



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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'FUZZY' NAMED FAIR 'FRIEND' AND FAYETTE 'FACE'

Uniontown, PA – Robert “Fuzzy” Stein has proudly called the Fayette County Fair his second home for more than six decades.

A charter member of the Fayette County Agricultural Improvement Association, Stein has been involved with the fair since its humble beginnings at Burgess Field, and was there when the Fayette County Fairgrounds became the annual fair’s permanent home.

“He was always Mr. Fair,” said Stein’s daughter, Marti Clark. “He put everything he had into it. He was out here every year, every night until close, counting the money.”

Also known as “Bob the Banker,” Stein, 95, of Uniontown, spent his many years on the Fayette County Fair Board making connections with his neighbors and celebrating local agriculture.

On Thursday, Stein was honored during the fair’s annual opening ceremony. Flanked by his children, Stein cried upon hearing he was the surprise recipient of the 2019 Friend of the Fair award - a distinction given by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture “in recognition of essential leadership, dedication and volunteer spirit.”

“I’m proud to say I’ve been very involved since day one,” Stein said through tears. “The Fayette County Fair has come a long way, and I just thank you so much.”

Clark, who said she “grew up at the fair” with her father, learned about the surprise honor several months ago.

“They told me he was going to get it and asked that I not tell him, so I didn’t say a word, but it was really hard,” she said. “I think it’s amazing. It’s wonderful to see him honored like this.”

Despite the secrecy, Stein said he had an inkling that Thursday’s fair visit was unusual, because of his children’s insistence that he attend.

“Since we got here, most of the time I had some idea that something was going on,” Stein said. “It was still a surprise. I feel really great right now.”

Born Dec. 16, 1923, in Philadelphia, “Fuzzy” is a son of the late J. Paul and Naomi Hershberger Stein. Growing up, he split his time between Uniontown and Everett, Pa., eventually graduating with the Uniontown Area High School Class of 1942.

Stein attended Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa., for a short time, but the onset of World War II required him to move back home and help on the family farm. During that time, he met and fell in love with his “brunette beauty,” Betty Hoover.

Following their marriage in 1948, “Fuzzy” and Betty had two children, Clark of Everett and Bob Stein Jr. of Chalk Hill. He is now a grandfather of four and great-grandfather of five.

Stein later returned to college, receiving his degree from Juniata in 1950. He went on to work as a parts manager at Fayette Farm Service in Uniontown, networking daily with many county farmers.

He began a banking career at Gallatin National Bank in 1957, serving for 28 years and rising through the ranks to vice president and cashier before his 1986 retirement.

A pro at mixing family life and civic duty, “Bob the Banker” is a member of the United Church of the Brethren and has served in countless community organizations, including the Exchange Club, Isaac Walton and - of course - the Fayette County Fair Board.

It is Stein’s commitment to Fayette County agriculture and dedicated service to his community that led to his Friend of the Fair award, as well as being named the Fayette County Public Relations Initiative’s July 2019 “face.”

As this month’s “face,” Stein joins the exclusive ranks of those recognized by the Fayette County Public Relations Initiative’s “Faces and Places” series as representing the very best people and locations in Fayette County.

To learn more about the Fayette County Fair, which is going on now through Aug. 3, visit www.fayettefair.com.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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For more information, contact Kristi Rooker Kassimer, Public Relations Specialist, at 412-691-0262, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info or Kaylie Moore, Journalist, at 724-317-6924, kmoore@fayettecountypa.info.