



**BROWN COUNTY
FAIR FOUNDATION**

**HALL OF FAME
BANQUET 2026**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026 • 4:00 PM
HOLUM EXPO BUILDING • ABERDEEN SD**



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**HOLUM EXPO BUILDING
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PROGRAM

Social Hour - 4:00 PM

with cash bar, Taulelle corn dogs,
and variety of popcorn flavors

Dinner and Program - 5:30 PM

Ken's SuperFair Foods
- Roast Beef, salads, dessert

Volunteer of the Year Award

Message from the Fairboard

Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Mike Hassebroek

Rick Pigors

Geraldine* and John Kippley

Richard Taulelle - Taulelle Concessions

Thomas C Carlson

*In Memoriam

Raffle & Live Auction

Raffle tickets will be available
throughout the evening.

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 host 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 as pictured: Fair Manager Rachel Kippley, Secretary Vicci Stange, President Laura Siefkes, Vice President, Chad Locken, James Meyers, Pearl Holt, Tom Carlson, Greg Markley. **Sitting:** Duane Sutton, Jeff Kippley, Stu Swenson, Joe Akkerman. **Not pictured:** Ryan Swenson, Shelly Eisenbeiz, Tom Paepke, Treasurer Mike Keller.

THANK YOU

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

Banquet Sponsors include

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RDO
The Crossing Bar
C-Express

Harry Implement
Jeff & Rachel Kippley
Auto Value Parts Store
Aberdeen Chrysler Center
Alleivity Entertainment
Marlin's
Brown County Fairboard
Lang's TV & Appliance
Culver's
Dave's Marine
Anthem Oats
Golden Ticket Theatre
Les Schwab
Ken's Gourmet Coffee
Mohr Honey
Smack Foods
Kessler's
Family Pride Meat

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Mike Hassebroek

Mike Hassebroek served on the Brown County Fair Board from 2000-2005, serving as President in 2004, and then for 11 years served as a liaison to the Board, describing himself as “Amy’s gopher” with a chuckle. When lights went out at 2am, Mike says the shenanigans would begin! The next morning it would all start again, and Mike would be one of the first ones up and at it. He says he’s done everything from holding tents down, to witnessing an incident with a discharged fire extinguisher, to making a brand new Bride put up fence. “Just living through the storms sometimes” was how fair week went.

Mike was instrumental in getting Bingo started at the Fair in 2004, and was pleasantly surprised when he asked Kessler’s to donate milk at the time, for prizes, and they donated a gallon of milk a week, for a year! Kessler’s was and is still the named sponsor of the event. A few other things that Mike was instrumental in helping get started were the Super Farmer contest, the crowd loving Mutton Busting at the Rodeo, and the FFA auction at the fair, with help

from Tweeter (Duane) Jark. If you’ve ever eaten out of the 4-H Leader’s Association Concession trailer, it was built by Mike, in memory of his mom and dad. They were both 4-H leaders and enjoyed watching his daughters participate in 4-H. Mike credits Curt Erickson for initially asking him to be a part of the Fair Board. At the time, Mike was managing the Bunny Barn, and had even organized a sanctioned Rabbit show at the BCF.

Mike and his wife Jeanette, have been married 42 years. Mike has three children; Chad (Emma), Jason (Susan), and Mandy (Rich). Jeanette has two children; Carisa, and Dixie (Josh). Together they have Jennifer (Ryan), 17 grandchildren, and 6 great grandchildren. Mike’s career includes 13 years at Horton’s in Britton, Hub City Safe Guard for 27 years, retired for 7 years, and now at Auto Value Parts for 5 years. He has owned Racewest-East Trophy Shop in Ipswich, for 3 years, recently taking over space where the Red Bobbin used to be, with sewing still set up.



Rick Pigors

Rick Pigors served on the Brown County Fair Board from 2006-2011, serving as President in 2011, and again served on the Board from 2015-2022, and as President a second time in 2019. During those years, Rick served on numerous committees, including Livestock, Camping, Entertainment (Rodeo, Special Events, Grandstand), Carnival and Vendors, Building and Grounds, and Competitive Exhibits (Home Arts). Rick continues to be involved with the rodeo, driving courtesy carts and wherever he’s needed, including being the jokester!

Rick states he enjoyed getting everything ready and prepared for the fair, working with vendors and seeing all the different carnival displays. He goes on to say that working on the Rodeo and Entertainment Committee were definitely a highlight of being on the Board. Rick extends a special thank you to the all the office staff throughout the years, for their hard work and good times together.

When Larry Gerhlach passed away in 2011, Rick was serving as President, and states this was a challenging time. He went in every day to the fair office to help the staff get things ready for the fair. He even started camping a month before the fair started, in order to get everything set up and ready to go. Then in 2015, when Amy Scott passed

away, Rick was again serving on the fair board and expressed that this too was a challenging time. One year when setting up back stage, Stu Swenson had severely injured his ankle, and Amy appointed Rick to be in charge of Entertainment the rest of the year. That’s how it went, he says. He’s glad to not be crawling in mud and water to get the Artist’s travel coaches out anymore, and working from 7am-3am. Mud could also be fun however, as was spending time with the Artists. Rick said that Cassadee Pope requested a “fun” ride on the side by side UTV, that included water and mud!

Rick and his wife, Cindy, farm with their son Eric and his wife Brenda, their daughter Ashley and her husband Brandon, and grandchildren, Grady and Gentry Pigors. They own around 200 registered Angus cows that keep them busy. Rick has held offices at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, served 6 years on the Groton School Board, served on East Hanson Township board for many years, 15 years on the Groton Area Rescue and Fire District, Brown County Community Emergency Response Team, and has received the Rural Dakota Pride Award from the Farmer’s Union.

Rick believes in how the 4-H program impacts youth and how the fair impacts the community.



John and the late Geraldine Kippley

The Kippley family is a familiar name around the fairgrounds. John would call this a family affair, and if you ask any member of his extended family, they would agree. He says it all began as Friends of the Fair, and they began actively volunteering during the 1986 Fair.

In 1971, there were two booths at the fair, located then under the Grandstand, and one of those booths happen to belong to John and Gerri Kippley. Gerri, along with Colleen Ringgenberg, ran the 4-H Concessions Stand between the Women's Building and the Expo. Gerri served as the Fair Treasurer, handling finances of the fair until the Brown County Treasurer's office managed the finances. She audited the fair books and celebrations.

Right after the 1986 Fair, Gerri jumped on board, serving 2- three year terms from 1987-1994. While she was on the fair board, Friends of the Fair was established, and John joined right away. Emphasizing a life of service to their own family, their son, Jeff, will complete his tenure on this Fair Board this year.

After the 4-H Concession Stand closed, John ran both Concession Stands with the Hansons, in front of the Beef barn and Hog & Sheep barn, for a number of years. At the time, proceeds from the concession stands provided revenue to sponsor the 4-H premium sale.

Around 2000, Larry Gerlach asked John and Gerri

to take over the watermelon feed, which they did and moved it from Saturday morning to Saturday afternoon of the fair. John and his family continue to sponsor this free event at the fair to this day. They didn't stop there, Larry asked John & Gerri, along with others, to re-create the 4-H BBQ, Gerri and Susan Gerlach cooked the BBQ and John helped serve, something their family still helps with today.

As things began to change at the fair, Campsites would now come with a fee, but that didn't keep John and Gerri from renting, they were one of the first ones to pay for their campsite. Michelle and Darrin Olson, their daughter and son-in-law, still camp in Clover Campsite #4, their original campsite.

Anytime Larry needed something, Gerri and John said yes, and the family continues to be incredibly active with the fair to this day, doing whatever they can to help the success of the fair. Here are a few of the other activities and events the Kippley's assisted with; The Kid's Zone and maze, Super Farmer contest, free root beer floats, and prospect calf show.

Gerri and John's children are Michelle (Darrin) Olson, Paula (Jason) Boike, Jan (Mike) Kluis, and Jeff (Rachel) Kippley. They also have 18 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. John's daughter Michelle states "It's an honor to have the love of the fair instilled in us".



Taulelle Concessions

Taulelle Concessions has been part of the Brown County Fair since 1984. This upcoming summer will mark their 43rd year at the fair.

Nick Taulelle, now only 47 years old, can't claim to have been there the entire time, but worked at the fair for the first time when he was 13 years old. Since then, he's been coming to the Brown County Fair nearly every year for most of his life.

Without a doubt, Richard and Nick say that their favorite part of the Brown County Fair, are the people. The relationships they've built over the years with customers, fair board members, staff, and people throughout the community are truly special. Because they've been coming to the fair for so long, many of those relationships have turned into lasting friendships. Taulelle's say that they stay in touch with some of the people year-round, while others they only see once a year. When we arrive in town for the fair, it feels like a reunion.

They also have customers who have been coming to their stands for so long that they've watched them grow up, get married, have children, and then watched those children grow up as well. Saying that out loud, Nick says, definitely makes

him feel a little older, but it also speaks to how meaningful those connections are. The people who attend the Brown County Fair are truly some of the best around. That's not just something they say, it's something they talk about often among themselves. With relationships and experiences like that, supporting the Brown County Fair and its community has always come naturally.

As for challenges, they say, there really aren't any that are unique to the Brown County Fair. Any challenges they face are simply part of the concessions business. The biggest challenge is often the long hours. Over the years, some of that has been self-inflicted, as they've expanded their hours of operation late into the night to make sure fairgoers leaving the Club House or Centennial Village can grab a meal after their night out. That can make for long days and short nights, but even those late hours have their rewards. They've met great people during those times and often see familiar faces, including hardworking fair staff who finally get a chance to relax after a long day. After all these years, they've learned to focus on the positives and roll with the rest.



Richard Taulelle

Richard Taulelle has been married to his wife, Rita, for over 50 years. Together, they raised three children: Felicia, Amanda, and Nick.

Richard and Rita grew up on Minnesota's Iron Range, where they met. After getting married, they briefly moved to Washington, D.C., where their first child, Felicia, was born. Shortly afterward, they returned to the Midwest, living for a time in Wisconsin before eventually settling back on the Iron Range.

After returning home, Richard partnered with a few friends to sell bratwurst at a local All-Class Reunion. Their setup was simple, a grill made from half of a steel 55-gallon drum, a tarp attached to the side of a local bar for a roof, and Johnsonville brats that Richard had come to appreciate while living in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

While that partnership lasted only a few years, Richard had caught the bug for the concessions business. His partners moved on, but Richard decided to pursue it on his own.

He started with a small food trailer that looked more like a shed on wheels, and secured a spot with a traveling carnival, spending a summer traveling the Midwest. Financially, that summer offered little reward, but it provided invaluable experience and a deep understanding of how demanding the

business could be. Rather than discouraging him, it motivated him.

Richard continued to build the business, adding menu items such as fresh-cut onion rings, steak sandwiches, and corn dogs. He soon realized that booking fairs independently, rather than through a carnival, was a better path forward. The following year, he applied to the Brown County Fair and was accepted with onion rings and steak sandwiches.

After his first year, Richard knew that in order to continue growing and returning each year, he needed additional products and locations. He applied for and was granted a corn dog stand, all of which were operated out of what were known as "stick stands." These stands were affordable but required a tremendous amount of work, consisting of countless individual pieces that had to be assembled each event. Taulelle Concessions operated this way for many years before eventually transitioning to roll-off units and trailers, which significantly improved efficiency.

While Richard's daughters, Felicia and Amanda, chose different career paths despite helping in the business when they were younger, his son Nick developed a strong interest in the concessions business from an early age.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Nick Taulelle has been married to his wife, Amy, for 21 years. They have two children, Jackson and Allison.

Nick began working in the family business at the age of 13, starting as a product runner and gradually taking on greater responsibility, eventually helping manage daily operations. Like his father, Nick caught the concessions bug and always dreamed of owning his own food trailers.

That opportunity came in 2007, when Nick built his first trailer dedicated to fresh-cut French fries—a trailer that still operates at the Brown County Fair today. He continued to grow his business by adding lemonade, smoothies, and cheese curds. From the outside, most people would never have known these were separate operations, as they worked seamlessly alongside one another.

In 2021, two major milestones occurred. Richard retired after 40 years of owning and operating Taulelle Concessions, and Nick assumed ownership

of all locations and equipment. That same year, Nick purchased another concessions business from a retiring Iowa concessionaire, adding three more trailers and an entirely new route of fairs and events.

Today, Taulelle Concessions is solely owned by Nick and operates eight food trailers across the Midwest, participating in approximately 35 events each year. The business employs a core team, including Dan Haines, who has been with the company for over 15 years and plays a key role in managing operations and overseeing events. Taulelle Concessions also employs approximately 15 international workers on seasonal visas, along with local employees in the communities they serve.

Richard remains actively involved as well—serving as a driver, trailer hauler, product runner, and, for those who know him best, the company's unofficial public relations expert.

"On behalf of Taulelle Concessions, we would like to sincerely thank the Brown County Fair for the honor of being inducted into the Foundation's Hall of Fame. This recognition means more to us than words can fully express. The Brown County Fair has been a constant part of our lives for decades, and we are deeply grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a special tradition and community."

– Richard and Nick Taulelle

Thomas C. Carlson

Thomas Carlson served on the Brown County Fair Board from 2008-2011, and 2013-2015 on the Legacy Board. During his time on the Fair Board, Tom served on the Livestock, Grounds, and 4-H Committees; setting up different events for livestock, and many different events at the Horse Arena, helping Joe Akkerman.

Tom began volunteering with the Jim River Rider's horse club, that he and Cheryl belonged to. They parked cars with the horses during fair time, until the horse barns were demolished. The barns were where West Hill campground is now. In 2008, Tom began serving on the Fair board, where he served until 2011. After Tom's time on the Fair

Board, he and his wife Cheryl, began serving on the Brown County Legacy Board (committed to the continued support of the fair), actively volunteering to get everything set up in preparation for the fair, and tearing it all down after the fair was over. He is also a founding member of the Brown County Fair Foundation.

For 34 years, Tom worked for 3M, then for the City of Aberdeen at Wylie Park for an additional six years. His wife Cheryl also worked at 3M for 28 years. Between Tom and Cheryl, they have 4 children: Ryan (Sara) Reinke, Lauren Job, Tasha Job, and Marleena (Brady) Smith, 8 grandkids, and 2 great grandkids.





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