

Northwestern Michigan Fair Association

Candidacy for Board of Directors Questionnaire

All candidates must be a Lifetime or a 2025 Annual Member of the Northwestern Michigan Fair Association.

Name: Nicolette (Nicki) Brown
(Please print as it appears on your membership card)

1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

I began my involvement with the Northwestern Michigan Fair in 2013, when I first participated as a 4-H parent. Supporting my child's projects sparked my passion for the 4-H program, and I quickly recognized the value it brings to youth—teaching responsibility, leadership, and agricultural skills. In 2015, I took the next step by becoming a 4-H leader, allowing me to guide and mentor young exhibitors as they developed both their livestock projects and their personal confidence. As my commitment grew, I accepted the role of Swine Species Chair in 2021, overseeing the Swine Barn operations at the fair. In this position, I have worked closely with exhibitors, families, and volunteers to ensure a positive, educational, and rewarding experience for all participants. My responsibilities have included organizing barn activities, coordinating logistics, and helping youth showcase their hard work with pride. In 2023, I expanded my involvement by joining the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council Executive Board. Serving on the board has given me the opportunity to collaborate with other leaders in shaping the direction of the livestock program, strengthening community connections, and ensuring the long-term success of 4-H at the fair. Through each role I have taken on, my goal has always been to support youth, promote agricultural education, and continue building on the strong traditions of the Northwestern Michigan Fair.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

My involvement with the Northwestern Michigan Fair as a board member will give me opportunity to grow as a leader, build a strong work ethic, and contribute meaningfully to my community. Through years of service as a 4-H parent, leader, Swine Species Chair, and member of the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council Executive Board, I have developed valuable leadership skills that allow me to guide, mentor, and inspire youth while supporting fellow volunteers and families. I bring a tech-savvy approach to my work, using modern tools to improve communication, streamline organization, and enhance efficiency across fair and livestock programs. At the same time, I value teamwork and collaboration, consistently working to build positive relationships that strengthen the fair community. Ultimately, the benefit of my involvement lies not only in the skills I've gained but also in the impact I've been able to make—helping youth succeed, fostering connections within the community, and supporting the long-standing traditions of the Northwestern Michigan Fair.

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

My particular interests with the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board focus on supporting efficient operations, advancing technology, and strengthening the exhibitor experience while honoring the fair's long-standing traditions. I have a strong interest in registration and would enjoy aligning the premium book with the new online registration format to ensure a smooth, accessible process for exhibitors and families.

I am also deeply committed to livestock and their health and wellness, recognizing that the animals are at the heart of our agricultural programs. By supporting youth in their livestock projects and working to uphold high standards of care, I help create an environment that is both educational and rewarding.

Equally important to me is collaboration with the many partners who make the fair possible. I value working together to ensure the fair not only grows and adapts to the modern age but also preserves the traditions that have shaped it for generations. Through this balance of innovation and heritage, I strive to help the Northwestern Michigan Fair continue thriving as a cornerstone of our community.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

My vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair is for it to continue growing and thriving as both a community tradition and a place of innovation. I do not come with a personal agenda, but rather with a passion for working alongside a dedicated team of individuals who have been serving this organization for years. Together, I believe we can build upon the strong foundation that already exists, introducing new ideas and approaches that will support future generations while honoring the traditions that make the fair so meaningful.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

I have been working with the Northwestern Michigan 4-H Livestock Council registration system for about six years, witnessing and contributing to its evolution from the days of submitting three paper copies at the Civic Center to the fully on-line registration system we use today. This experience has allowed me to not only embrace change but also help others adjust to more efficient, modernized processes that better serve our exhibitors and families. I also have been the on-line editor to our website, working with our species chairs to update content while keeping all of this within the MSU guidelines. In addition to my technical knowledge, I bring my "livestock hat" to the table. As someone who is deeply engaged with livestock at home, I am continuously learning and expanding my understanding—not just with the species I specialize in, but also with those I am less familiar with. I believe in being a lifelong learner, and this curiosity helps me better support 4-H youth across all project areas. I also contribute strong board leadership experience. Over the years, I have served on numerous boards at different levels, including township boards, school boards at both the district and intermediate district level, and even national boards within my professional career. This breadth of governance experience equips me with a well-rounded perspective, strong decision-making skills, and the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse groups. Finally, the significant time and energy I dedicate to the Livestock Council Board reflects my deep commitment to the success of youth and the fair. I see my role as one of service—helping youth, families, and our community thrive while honoring the traditions that make the Northwestern Michigan Fair so special.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

As a mom, wife, employee, and someone who was raised to serve her community, I believe that stepping into this role is the natural next step in my personal growth and development. Over the years, I have watched many tides flow through the Northwestern Michigan Fair. While I did not show as a youth myself, my family's ties to the fair go back generations, including when it was held at the Civic Center in Traverse City. The fair has always been more than just an event—it is a core tradition for countless families in our community. I truly believe it will continue for another hundred years, and I want to play a small but meaningful part in carrying that legacy forward. Just as my mom shares stories with my children about her days sleeping in the horse stalls at the Civic Center, I want to create lasting memories with my own children through our time in this wonderful organization. To me, this is about more than service; it's about building traditions, strengthening community, and ensuring the fair continues to inspire generations to come.

Please complete and return by mail or email by 11:59 PM on Tuesday, October 7th to: Northwestern Michigan Fair Association, Attn: Tom Looks, PO Box 327 Grawn, MI 49637 or email to tom.looks@northwesternmichiganfair.net.

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Name: **Frank Guerin**

(Please print as it appears on your membership card)

1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

As a Fair Board Director, I have been involved with the NWMI Fair for 7 years. In that time, I have chaired the Buildings & Grounds, Bingo, Rentals & Contracts, and Concessions Committees. I currently chair the Rentals & Contracts and Concessions Committees. I have served on the Buildings & Grounds, Safety & Security, and Memorial Wall Committees.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

I believe the NWMI Fair would continue to benefit from my involvement primarily with the Concessions Committee. Our vendors look for consistency and relationships throughout their seasons and we provide that to them. They enjoy seeing all of us and appreciate having the same person as their point of contact from year to year. The Fair would also benefit from my dedication as a volunteer. Like the other directors on this board, I enjoy serving our Fair through the opportunities presented whether for the Fair itself or the many other happenings.

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I desire to continue as Concessions Committee Chair. I also look forward to helping with Buildings & Grounds, Winter Storage, and other committees, as needed.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I believe the Board should expand in numbers to distribute the workload of the current Board, as the responsibilities of operating the Fair year round have grown significantly over the last decade. Additional Directors also brings the benefit of a variety of viewpoints, experience, and wisdom of which these qualities can provide the Fair with greater success and longevity.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

With my construction background, I am experienced in areas of developing budgets for projects, new and remodeling construction, building maintenance and repairs, and working with other trades, firms, and governmental agencies. I am moderately skilled in equipment operation and maintenance.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

Over the years that I have served the NWMI Fair, I have served on other non-profit area boards. When I needed to lighten my load, I stepped away from other boards so I could continue to serve the Fair. I enjoy the opportunity to continue the legacy that is the Northwestern Michigan Fair and help grow it in the years to come.

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Name: Joe Hubbell

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1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

I've been on the board for 9 years, having served as President for 6 years. Prior to serving on the fair board I helped the Livestock Council for multiple years.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

I will continue to put forth efforts to improve and maintain the fairgrounds, effort towards community awareness and involvement. Also, pushing for continued growth towards smooth fair weeks and off season events/rentals for the overall success of the fair association.

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I am interested in the entire operation of the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board. I like to put special interests in improvements and maintenance of the property and the future of the Northwestern Michigan Fair.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I would like to see capital improvements continued such as updating older buildings, continuing to update the underground electrical infrastructure so the grounds will have a reliable power grid and improvements to all permanent campsites. I would also like to see the board to continue to work together as one unit with multiple opinions and a like minded goal.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

I can contribute team leadership, property management and construction skills to the Northwestern Michigan Fair.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

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Name: Breann Kern

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1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

I have been involved in the Northwestern Michigan Fair for over 10 years. I was in 4H for 4 years, was the guardian for my sister in law for 3 years, and now attending for my nieces.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

My involvement on the board of the Northwestern Michigan Fair would indeed bring significant benefits, given my skills and mindset. I have great organizational skills and believe I can ensure that the fair runs smoothly, especially when coordinating numerous events and activities. I have experience in managing large crowds and thriving under pressure and will help the board effectively handle the fair's dynamic environment, ensuring both participant and attendee satisfaction. I can connect with diverse individuals, enhance teamwork and communication among individuals. I always have a positive outlook and believe I would be a valuable asset to the Northwestern Michigan Fair's board of directors.

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I have interest in Advertising, Social Networking, Entertainment, Fair week free entertainment, winter storage, off season events, and non animal exhibits.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

To create a positive, and well organized environment.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

I am a wedding venue owner and coordinator locally. I can manage crowds and coordinate events in high-stress settings. I communicate and build relationships throughout the year with our wedding couples and I would implicate that by engaging with vendors, exhibitors, and attendees. I work with diverse personalities and can help create an inclusive atmosphere at the fair. I can apply organizational skills and attention to detail, and can significantly enhance the fair's success and ensure a seamless experience for everyone.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

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Name: **Milt Lewis**

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1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

22 years, 7 as a volunteer and 15 years on the board of directors. I have chaired the following committees. non-fair camping, buildings & grounds, golf cart enforcement, and Facebook. Currently I chair the museum, winter storage and the website. Over the years I have served on many committees.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

I have a lot of knowledge of the behind the scenes of what it takes to put the fair on.

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

To continue to chair the museum, website and winter storage committees and help where ever I can.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

Keep updating the older buildings, have paved handicap parking, and continue to be the greatest fair in northern Michigan.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

Updating the website when it needs it, and i'm fairly good at packing the buildings with winter storage.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

I'm currently the treasurer for the local snowmobile club (23 years). I am the president of the local ORV club. I have 4 kids, 26 grand & great grand kids.

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Name: Carolyne Woodhams

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1. How long have you been involved with the Northwestern Michigan Fair, and in what capacity?

I have been a part of the Northwestern Michigan Fair for over 15 years. My daughter showed animals at the fair, I've been a 4-H leader for many years and have been on the Fair Board for over 13 years. I am a part of several committees and the Chairperson for a few. My Grandchildren are now showing animals at the Fair.

2. How would the Northwestern Michigan Fair benefit from your involvement on the Board of Directors?

I love being on the Fair Board and I love what we do! I love working with others on the Board and our community. I work very hard for the NWMI Fair and have been for the past 13 years. I would love to keep doing what I am doing. I enjoy keeping our Social Medias up to date. I will continue to put forth hard work and dedication to the NWMI Fair. I have enjoyed being a part of the advertising and have some great things happening with this next year!

3. What are your particular interest areas in regards to serving on the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

I have enjoyed being the Advertisement, Sponsorship, and Pancake Breakfast Chairperson. I love working with businesses and obtaining new and additional sponsors yearly. I love every committee I am a part of and I enjoy working with others! I help out wherever I am needed as much as I can.

4. What is your vision for the Northwestern Michigan Fair Board?

My vision for the Fair Board is I see us working together as a Unit like we did this past summer. This year at the 2025 Fair, we worked together better than we have in my past 13 plus years! It was fantastic! It's great when we have a group of people with the same perspective in mind and that is to make the Northwestern Michigan Fair the very best it can be and every year we strive to make it better.

5. What skills and/or experience can you contribute to the Northwestern Michigan Fair?

I assist with Advertising and Sponsorships and feel that I am a pretty good "people person". Additionally, I am the voice of the 4-H Cattle shows along with being the person behind the Fair Social Media. I also oversee the Pancake Breakfast which keeps growing and growing every year. I love being able to work with local businesses to obtain Sponsorships.

6. Please share anything else you would like the voting membership to know about you.

This past May when my son unexpectedly passed away, the love and support that I received from our Fair Board and the 4-H community was astounding and appreciated beyond what I could comprehend. That is what this Fair Family is all about and I would love to continue to be a part of it! Thank you.

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