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Five Honored with Heritage Awards

LAS VEGAS, NV — December 9, 2013 — Today at the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) 123rd Annual Convention, Heritage Awards sponsored by Haas & Wilkerson Insurance were presented to five exceptional individuals in the field of fair management, according to IAFE President and CEO Jim Tucker. The convention is taking place Dec. 8-12, at the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev.

Carol Porter of Haas & Wilkerson Insurance announced and presented the awards to the recipients, who were nominated by their fairs' staffs. The awards recognize the achievements of outstanding volunteer fair managers. Each winner received a plaque and \$1,000, and each fair nominating the winners received \$500. The nominees were required to have at least 10 years of fair management experience and could receive no more than \$2,500 remuneration annually for serving in the position. The nominees' fairs were also required to be current members of IAFE.

The 2013 Heritage Award winners are Byron Anderson of the Washington County Agricultural Society in Lake Elmo, Minn.; Doug Brand of Seward County Fair in Seward Neb.; Roger Henrichs of the Gage County Fair in Beatrice, Neb.; Allen Paulson of the Clearwater County Fair in Bagley, Minn.; and Paul Vaassen of the Iowa State Fair, Des Moines.

Anderson has been a member of the Washington County Agricultural Society since 1974. In 1993, he was elected to the executive committee of the County Fair Board as a director at large. He served as vice president of the board in 1996 and was elected president in 2000. He held that position until his term limits forced him to step down. He was re-elected as president in 2012 and serves there today.

"I believe fairs gather a community. Communities are strengthened as members work and visit together, sharing an experience," stated Anderson.

Anderson has attended three IAFE Conventions and 28 IAFE Zone 4 meetings. He has participated in the Minnesota Federation of County Fairs convention for 40 years. In 2007, he was elected vice president of the federation. Shortly thereafter, he was elected president of the federation and continues to serve in that position today.

Anderson is an active member of his community. He has served as vice president and president of the Minnesota Federation for Responsible Animal Care, director at large for the Tri County Pork producers, and director for the Washington County 4-H Federation. He has also been a member of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, the Tri-County Cattlemen's Association, the Minnesota State Shorthorn Association, and the FFA Alumni Association.

Brand has served as secretary of the Seward County Fair since 1976. He actively manages the fairgrounds on a year-round basis and has numerous responsibilities including creating fair schedules, building exhibits, setting up livestock pens, and more.

"My philosophy is 'Spotlight Our Best, Promote Agriculture and Young People.' It's been a 37 year project that I have really enjoyed," stated Brand.

Brand has served on the Nebraska State Fair board for 16 years, from 1986 to 2002 and 2006 to today. According to Nebraska State Fair Executive Director Joseph McDermott, Brand was instrumental in shaping the new grounds when the fair moved in 2010. Brand is an active member of the Nebraska Fair Managers Association having served as a director for four years and attended the association's convention for the past 37 years. He recently received the Nebraska Fair Managers Association Fair Person of the Year award, the association's highest recognition.

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Brand is active in the Seward community. He has served as a 4-H Club leader for 18 years, treasurer of the Seward Foundation for six years, and an ambassador for the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben for 33 years. In addition, he is a member of the Seward County 4-H Foundation, the AGR Kappa Chapter Alums, the UNL Ag Hall of Achievement, and the Seward Community Scholarship Board.

Henrichs has served as a board member of the Gage County Fair since 1981. From 1988 to 2010, Henrichs served as president of the Gage County Agricultural Society and oversaw all the business affairs of the ag society and fair. He continues to represent the fair and ag society in a professional manner on the local, state, and national levels.

“A fair includes competition, but whether you win or lose, it all starts with making wise decisions, helping to create and share a feeling of community involvement and smiling through successes and failures,” stated Henrichs.

He has attended 10 IAFE International Conventions since 1995 and 10 IAFE Zone 5 meetings since 2003. He has attended each Nebraska Association of Fair Managers (NAFM) convention since 1981 and has been a frequent panel participant and table topic leader. He served as a Nebraska State Fair board member from 1991 to 2006, serving as board chair the final three years. He continues to serve as open class dairy superintendent at the state fair.

Henrichs has served in numerous leadership positions in his community. He served as an advisory board member for the Beatrice and Gage County Visitors and Tourism Committee in 2006, president of the Nebraska Dairy Herd Improvement Association from 1991-1992, and as council president of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in 2004, 2012, and 2013. He earned the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers Fair Person of the Year award in 2004 and the Lifetime Friend award from the Nebraska State Fair in 2006.

Paulson has served as manager of the Clearwater County Fair since 1986. He previously served as treasurer of the fair from 1976-1986. His leadership and management skills have ensured that each fair is “bigger and better” than the last. He has added unique competitions and expanded the competitive exhibit departments. Under his leadership, the fair has improved accessibility for disabled fairgoers by adding asphalt walkways.

“Giving of one’s time, energy, and talents can be very rewarding and offers the opportunity to meet new people and make lifelong friends,” stated Paulson.

Paulson has attended 10 IAFE Conventions since 2001 and participated in each IAFE Zone 4 meeting since 1998. Paulson has served on the Minnesota Federation of County Fairs since 1976 and served as vice president from 1999 to 2000 and president from 2001 to 2002. He has chaired numerous Federation committees including the Legislative, Bylaws, Resolutions, Credentials, and Federation Showcase Committees. He currently represents all of northern Minnesota on the Minnesota State Fair Board.

Paulson is an active member of his community. He has served on the Bagley Area Farmers Market Committee since 2009 and the Breakfast on the Farm Committee since 2001. He is a member of the Red River Valley Development Association and is involved in his community’s theater. He previously served as secretary, vice president, and president of the Headwaters Rotary Club.

Vaassen has served as a director on the Iowa State Fair Board of Directors for 31 years. His tenure at the fair has included service as vice president from 1990 to 1992 and president from 1993 to 1995.

Vaassen was instrumental in the development of the state’s Blue Ribbon Program, which has raised more than \$95 million for the renovation of the historic Iowa State Fairgrounds. During his tenure on the fair board, he has served on all eight fair board committees.

“It is our responsibility as fair officials to recreate a family friendly environment for all our fairgoers from the time they come on the grounds until they are ready to leave,” stated Vaassen.

Vaassen has attended each IAFE Convention and each IAFE Zone 5 meeting since 1985 and each Association of Iowa Fairs convention since 1983. He has served as a speaker and as a table topics leader at the IAFE Convention and Zone 5 meeting.

Vaassen is an active member in his community. He previously served as 4-H Club leader. He is a past president of the Dubuque County Cattlemen’s Association, the Dubuque County Farm Bureau, the Western Dubuque Education Association, and the Iowa Angus Association. He is also a member of American Angus Association, the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, and the Knights of Columbus.

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