

The Intentional Tourist
by Jarrod McCartney
November 8, 2023

We're just a few short days away from a time of year I anticipate with both excitement and dread. No, it's not the hustle and bustle of the holiday season—it's the Red Cloud Community Fund's (RCCF) Annual Banquet. This year, we'll have the event at 5pm on Saturday, November 18th in the Red Cloud Opera House.

I look forward to this event every year because it causes us to reflect on all that we have achieved and it gives us a chance to share that with the community. I also dread it, because there's a lot of planning that goes into the event. Lots of list-making and marketing and speechwriting always accompanied by an unreasonable fear that somehow it will all go wrong and I'll forget what we did last week let alone 12 months ago and that Danny Bengel will show up with pudding cups and chicken nuggets instead of the Mississippi pot roast and cheesy potatoes he's promised to have Hometown Market serve at the event.

Of course, we all know that Danny will come through with an incredible meal and that it will be impossible for me to forget our recent successes. Thankfully, this year a lot of our progress is obvious and not just happening primarily behind the scenes. While our event will continue to highlight RCCF's achievements, we've decided to change things up a bit. Our event is a celebration of philanthropy and small-town pride. We're going to use this space to spotlight a few other organizations. This year, we'll highlight the Donald G. Stratton American Legion Post #238. Legion members Mike Goebel and Brad Frey will discuss the Hardwick Park project and also introduce our keynote speaker: Donald Stratton's granddaughter Nikki Stratton.

We're also giving away awards at this year's banquet. We'll recognize our Donor of the Year, establish the 1871 Club for donors who have left us a legacy gift, recognize the Friend of Tourism and the Friend of The Valley Child Development Center (TVCDC) for 2023, and will also recognize a Youth Volunteer of the Year and the Youth Sports Volunteer of the Year.

We will also take some time to recognize the achievements of our own members, honor those who have reached milestone anniversaries, and thank volunteers and sponsors who make our work possible.

There will be a lot more going on at the event—including some fun audience activities—but why don't I let you find that out for yourself? You are, after all, invited to our our banquet! Just make sure to send me an RSVP at jmccartney@redcloudnebraska.com or by calling 402-746-2653. No purchase or membership necessary. We just want to make sure that there's plenty of pot roast for everyone...and enough places to sit down.

Oh and one last critical note: if a Husker sporting event happens to coincide with the event, we might happen to accidentally leave a TV on somewhere in the building. We hope to see you on November 18th at the Opera House!