



Photo Credit Tommy Collier

## A Message from Pete Coors and a

### MILESTONE MOMENT

Bruce Wagner has long since made a name for himself around the National Western. As a refresher, Bruce is the chair of the Junior Livestock Auction and a member of the Western Stock Show Association's board of directors (he's taking over the board's treasurer role as I write these words) as well as its Capital Campaign Committee. Well, his name – as well as that of his wife Bev and his company, Wagner Equipment Co. – will soon grace key areas of the new HW Hutchison Family Stockyards Event Center, inside and out.

First, a quick National Western Center geography lesson. The HW Hutchison Family Stockyards Event Center is the centerpiece of the Cille and Ron Williams Yards. The Stockyard Event Center hosts two major spaces: The Stow L. Witwer Memorial Show Arena and, I'm pleased to announce, The Wagner Equipment Co. Auction Arena.

Then, just outside, countless thousands of National Western Center visitors each year will soon enjoy the Bruce and Bev Wagner and Family West Plaza. And I do mean soon: The Yards and the Auction Arena will be ready to go for the 2022 Stock Show.

Before I tell you more about Bruce, here are a few highlights of the facilities to be named after him, his family, and his company.



Photo Credit Emile Mittelstaedt

Left: Junior exhibitor Grant Vickland and the champion hog with Bev and Bruce Wagner at the 2016 Jr. Livestock Auction

Above: Bruce Wagner and Ron Williams. Wagner's naming rights will be within the Cille and Ron Williams Yards.

The Wagner Equipment Co. Auction Arena will have close to 650 stadium-style seats around an arena floor that can flexibly host livestock sales, lectures, or small concerts. Another 150 to 200 temporary seats can fit on the mezzanine floor if needed. The arena floor will have bison-sturdy fencing that is removable to accommodate other types of events. The Auction Arena mezzanine level will connect via stairs or elevator to the ground floor lobby and concession/bar area, and the southwest corner of the mezzanine has space for a temporary bar or gathering space just outside the Hospitality Suite. The mezzanine level will also provide direct access to the balcony, the West Plaza, and the future catwalk.

The Bruce and Bev Wagner and Family West Plaza will compass a full acre of open plaza space directly outside the Stockyards Event Center. It will be anchored by the historic water tower and have landscaping and seating areas around the edges. The plaza will have direct access onto future catwalks featuring views over the entire Stockyards site and out to the mountains. Power and water spaced throughout the plaza will make this space usable during the Stock Show for the Herd Sire Show and the Stock Dog Competition, and for a variety of other uses year-round such as farmers' markets and concerts.

Now, about Bruce. He grew up in Texas, where his family had horses, and went on to Texas Tech in Lubbock. Friends in the cattle and feedlot business sparked an interest in livestock. He got to know the National Western soon after moving to Colorado in the mid-1970s. As Bruce put it, "It quickly became apparent that the National Western had everything I had grown to enjoy, so it was kind of like love at first experience."

It also happened that Bruce had grown up in Dallas with our own Doug Jones, the Chairman of the WSSA's Board of Directors. Bruce and his daughter competed in team penning at the Stock Show, and Doug got him into goat roping and then onto the Junior Auction Committee.

"It's been a fun ride ever since," Bruce said.

Bruce and his family's decision to support the National Western Center came from the head as well as the heart.

"We have the best livestock show in the nation, and it didn't take a genius to see that, with our shows and events, if we had a world-class facility, lord only knows where we could go with it," Bruce said. "I've been behind building a new facility since the idea's inception."

Just as importantly, Bruce says the National Western exemplifies the West's greatest qualities.

"It's easy to put your money behind people who live and die by the ethics, morals, and hard work that is represented by the West and an organization like ours," he said.

That the facilities emblazoned with the Wagner name will be within and just outside of the HW Hutchison and Family Stockyards Event Center is "icing on the cake," Bruce says. Buck Hutchison is a dear friend and served alongside Bruce as longtime co-chair of the Junior Livestock Auction. Bruce says he looks forward to presiding over the auction in a space graced with both the Wagner and Hutchison names.

"Then we get to have a beer together on the plaza – how great is that?" he said.

Bruce says he hopes his family's involvement with and contributions to the National Western inspire others to step up.

"If you love the West, then you must love the National Western and what it stands for," he said. "So get involved. This is a rare opportunity to be a part of something very special – something that will last for generations. Don't pass it up."

We could not be more pleased to name these signature areas after Bruce, Bev, and Wagner Equipment Co. Bruce inspires so many of us every day, and now, thanks to his generosity, he will inspire generations to come.



**Speak of the devils...who are also our angels!**

This month's video [features Bruce and Buck](#) being interviewed by Bruce's longtime friend and WSSA Board Chair Doug Jones.

#### For questions about the campaign or making a gift, please contact

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