

# Dedicated volunteers keep Ag Expo running smoothly

Annual event keeps change constant to attract farmers

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**  
Capital Press

**SPOKANE** — The Spokane Ag Expo wouldn't come together without the hard work of its many volunteers.

Two longtime volunteers are Bill Nelson and Sybil Tresch.

Nelson has been involved since the first Expo, when he was an exhibitor.

"They hooked me many years ago," he said, noting he gets a chance to catch up with long-time farmer friends at the Expo.

"Sometimes you don't see them until you come to the show," Tresch agreed. "There's a lot of standing in the aisles and visiting. That's fun to see. You recognize the long-term attendees."



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Sybil Tresch and Bill Nelson stand outside the Spokane Convention Center. They are longtime volunteers at the Spokane Ag Expo and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum.

Tresch started volunteering in about 1991, serving as board president for

two years and on various committees.

"I loved it, I liked the

people I met, too," she said.

Many of the longtime

volunteers have demonstrated a rare loyalty not seen in other organizations, Tresch said. She estimated there are 10 or 12 volunteers who have been with the show since the beginning.

Nelson grew up on a farm in Davenport, Wash., and worked for a manufacturing company as sales manager.

Tresch lived on small acreage farms growing up, but her background is in finance.

Nelson and Tresch have been friends for a long time. They helped put on a horseshoe event in different communities around Spokane. The winners from each town used to compete at the Expo.

Tresch believes the Expo remains an important function for farmers around the region, to see technology updates and receive continuing education credits.

Nelson said the show works to provide some-

thing new every year, to keep farmers coming back again and again.

Volunteers work to make sure the Expo runs as smoothly as possible, drawing high quality attendance to interact with the show's exhibitors, Nelson and Tresch said.

"Everyone who comes to the show is basically a qualified buyer," Nelson said. "When I was exhibitor, I always had people that came to the show to see me and ask questions. It's those kinds of relationships that you build by being an exhibitor."

"We're getting more young people, I think, that are interested," Tresch said.

For aspiring new volunteers, Tresch recommends becoming acquainted with Greater Spokane Inc., and determining which committees may be the best fit.

Both Tresch and Nelson plan to continue working at the Expo.

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