

Sandra Bauer



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I am asking for your vote because I believe deeply in what the Oregon Country Fair is, what it has built over fifty-seven years, and what it still has the responsibility to become.

Most people who encounter the Fair see three magical days in July. What I see, as someone who has spent years in this community as one of the original core group of founders who celebrated when we got our 100th booth - is the other 362 days. The Fair exists because thousands of people choose, year after year, to give their time, skill, and heart to something bigger than themselves. Everything the Fair accomplishes is because people believe this place is worth their labor of love, and the community we build together.

Education has always been important at the Fair. We educate the public and each other about sustainable living, about art and the value of handcrafted goods, about alternative energies, about the archaeology, about community organizations, about community-building outside the traditional market economy. We need to constantly update education at the fair so this last year I led our newly established Educational Grants program, created to enhance and expand the Fair's educational offerings during the Fair. This last year we funded educational projects in Energy Park, The Oasis and Archaeology.

Our three Philanthropic funds direct our philanthropy dollars to organizations working on social justice and equity, environmental protection, community social programs, and educational programs in our neighboring schools and to other non-profits who do work in concert with our values. I led the updating of the Board Giving Grants so that our annual grants would be in larger, more significant amounts, rather than in smaller scattered gifts. This allows that funding to create a far more substantial impact. This year's focus was on Social Justice and Social Inequity.

I believe in policy that is consistent and consistently applied across thousands of volunteers and staff, so people know what to expect and can trust the process. Inclusion and belonging is important to the organization, grounded in the understanding that an organization committed to inclusion must first build an inclusive community within its own culture. We continue to educate ourselves on how to do the work to get this right and to bring the training to everyone.

Some of my work on the board includes serving as co-chair of the Fixed Assets Committee, where we have focused on maintaining and updating our fixed assets. I chair the Personnel Policy Committee, which keeps our employee manual current and fair for staff. I have managed the Executive Director evaluation process on behalf of the board for several years, working closely with an outside HR firm we retained to help shape and carry it out. I have also served as the board's liaison to the Budget Committee for six years.

One of the board's most important responsibilities is fiduciary. The Budget Committee is a careful steward of our finances, and the board is responsible for reviewing and approving that work. That same fiduciary responsibility extends to the infrastructure that supports it all — water, power, roads, structures, and IT and Internet access, including the reliable connectivity our vendors need to run their booths — systems that were built for a much smaller and simpler operation than the one we run today. Meeting the Fair's current scale and safety needs means budgeting seriously for those upgrades.

Fifty-seven years of community, generosity, and values - a spirit of whimsy, costumes, wandering performers, and handcrafted artistry and great food around every corner - built this Fair, and it is now up to us to make sure the people and the structures that sustain it are ready for what comes next. I would be honored to earn your vote to keep doing this work alongside all of you.