



HONORING THE LEGACY BUILDING THE FUTURE

a campaign for the National Western Stock Show



Campaign Roundup

from Pete Coors

Photo Credit Jensen Sutta

A Message from Pete Coors

I am starting this month's Roundup on a somber note, with a tribute to J. Landis Martin. Lanny passed away on September 1. Not only did I lose a great friend, but our entire community lost a champion – a smart, savvy, and creative businessman and philanthropic cornerstone to so many organizations.

We were fortunate that Lanny served as a member of our Honoring the Legacy Capital Campaign Committee since its inception in 2017. He and Sharon were generous donors to the campaign, and his counsel over the years was treasured, especially as we designed the Legacy Building's Katherine and J. Robert Wilson Art Gallery.



Photo credit: Jensen Sutta

Lanny was born in Grand Island, Nebraska, a town nestled on the banks of the Platte River Valley. When he was named to the Colorado Business Hall of Fame in 2012, he recounted that his proudest professional accomplishment was founding Platte River Equity, a leading private equity firm, which took its name from the Platte River that ran through his hometown.

We were but one of many organizations that benefitted from his wisdom and philanthropic support. The Denver Art Museum received its largest-ever gift from Lanny and Sharon. Lanny maintained strong ties to his alma mater, Northwestern University, where he earned bachelor's and law degrees. He served on Northwestern's board of trustees and was its chairman from 2017 until August 2022. He was also a previous board member and chairman of the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation in Denver, chairman emeritus of Central City Opera, and chairman of the Clyfford Still Museum Foundation. These were just a few of the organizations that benefitted from his wisdom and generosity.

The Martins' philanthropic gifts were often sizable, and many came with well-deserved fanfare. But my favorite among them was the gift he and Sharon made to Grand Island Senior High School to renovate their football stadium. He and Sharon made the lead gift to that project in honor of his father, a timekeeper at the school.

That says everything about who Lanny Martin was and how he will be remembered: selfless; dedicated to family; someone who never forgot or stopped appreciating where he came from; and someone who helped make big dreams become realities.

We found this wonderful picture of Lanny with Barth Whitham, WSSA Board Vice Chairman and fellow Campaign Committee member. It was taken the day we cut 11 ribbons throughout the Cille and Ron Williams Yards and the HW Hutchison Stockyards Event Center. I asked Barth if he would share a few words about our friend. He said:

"Lanny created a lot of value everywhere he went. His early years growing up in Grand Island, Nebraska, gave him an appreciation for the West and the intersection of agriculture, industry, and common values. I worked with him on a couple projects that gave me a real appreciation of his ability to find a path that improved outcomes. He had this way of honoring family that made you aware of his priority to his family without presumption. An impressive man, American, and Nebraskan."

Nothing But Gratitude

Lanny's passing made me pause and think about our Capital Campaign Committee. This group first met on January 25, 2017. We had just come off of Stock Show, and the complex was still in the process of cleaning up, so we met in a boardroom in the downtown Molson Coors offices. We recruited 13 members, as well as five Vice Chairs. We covered the typical agenda items, like the role of the committee and a review of our work to date, which was pretty brief since we'd only started in October 2016. Paul went over the site plan, buildings, timelines, and financing. We ended with a discussion about the creation of our campaign plan – naming rights, fundraising strategies for the buildings, and prospects.

To say we were just barely out of the gates with the campaign would probably be kind. We had come through the Stock Show with a name, a logo, a trifold brochure, and a few lunches under our belt, but that was about it.

Yet, our [committee](#) dug right into this grand adventure with us. Along the way, we talked Bruce Wagner and Stanton Dodge into serving as Vice Chairs and added eight additional members. We have had one member step down because of his retirement, and we lost our dear Nancy Petry along the way as well.

But we are about to embark upon our seventh year of the campaign next month, and I continue to be amazed – and so deeply grateful – that everyone has kept working, kept believing, kept raising money, and kept giving. In fact, this committee's members have donated more than \$42MM of the nearly \$108MM total raised to date. They attend our quarterly meetings, host and attend events throughout the year, open doors, make calls, and most spend nearly all 16 days of Stock Show with us – selling bricks and brands, coming to interviews, attending lunches, and generally helping out. As our campaign director Angela Lieurance often says, there's nothing our committee won't do for us when we ask. And we are forever thankful and forever better because of their selflessness.

So, while I started on a sad note this month, I want to end on a celebratory one. I want to honor Lanny and his contributions to our campaign, our community, and to philanthropy on a much broader stage. And I want to celebrate our Honoring the Legacy Capital Campaign Committee. We would not be where we are without all of them! When you see them in our community or at the Stock Show, please thank them for all they are doing to honor our legacy and build our future.



This Month's Video

With the 2024 Stock Show a mere 110 days away, I am really enjoying rewatching the videos we did during the 2023 Show. This month, I am joined by WSSA Board members Bruce Wagner and Guy McEndaffer for an interview with Guy Colyer of [Colyer Herefords & Angus](#) out of Bruneau, Idaho. They prove that a little snow won't ever stop them from coming to the "Superbowl of Livestock Shows." Enjoy!

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

Angela S. Lieurance
Director of the Capital Campaign
Western Stock Show Association
4655 Humboldt Street
Denver CO 80216
alieurance@nationalwestern.com
303-919-5214

Stay in touch with us on social media:



For news, updates and more on the Honoring the Legacy campaign for the National Western, visit

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