year just to come to the Brown County Fair, and plan their vacations around the Fair. Being such a family friendly Fair is one of the biggest draws, plus it's affordable with no gate fees or parking fees, and they hear that from people every year.

The draw this one event brings to the community is amazing. Having a retail store the week of the Fair is the highlight of the summer, but it also has it's challenges with scheduling, as their employees would like to attend events during the day, as well as the concerts at night. They state they are thankful to be able to do their small part. The Fair Board and all of the volunteers, and staff, are who do all the heavy lifting to put the Fair together, and are the ones who truly deserve the thanks.

"Pete" and Terry have been married 49 years (50 in September). They have 2 daughters, 2 sons-in-law, and 4 grandsons. Cherise and Rick Hughes, Benjamin, and Samuel live in Salina KS. Alissa and Tracy Battest, Kaden, and Devin live in Aberdeen. Alissa works with the Larsons at the store.

The Hitch'n Post was opened in April 1970, by John Pagones, who also owned the P & H Bootery and Western Corral on Main street. Terry went to work for John in August of 1970 and he and "Pete" bought the store in 1982 along with George Lemer. In 1987, the Larsons bought George out, and "Pete" went to work at the store. The Hitch'n Post currently has 12 full and part time employees.

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