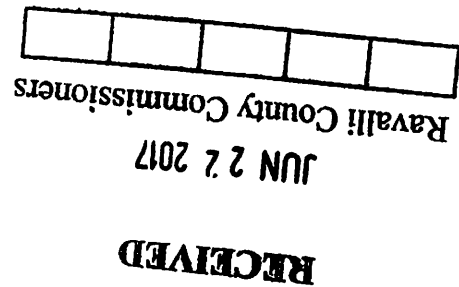


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Ravalli County Fairboard and Fair Manager, Ravalli County Commissioners, Ravalli Republic

June 20, 2017

I am so disappointed to read that our Ravalli County Fair will not be having many of our non-profit food booths. Those food booths fund our community. With the loss of the non-profit food booths, we lose guilt free eating at the fair – a plate of noodles, and you know you are helping a scout go to camp. Drink a huckleberry milkshake, and a church can provide youth or mission programs. The Soroptimists fund college scholarships, ballet dancers take dance classes, 4H kids go to camp and everyone working at a booth learns how to pull together to achieve a goal. I've worked at several of the booths over the years, and the booth not only provides much needed funds, but becomes a team building experience as well. It is not feasible to have credit card training when each booth is staffed with volunteers who have to take unpaid time off of work to get their shift in (and pay a gate fee to get there) and there is a rotating crew of dozens of volunteers that make it all happen for the four days of fair.

The fair is more than an opportunity to maximize revenue, it's a coming together of our community, a time to show off our talents, run into old friends, and celebrate our western culture.

I can appreciate that changes may need to happen, but if we lose our non-profits, we're losing what's best about our fair and hurting the groups that spend a lot of time and money mentoring our children and community members throughout the year. Does the Fairboard understand how many volunteer hours make our fair and community be its best? It's a huge number. Let's keep our non-profits feeding our fair patrons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Hessert".

Judy Hessert

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