

By Russ Pankonin, The Imperial Republican

Dating back to 1952, the Chase County Fair has built a reputation second to none for county fairs in Nebraska. When I'm in other parts of Nebraska and the subject of fairs comes up, most people have heard of the Chase County Fair.

When you think about that, that's really pretty amazing. But it just didn't happen overnight. Like I mentioned before, this brand of tradition began with a vision clear back in the early 1950s.

That vision of teaming up with entertainment promoter Don Romeo of Omaha set in motion the creation of a brand and tradition that many other fairs would love to have.

The visionaries from those early days are now gone but what they built continues to live on more than a half a century later. Their same fervor for the Chase County Fair has passed on from one generation to another, and now another.

And when you look back at the stellar history of this fair, it's easy to forget that all this has been built on one important foundation—volunteerism.

Never has the attitude been of “what can the fair do for me” but instead “what can I do to help the fair?” That's what makes our fair so successful.

Fair board President Dave Schilke said it best this week when he said, “We couldn't do it without all the volunteers.” So right he is.

Fair board members volunteer hours upon hours throughout the year planning the annual fair, not to mention the time spent actually putting on the fair.

Why do they do it? Because they love the fair.

That's also why hundreds of people volunteer their time during the fair.

If you are one of those volunteers, you too can take a great deal of pride in knowing that you're one of the people making the Chase County Fair an annual success.

You play a key role in maintaining the tradition that's been built over many years by people who truly love the fair.