



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year Nov. 1, 2023 – Oct. 31, 2024





Dear Friends and Supporters,

The State Fair is a special place, and since the earliest days of the Foundation, our supporters have embraced opportunities to leave their mark on the fairgrounds. This legacy is evident in the thousands of recognition bricks in our plazas, and the recognition benches and tables that provide seating throughout the fairgrounds. In 2024, the Foundation introduced its newest recognition opportunity: colorful tiles on the Welcome Wall. These vibrant additions continue the tradition of sharing cherished memories and stories while supporting the fair.

As Foundation supporters, you know leaving a mark on the fairgrounds through the Foundation extends far beyond recognition programs. Each Friend of the Fair and donor contributes to a lasting impact at the State Fair. This year alone, your generosity helped fund \$2 million in projects across the 322 acre fairgrounds, bringing the total granted since the Foundation's inception to over \$20 million in support of the fair!

Looking ahead, your continued support of the Foundation will leave an even greater mark. Along with maintaining our commitment to educational programs and ensuring a welcoming fairgrounds, we're thrilled to support major renovations to two iconic fairgrounds buildings in the coming years (stay tuned!). These investments are critical in preserving what makes our fairgrounds so unique and are essential to the future of the Minnesota State Fair.

The impact of your giving is evident in countless ways, and tells a story of unwavering commitment to the Minnesota State Fair. Thank you for your continued partnership in leaving an undeniable mark on the Great Minnesota Get-Together.

See you at the fair,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Litton E.S. Field, Jr.".

Litton E.S. Field, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Chung".

Mary Chung  
Executive Director





Contributions from our  
generous donors

## LEAVING THEIR MARK on the fairgrounds!



In 2024, the Foundation granted \$2,015,378 to the State Fair in support of a variety of programs and projects including building ventilation upgrades, accessibility enhancements, rural youth scholarships, awards for livestock and fine arts competitions, and more. Read on for some of the highlights!

## FINE ARTS CENTER

Since 1980, the Fine Arts Center has annually hosted Minnesota's largest juried art exhibition. Built in 1907 as the fair's original Dairy Building, this stunning brick structure has also been known as Machinery Hall. Now, it gives fair guests the opportunity to view over 300 of the finest pieces of art created by talented Minnesotans each year.

In 2024, the Foundation was able to fund much-needed improvements to the Fine Arts Center to preserve this historic building. New windows replaced the old, damaged plexiglass and now allow ample sunlight into the space, making it feel bright and open while also protecting the artwork. New historically-replicated doors provide elegance and improved security. Additional improvements such as painting inside and out, a new welcome desk, improved ventilation, and landscaping make visiting more comfortable and highlight the building's architectural details. This historic building now truly stands out as a unique gem on the fairgrounds.



## SO LONG BENCHES...

One of the Foundation's most beloved recognition programs came to an end in 2024. When the fair asked for help in providing fair guests with a place to rest their feet as they enjoy their day, you showed up! After nearly two decades of benches and tables dedicated to honoring individuals, families, special occasions and more, the 2,641 benches and 66 tables that line the streets of the fairgrounds have certainly accomplished that mission.



We extend a heartfelt  
**THANK YOU**  
to our many bench and  
table donors throughout  
the years!

## ...HELLO, WELCOME WALL!

As part of the re-imagined State Fair entrance at Gate 9 along Como Avenue, the Foundation was able to introduce a new recognition program in 2024 – the Welcome Wall! This artistic installation gives donors a new way to leave their mark with an engraved message on a tile that will stay on the fairgrounds for years to come. In its debut year, the Welcome Wall quickly became a popular spot for photographs and a great landmark for meeting up with friends and family.



For more information on personalizing a tile for the Welcome Wall, visit [msffoundation.org/ways-to-give/recognition-programs/tiles](https://msffoundation.org/ways-to-give/recognition-programs/tiles)





Endowment  
GIFTS THAT  
LAST FOREVER  
and honor your legacy!



In addition to supporting ongoing projects on the fairgrounds, in 2024 donors helped to grow the Foundation’s endowment, which serves as a lasting source of financial stability for the fair. Beyond the general fund, the endowment includes many donor-created named funds designated for specific purposes across the Foundation’s five impact areas - agriculture, arts and culture, education, history and heritage, and the fairgrounds environment - as well as funds dedicated to addressing the fair’s most pressing future needs.

We are grateful for the new endowment funds that were established this year:

- At Our Best: The All Are Welcome Fund
- Louis and Ida Lee Hurvitz Fund for Safety and Security
- Johnson Family State Fair Fund
- Jori Jones Fund
- Kathy Junek Fund for Youth at the Minnesota State Fair
- DJ Leary and Linda L. Wilson Endowment Fund
- Wessel-Rouillard Fund for Agriculture

If you are interested in learning more about endowment funds, visit [msffoundation.org/endowments](https://msffoundation.org/endowments).

To see a complete list of named endowment funds and their purposes, visit our website [msffoundation.org/named-endowments](https://msffoundation.org/named-endowments).

Remember, anyone can contribute to any named fund, supporting so many of your favorite things at the fair!



FINANCIAL  
STATEMENTS

Fiscal Year:  
Nov. 1, 2023 – Oct. 31, 2024

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

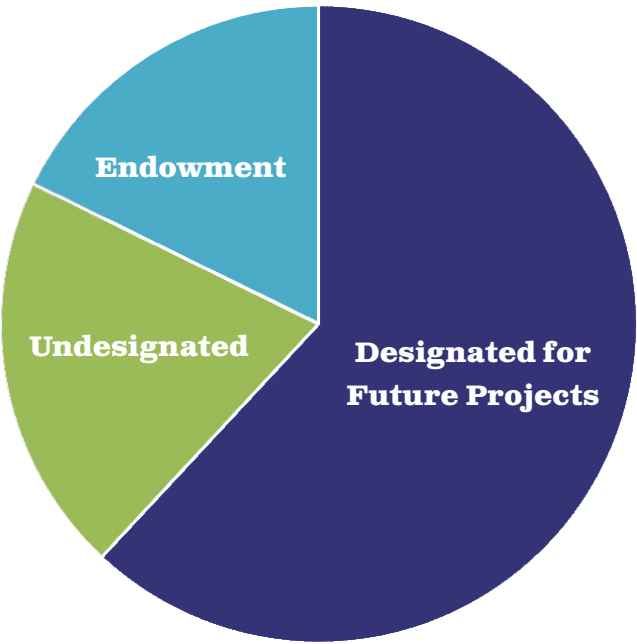
Statements of Financial Position		
	10/31/24	10/31/23
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 17,749,748</b>	<b>\$ 6,560,863</b>
Liabilities	\$ 133,135	\$ 130,064
Net Assets:		
Undesignated	\$ 3,580,321	\$ 2,919,271
Net Assets:		
Board Designated – Endowment	\$ 158,278	\$ 126,574
Net Assets:		
Board Designated - Fine Arts	\$ 124,496	\$ 107,243
Net Assets:		
Board Designated - 4-H Building	\$ 13,399	\$ -
Net Assets:		
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 13,740,119	\$ 3,277,711
Total Net Assets	\$ 17,616,613	\$ 6,430,799
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 17,749,748</b>	<b>\$ 6,560,863</b>

Statements of Activities		
REVENUES	2024	2023
Contributions	\$ 12,612,502	\$ 2,780,235
Support from the Minnesota State Agricultural Society (State Fair)	\$ 205,545	\$ 191,871
In-kind Contributions	\$ 118,251	\$ 150,653
Special Events, Net of Direct Benefits	\$ 253,547	\$ 180,597
Interest and Dividends	\$ 287,695	\$ 141,962
Unrealized Gains on Investments	\$ 582,947	\$ 99,207
Merchandise Sales, Net	\$ 332,740	\$ 297,283
Misc. Income	\$ 54,877	\$ 50
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 14,448,104</b>	<b>\$ 3,841,858</b>
EXPENSES	2024	2023
Program	\$ 2,361,741	\$ 1,562,882
Management and Administration	\$ 399,210	\$ 328,480
Fundraising	\$ 501,339	\$ 579,349
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 3,262,290</b>	<b>\$ 2,470,711</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 11,185,814</b>	<b>\$ 1,371,147</b>
Net Assets, Beginning	\$ 6,430,799	\$ 5,059,652
Net Assets, Ending	\$ 17,616,613	\$ 6,430,799

A FEW THINGS OF NOTE...

- Through the generosity of our donors, the Foundation was able to grant over \$2 million to the State Fair in support of projects and programs across the fairgrounds, the second highest amount yet.
- During the year, the Foundation received the largest gift in its history, a \$10 million donation designated for a specific future capital project.
- It was a record year for both the Taste of the Fair fundraising event and the Foundation-run Blue Ribbon BINGO at the State Fair, together bringing in over \$250,000 for the Foundation's mission.
- The Foundation’s endowment continues to grow and now exceeds \$3 million, providing a source of support for the State Fair in perpetuity.

Foundation Net Assets as of 10/31/2024





# JOIN THE CLUB

Great ways to give-together with your fellow fair fans!

## 1854 SOCIETY

In 1854, a visionary group of leaders founded what went on to become the Minnesota State Fair. Their foresight and dedication established a tradition that has grown into one of Minnesota's most cherished institutions, enduring through the years as a true cultural treasure.

The 1854 Society recognizes individuals who have included the Foundation in their will or estate plans, leaving a lasting legacy to support the Minnesota State Fair. Much like the original founders, these donors ensure the fair's future, preserving this iconic Minnesota treasure and the fairgrounds that bring it to life.

In 2024, the 1854 Society welcomed the following new members to its growing ranks:

- **Rohn and Joan Anderson**
- **Doug and Sue Huebsch**
- **Ranae Schleeve**

You can learn about joining the 1854 Society by visiting [plannedgiving.msffoundation.org](https://plannedgiving.msffoundation.org)



## GRAND CHAMPIONS

In 2024, we were proud to have over 500 Grand Champion donors make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more in support of the Minnesota State Fair. Grand Champions give in a variety of ways. As a token of our appreciation, Grand Champions are invited to special behind-the-scenes events throughout the year and receive special recognition at the J.V. Bailey House.

If you would like more information, or would like to join the Grand Champion Club, visit [msffoundation.org/grand-champion](https://msffoundation.org/grand-champion)



## FRIENDS OF THE FAIR

During the 2024 State Fair, our 3,067 Friends of the Fair voted to support the Fairgrounds Environment impact area with the Friends of the Fair Special Project Grant. This year, that money funded tree care and replacement, helping to provide a beautiful canopy and shade for guests visiting the fairgrounds.

Beyond helping the fair with their membership gifts, Friends of the Fair also get great perks! If you would like to become an official Friend of the Fair, visit [msffoundation.org/friends](https://msffoundation.org/friends)

**FRIENDS**  
★ OF THE ★  
**FAIR**

## Donor Profile

# MARGARET ROCKSTROH GENUNG

**Margaret Rockstroh Genung is your quintessential fan of the Minnesota State Fair.**

*Do you like the animal complex? "Yes."*  
*Agriculture Horticulture Building important to you? "YES!"*  
*Fan of Creative Activities? "Yes."*  
*Grandstand shows? "Yes."*  
*4-H Building? "Was a proud 4-H'er!"*  
*People watching? "Of course."*  
*Anything you don't like? "Wish the fair still opened at 6 a.m."*

Margaret reminisces about the days her father would gather up the family to head to the fair each year. Since 1963, they have committed to a sun-up to sun-down fair day. Her dad would bring the family one day only - except for extra trips when Margaret would compete in the rooster-crowing-contest. They didn't mind the hour-long drive or being hung up with the animal trailers hurrying onto the fairgrounds bright and early in the morning. They had to get their walk-around in before the throngs of other visitors streamed through the gates! Once Margaret had her driver's license, she was able to go more often. "I would come to the fair every day if possible!"

Margaret and her brother continue to honor those wee-hour entrances, heading north just as the 4-H Building's long morning shadow stretches across the entire width of Machinery Hill. "We still get to the fair at 6 a.m. ...even if we have to wait in the parking lot for an hour."

By 9 a.m. Margaret has picked up her Friends of the Fair benefits at the J.V. Bailey House (knowing a Blue Ribbon Bargain Book will help her save!) and has cast her vote to determine what project the the Friends of the Fair Special Project Grant will go to next year. Becoming an "official" Friend of the Fair 20 years ago was just the beginning of Margaret's gifts to steward the fair through the Foundation. She appreciated being able to start with a simple gift and continue to learn about the State Fair and each opportunity available to support the areas she loves.



Margaret with her siblings: Ken, Tony, Mary, Margaret, Joe

Margaret's day at the fair isn't complete without getting to see her four benches, including one at the West End Market that was part of a capital campaign to re-envision the area in 2014.

Margaret has supported several of the Foundation's campaign projects over the years including the Cattle Barn's Moo Booth and the new Judging Arena. She appreciates these updates, as wandering the barns to see the animals preparing for competition is one of her favorite things to do at the fair.

But animals aren't the only thing Margaret's got her eye on, "I love people-watching and meeting the variety of individuals that come to visit the State Fair. You never know who might sit on a bench next to you." Margaret fondly recalls one time in the early 80s when, out of the corner of her eye, she realized that Eddie Rabbitt was playing the water balloon squirt-gun game with her in the Midway!

Gradually increasing her donations throughout the years has led to many wonderful partnerships with the Foundation, and in 2023, Margaret started the Rockstroh Family Fund for the Minnesota State Fair Agriculture Horticulture Building. "The Ag-Hort Building is a special place for me and my family. Everything in the building is the essence of what a true fair should be; showcasing flowers, grains and vegetables; trees, honey and apples; and with so many learning opportunities!"

Margaret appreciates knowing where her gifts will make an impact, and that those gifts will continue on through her endowment, forever. "The endowment program is a great way to show your love of the fair. You can start small by participating in any existing endowment. Right now there are nearly 50 wonderful ones to choose from. If you choose to start your own, you are leaving a lasting legacy to the fair, and friends and family can participate in your endowment at any time."

Most recently, Margaret decided to join the Foundation's 1854 Society by including the State Fair in her estate plan. "Keeping the fair around for future generations is important to me. Through many areas, it teaches children many life lessons. It is more than just a fair."





2024  
FOUNDATION  
Donors

ORGANIZATIONS &  
INDIVIDUALS

\$25,000+

Anonymous  
Jerry and Jan Albrecht  
Ames Construction Inc.  
Dale and Ruth Bachman  
By The Yard Inc.  
Kathy and Jim Cargill  
Diane de Laet  
Margaret Rockstroh Genung  
Terry and David Gilberstadt  
John Junek  
Diane and Tim Madden  
Manitou Fund  
Mark and Kim Mueller  
New Fashion Pork

\$10,000 – \$24,999

David Cavallaro/"Mouth Trap"  
Cheese Curds  
Sandy Craighead  
Ken and Betty Dahlberg  
Foundation  
Mitch and Laurie Davis  
Steve Eilertson and  
Cynthia Huntington  
Anne and Litton E.S. Field Jr.  
Fleetwood Foundation  
The Frontier/Dick and Rosie  
John Gale Memorial Foundation  
Nancy Gossell and Ed Kvarnes  
Jerry and Debby Hammer  
Ruth and John Huss  
Pete and Sarah Johnson  
Veronica Johnson  
Margaret H. and  
James E. Kelley Foundation Inc.  
Michelle Mattson-Weiss

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Barbara Schaller  
John R. Schenk  
The Scrooby Foundation  
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Frank and Mary Cecilia Sullivan  
Donna Swedin and Phil Whipple  
Sweet Martha's Cookie Jar  
Sharon Wessel and  
Mike Rouillard  
Linda Wilson  
Kayla Yang-Best and Andre Best

\$5,000 – \$9,999

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Renee Alexander  
Sue Amidon  
The Ball Park Cafe  
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Flavia Berg  
Bremer Bank  
Bridgeman's LLC  
Cal Spas By Spa & Leisure Inc.  
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Kathy Covington  
Culver Franchising System LLC  
Margo Danner  
Mark and Mary Davis  
John E. Desmond and  
Janet C. Desmond Foundation  
Dino's Gyros  
Sara and Jock Donaldson  
Robbin Ersbo  
John and Anne Fabie  
Freestyle Productions Inc.

Giggles' Campfire Grill  
Kari Gullickson  
Hank and Ellen Hanten  
Kent and Judith Harbison  
Christopher and Amy Hawley  
Holy Land Deli  
Bob and Judy Horn  
Gail D. Johnson and Jim Sadler  
Lorenz Bus Service  
Wendy Marty  
Karmi Mattson  
McGough Construction  
Paul Miller  
Miller's Flavored Cheese Curds  
Northern Stars Homecare  
Sherry Oleson  
Leah O'Neil  
Irene Ott  
Curtis Peterson  
Dorothy Peterson  
Monica Pitterle  
Dale Raduenz  
Steve and Traci Ribar  
Tom Rush Family  
Tim and Kim Scanlan  
Susan and Alan Schuweiler  
Chuck, Elise and  
Bailey Smith-Dewey  
Solem Concessions  
Dave and Kathryn Sorensen  
Don Steinke  
Summer Lakes Beverage LLC  
Myron and Linda Tank  
UnitedHealth Group Inc.  
Jacob Vandelist  
Serra Vickery  
West Central Initiative  
Jim Wetzel  
Cheryl and Larry Winter

\$2,500 – \$4,999

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Dannette Alleman  
Terri Allen  
Joy and J.C. Amel  
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Katie Anderson  
Liz Anderson  
Anderson Race Management  
Joe and Cindy Andrus  
James and Georgene Angrist  
Debra and Alexander Arbit  
Thomas Arons  
Kayla Barrett  
Cindy Becker  
Sharon Beckrich  
Pamela Bednar  
Andrew Berns  
Susan and Keith Beseke  
Doreen Biedermann  
Thomas Bischoff  
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Rebecca Bogen  
Peggy and John Borchert  
Rachael Borman  
Eric Britt and Michelle Pett  
Jay Brown  
Jean and Michael Brown  
Shannon Buchda  
El Burrito Mercado  
Melissa Bushnell  
Kay Butler  
Lane Carlson

Sheldon Carlson  
Amy Carroll  
Cemstone Products Company  
Sitha Chhum  
Anne Christensen  
Collins Electrical  
Anthony Commers  
Companion Linc  
John Conte  
Karen Cooper  
Courage Kenny Rehabilitation  
Institute  
Lily Crooks  
Ellison Cullinan  
Thomas Danielson  
Kevin and Stephanie Davy  
Katherine DeCabooter  
Barbara DeMuth  
Dianna Deschene  
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Michael DeWitt  
Herb Dillon  
Cheryl Dinger  
William Dircks  
Gregory Dittrich  
Shannon Doherty  
Tracy Dorr  
Gwen Drobinski  
Matthew Dyson  
Susan Ebbers  
Nikki Edwards  
Beverly Eide  
Mike Ernster  
Jim and Jane Ertl  
Sheryl Fahnhorst  
Nancy Fazendin  
Dan Fisher  
Laurie Foell  
Joe Fox  
Sarah Frakes  
Gap - Employee Engagement  
and Corporate Giving  
Jackie Gates  
Gayle Gedstad  
Don Gerving  
Claudia Gilbertson  
Ann Goering  
Jim Goltz  
Richard Goossen  
Corey Gordon  
Christopher Goring  
Mike and Becky Goze  
Kelly Green  
Jamie Gregory  
John Grinager  
Kathleen Grindeland  
Betsy Grover  
Bradley and Kaydi Grunhovd  
Deb Grzywinski  
Marge Guderian  
Maureen Hagen  
Jessica Hagg  
Brad Hapka

Kari Heifort  
Heidi Heise  
Bev Herkenratt  
Jon and Teri Heyer  
Karl Hibler  
Allison Hilleren  
Brent Hodgeman  
Pamela Hodges  
Sarah Hoppe  
Mindy Howell  
Jane Hughes  
Janet Hughes and Matt Smith  
Carolyn Hunter  
Lou and Ida Lee Hurvitz  
Jackie Jennrich  
Bruce and Barbara Jensen  
Randy and Penny Jernberg  
Andrew Johnson  
Dave Johnson  
Kristopher Johnson  
Linda Johnson  
Lincoln Kallsen  
Payton Kaufman  
Richard Keeney  
Mary Keers  
Terry Keir  
Virginia Kelly  
Judy Kisch  
Gerald and Lisa Kissell  
Jeffrey Kline  
Knooihuizen Family  
Jason and Michelle Koerth  
Deanna Koren  
Karleen Kos  
Sterling Kowalski  
Mary M. Krakow  
Anne Krohn  
Brian Kueppers  
Scott Kuyper  
David Laden  
Adam Larson  
Laura Larson  
Shannon LaTourelle  
Lissa LaValle  
Cathy Lawrence and Lee Sheehy  
LeeAnn Lehner  
Curtis LeMair Legacy Foundation  
Lieberman Companies/Playland  
Arcade  
Carla Lien  
Nancy Lindberg  
David Lindeman  
Sharon Lindgren  
Sabrina Logren  
The Longview Foundation -  
Eleanor and Frederick Winston  
Peggy and Dave Lucas  
Sam Lund  
Julie Lundeen  
David Lyle and Alicia Herman  
Kelsey Lynch  
Robert and Patricia Mack  
Jessica Maki







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Becky McGowan  
Medtronic Inc.  
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Dianne Metz  
Joseph Meuwissen  
David Meyer  
Tricia Meyers  
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Timothy and Mary Miley  
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Sue and Tom Molloy  
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Betsey Nelson  
Nancy Neumann  
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Pamela Svihel  
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Heather Thelen  
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Ann Thorson  
Carrie Tjaden  
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Sheila Todd  
Bryan Trinka  
Roxie VanDeWater  
Christina Van Guilder  
Helen Wagner  
Katie Walker  
Tom Walsh and Holly Knight  
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Joe Westerberg  
Suzanne Wiebusch

Jennifer Williams  
Randi Winter  
Eh Xiong  
JoEllen Zabel  
Clara Zamorano  
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**\$1,000 – \$2,499**  
3M Foundation  
Brandon and Cheri Almich  
Brad and Barbara Anderson  
Gail M. Anderson  
Joan and Rohn Anderson  
Lori and Warren Anderson  
Teresa and Joel Anderson  
Attavio's Fried - A&R Concessions  
Bailey Nurseries Inc.  
Gordon and Jo Bailey  
Bandstand Concessions  
Corey Bartlett Fund  
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Anne and Tim Bechtold  
Stephen Behn  
Nicole and Brandon Behne  
Abigail Berquam  
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Nathan Dungan and Susan Hawks  
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Sara Edel and Dee Reinking  
Andrea and Roger Fahrenkrug  
Rich and Gretchen Falck  
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Lenie Lodge  
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Debra Linder  
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Brandon and Chris Moore  
Polly Morrison  
Sally Mortenson and Al Zdrazil  
Shelley Mueller  
Patty Napier and Pat Whitcomb  
Michel and Barbara Nelson  
Jack and Leila Nessen  
Nicholson Family Foundation, Chad and Laura Nicholson Fund  
Nicholson Family Foundation, Pondie and Mark Taylor Fund  
Richard and Nancy Nicholson  
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Jim and Karen Olson  
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Bernard C. Pawlicki Jr.  
Chris and Kathi Pearson  
David Peloquin  
Dolores and Dave Pemble  
The Perfect Pickle  
Pam and Jeff Petersmeyer  
Gayle Petrie  
Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 34  
Polaris Industries LP  
Jennifer Prestrud  
Andrew Punch  
Que Viet Concessions LLC  
R & J Concessions LLC  
Ramsey County Fair  
Matt Ribar  
Stephanie Rice  
Tim and Karen Roatch  
Bud Rotter Family Foundation  
Sandvik Family  
Gaynell Schandel  
Clarice Schmidt  
Karen Schneewind  
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*We thank our outgoing board members Dale Bachman, Julie Craven, Jason Koerth, Ken Sandvik and Linda Tank for their service to the Minnesota State Fair Foundation.*

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**The mission of the Minnesota State Fair Foundation 501(c)(3) is to**

# PRESERVE AND IMPROVE

**State Fair buildings, the fairgrounds and educational programs.**





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# IT'S EASY TO SUPPORT THE FAIR YOU LOVE!

- Become an official Friend of the Fair (donate and get great benefits!)
- Volunteer with the Foundation during the fair
- Place a custom engraved tile on the Welcome Wall
- Join the Grand Champion Club for behind-the-scenes events
- Give to the Foundation endowment, or create a named endowment with the Foundation
- Include the Minnesota State Fair Foundation in your will and become a part of the 1854 Society
- See if your employer matches charitable giving
- Donate appreciated assets, such as stock or land

- Give directly to the area of the fair you love most by supporting one of our impact areas:



Agriculture



Arts & Culture



Education



Fairgrounds  
Environment



History & Heritage

Visit [msffoundation.org](https://msffoundation.org) to see all the different ways to get involved!

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