



ANNUAL REPORT

2022



**Red River
Exhibition Association**

REDRIVEREX.COM



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WHO WE ARE

DELIVERING MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES SINCE 1951

The Red River Exhibition Association is a non-profit, community organization that manages the facilities and events at Red River Exhibition Park. As a self-sustaining organization, we rely on our own resources to raise operating revenue. This revenue is reinvested into facility and program improvements, supporting our mission to deliver memorable experiences to our guests.

Programming and events at Red River Exhibition Park are designed to meet the Association's mandate of encouraging and showcasing Manitobans and their achievements in agriculture, tourism, industry and commerce.



We are a member-owned association governed by a 20-member board of directors and managed by the CEO.

At the core of the Red River Exhibition Association is over 250 volunteers who give their time, energy and passion to ensure the ongoing success of our events and our organization. Our dedicated team of 15 full-time staff is complemented by a hardworking group of seasonal employees. 2022 marked our association's 70th year and the 25th year of operation on our current location on Portage Avenue on the edge of Winnipeg.



WHO WE ARE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Jason Pusiewich - President
Tom Tolton - Past President
Jeffrey Coleman - Vice President
Darren Lewis - Vice President
Marlene Baskerville
Peter Synychych

DIRECTORS

Chase Allen, Rod Cantiveros, Sarah Carter, Ed Deen, Robert Deniset,
Jim Feeny, Jack Hildebrand, Laura Holtmann, Mike Lesiuk, Ann
Mandziuk, Hermann Schweizer, Trevor Williams

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Government of Canada

Marty Morantz, MP Charleswood/St. James-Assiniboia Headingley

Province of Manitoba

Scott Johnston, MLA Assiniboia

City of Winnipeg

Kevin Klein, City Councillor for Charleswood-Tuxedo-Westwood

RED RIVER EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION STAFF

Garth Rogerson, Holly Thorsteinson, Kyle Kyryluk, Lisa Tully, Oscar
Rodriguez, Angie Brookman, Brittany Munro, Alana Fehr, Katie
Raven, Alex Labuschagne, Tyler Cook, Ian Comber, Royce King,
Daryl Schroeder

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jason Pusiewich



There's something to be said about those ten days in June. Ten days where family and friends can connect on the grounds of the Red River Exhibition, share in some great food and entertainment, recount cherished memories, and create new ones. We were collectively able to live that experience again in 2022, and I am grateful for that.

Taking a couple of steps back can be a great way to gain perspective. That perspective can help a team focus on what is important and appreciate what they have.

It is with that gained perspective and knowledge that we grew this year as an organization. Not only did we get back to basics - doing what we do best, we also continued our journey towards a broader and more engaging future.

The team completed all of the critical groundwork for "The Loop", our exciting new multi-purpose track and event space. In addition to The Loop, we're well into the development of expanded and permanent park space. This purpose driven project, spread over many years, will allow us to develop both the summer show as well as many complimentary events. New pathways, structures and facilities all designed to accommodate a wide range of uses. The careful implementation will allow us to grow with measured pace, without disruption to our ever-expanding calendar of events.

I am proud of our team. The staff, board and volunteers that make up The Red River Exhibition Association have proven themselves to be resilient, pragmatic, and determined. Without doubt the best is yet to come.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

GARTH ROGERSON



I always enjoy writing this report because it gives me a chance to reflect on everything that happened over the last year. 2022 was an exciting year and it was the first full year back after the pandemic. Traffic patterns were different than pre-pandemic so it will be interesting to see if this is a permanent shift or just a result of lifted restrictions.

Our year always starts big with Canad Inns Winter Wonderland and 2022 was no different. It is interesting to see such large crowds even after 22 years so this has really become a family tradition. Exhibition Place was also busy hosting shows and while we did have some cancellations due to the continuing effects of the pandemic we still did very well. The number of clients continues to grow as we begin to fill the shoulder season.

2022 also marked the return of a full Red River Ex and what a great return with a number of broken records.

The Ex continues to grow and with expansion of the fairgrounds opening in 2023 we expect this growth to continue. The new areas of the Park include a race track, Indigenous Village, farm animal display and rotating exhibits as we expand the number of events we host. While there is more work to do we are ready to open in 2023.

2022 also saw the return of our Fall Fair, so this is now an annual part of our event calendar. We are planning a lot of changes for 2023 so I look forward to sharing those with you.

2022 was a challenging year with uncertainty post pandemic, huge cost increases and the wettest year on record. We adapted to all of these challenges and in the end posted a good year. All of this couldn't have been done without the support of our Board of Directors and all of our volunteers so thank you for everything you do.



2022 HIGHLIGHTS

CANAD INNS WINTER WONDERLAND

The 22nd year for this holiday light show proved to be a success, despite Code Red pandemic restrictions closing the outdoor Holiday Photo Stop area and the skating rink.

After record-smashing attendance in 2020/21, it was encouraging to see the community come out once again in great numbers as we move past the pandemic.

We were very pleased to continue our long-standing partnership with Canad Inns as the event's title sponsor and to once again donate a portion of the proceeds to KidSport Manitoba and the Red River Exhibition Foundation.





THE RED RIVER EX

The most notable success this year was the return of the Red River Ex after two years of cancellations due to COVID-19.

The community embraced the return of The Ex with strong attendance setting a number of new records all thanks to a stellar line-up of performances, attractions and the most rides ever at The Ex with the return of the world's largest travelling carnival, North American Midway Entertainment.



Other exciting new programming included barrel racing and bull riding – showcasing these thrilling events to an urban audience. Canine Circus and Chainsaw Carvers were also new, filling out a lineup of all-time favourites including EXtreme Dogs, DooDoo The Clown and High Divers along with our two music stages and fair favourite food and drinks.

Thanks to the continued dedication of our volunteers, sponsors, retail and media partners, the return of The Ex after two long years was a successful summer show.



THE FALL FAIR

The Fall Fair was back for its second year, demonstrating the demand for quality affordable entertainment over the September long weekend. With its focus on local performers, vendors and midway partner – Select Shows – the Fall Fair’s vibe resonated with families.



THIRD PARTY EVENTS AND RENTALS

It was great to once again have a full calendar of events in Exhibition Place throughout 2022. We were pleased to welcome back shows including the Four Seasons RV sale, Manitoba Outdoors Show, Cottage Country's Lake and Cabin Show, Winnipeg Rock N' Gem Show, Third & Bird, Rodarama, Winnipeg Tattoo Convention, Winnipeg Ice Fishing Show and Scattered Seeds to name a few.



2022 also marked the first year of welcoming the Manito Ahbee Festival to its new home at Red River Exhibition Park. This international festival celebrating Indigenous arts, culture and music took place over the May long weekend and signalled the start of a strengthening relationship with Winnipeg's Indigenous community and various organizations, including events with the Manitoba Métis Federation and as host of the Indigenous Languages of Manitoba Conference



SITE DEVELOPMENT

With ongoing cost and supply chain issues caused by the pandemic, development within the park was slowed – but not stopped. Major water and sewer servicing work continued, as did work on the new permanent Indigenous Village, which received funding through the Building Sustainable Communities grant through the government of Manitoba and is slated for completion in 2023.

With major delays caused by an extremely wet spring and summer, the construction of the harness racing track, The Loop, was completed to such a degree that a test race was conducted on October 22. Additional construction in the spring will complete the facility which, with government approval and funding, will host harness racing starting in June 2023.

Development of the area surrounding the track also started this year, with four new buildings set to be ready for summer 2023.

FESTIVAL EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE CENTRES

As one of Winnipeg's largest early learning and child care centres, we are proud to have delivered quality education and care at our three locations over the past two years, including the challenges of supporting the community throughout the pandemic. Work on the outdoor play area at the main location within Red River Exhibition Park continued and will be completed in 2023.



MANITOBA AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME



The Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame Celebration of Ag event returned in 2022 with a luncheon at the Victoria Inn in Winnipeg. This year's celebration honoured the two new inductees to the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame and the 2022 Farm Family of the Year. The event also featured the presentation of the Manitoba 150 Medal to Bob Roehle for his unwavering commitment to the community and the success of Manitoba's agriculture industry.

2022 Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame Inductees

Dr. Digvijay Jayas: recognized worldwide for his significant contributions to improving the economic outcomes of farmers and the oilseed, pulse and grain industry, to global food security, and to the environmental footprint of food production.

Dr. Elmer Stobbe: a true visionary remembered for his pioneering work on no-till farming systems, where he innovated cropping systems, machinery design, weed management, crop variety development and disease management.

With these inductions, the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame continues the tradition of formally and publicly recognizing inspiring individuals who, in the course of their residence in Manitoba, have made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of agriculture and the betterment of rural living in the province.

2022 Farm Family of the Year

The Sirski family of Dauphin, Manitoba: As the owners of the Sirski Farms, Ernie and Janet along with the support of their three adult daughters – Tanis, Rachel and Alyssia who also hold full-time jobs – farm 5,500 acres in Manitoba's Parkland region. The logo for Sirski Farms proudly displays a Canadian flag alongside one from Ukraine, signalling great pride in the family's heritage.

RED RIVER EXHIBITION FOUNDATION



The Red River Exhibition Foundation has now raised over \$1,000,000 in support of our community in the form of scholarships and bursaries awarded each year.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Industry

Farm Family of the Year

Scholarship: One \$1,500 scholarship is awarded in honour of the Farm Family of the Year.

2022 Recipient: Emily Robb

Manitoba Women's Institute

Scholarship: Two \$1,000 scholarships are presented to applicants taking a Manitoba academic or vocational course.

2022 Recipients: Brookelyn McRae & Christa Boekhorst

4-H Centennial Scholarship: One \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to recognize the 100th anniversary of 4-H, Canada.

2022 Recipient: Kate-Leigh Heapy

Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame: One \$1,000 scholarship is awarded in honour of the inductees into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame.

2022 Recipient: Cole Topham

50th Anniversary Farm Family of the Year Scholarship:

One \$1,500 scholarship is awarded in honour of the 50th anniversary of the Farm Family program.

2022 Recipient: Ashlyn Whetter

Manitoba Farm Women's

Conference Scholarship: One \$500 scholarship is presented to a student from rural Manitoba studying agriculture or any field that supports rural life.

2022 Recipients: Brookelyn McRae

R.D. Payne Equine Scholarship:

One \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to an individual striving to advance their equestrian abilities and, ultimately, pursue a career in the equine industry.

2022 Recipient: Kami Wood

Cam Brown Scholarship for

International Study: One \$3,000 scholarship is awarded to University of Manitoba agriculture student interested in studying outside Manitoba and/or Canada.
Not awarded in 2022

RED RIVER EXHIBITION FOUNDATION

Business, Aerospace, Tourism, Performing Arts and Trades

Business Industry Scholarship:

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and the Real Canadian Superstore founded this scholarship in 2005. Three scholarships are presented to Manitobans entering or continuing their post-secondary studies in a business-related program at a Manitoba university or accredited college.

2022 Recipients:

Darci Wilkinson
Kate-Leigh Heapy
Peyton Bateman

Tourism Industry Scholarship:

Three \$1,000 scholarships are presented to individuals in a tourism or hospitality diploma program at a Manitoba post-secondary institution.

Not awarded in 2022

Ron Meyers Memorial Scholarship for Performing Arts:

Awarded to an individual pursuing post-secondary education in the performing arts.

Not awarded in 2022

Aerospace Industry Scholarship:

Three \$1,000 scholarships in this category are awarded every year in memory of Bob Lang, a long-time employee of the Association.

2022 Recipients:

Ayodele Akingbade
Kian Bullanday
Lyndon Mallorca

Kinsmen Club of Winnipeg

Bursaries: Established in 2022, these three bursaries will support individuals in their post-secondary education.

- Trade Bursary
- Community Leadership Award
- Kathy Kennedy Bursary



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Our events, programs and initiatives would not be possible without the support of our sponsors and partners.

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