



# NETWORK

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The Iowa Association of County Extension Councils serves as a vehicle for networking between county extension councils of Iowa, Iowa State University, and government leaders to promote and strengthen all local and statewide Extension programs.

## New voterVOICE System to Speed Legislative Contacts

Getting the message out in a quick, consistent, and reliable manner is key to the success of a good legislative advocacy campaign. IACEC has been working since its inception to continually improve the process in facilitating legislative contacts for its members. The IACEC Board of Directors is pleased to announce the roll-out of a new legislative contact system called **voterVOICE**.

**voterVOICE** is an internet-based technology that will allow IACEC to easily and affordably implement grassroots communication with our members. **voterVOICE** helps organizations recruit and mobilize supporters to send personalized messages to key political decision makers at the federal and state levels. In as little as a minute, supporters are informed about the issue, matched to their correct elected official(s), and guided through the message-sending process.

“The beauty of the **voterVOICE** system is that we will now be able to communicate directly to all Extension supporters who sign up for the system and make political advocacy easy for everyone. We will provide them with a suggested message that they can personalize and the contact information for their legislators comes up

right along with the message,” said IACEC President Sybil Soukup. “It really streamlines the whole process for everyone.”

Before making a decision to try the **voterVOICE** system for the upcoming legislative session, IACEC board members talked with their local legislators to find out how they would respond to such a campaign.

They found that legislators appreciate knowing how their constituents feel about an issue, regardless of the way that information is communicated to them. Their main concern is that messages come from constituents. The **voterVOICE** system is set up to send messages with the user’s contact information, ensuring that elected officials know that it is a constituent providing feedback or information to them.

“The IACEC Board chose to invest in **voterVOICE** based on the feedback from legislators and the affordability of the program,” Soukup said. “If the Association continues to have 99 member counties, as in the past, the represented cost of the **voterVOICE** program is about \$10 per county; by far the most affordable program we could ever find that allows for so much activity!”

The system is already prepared for IACEC members to sign up. We urge you to not only sign yourself up, but to pass along the link to all the Extension supporters you know so they can sign up too!



To register for **voterVOICE**, go to:

[www.votervoicenet/groups/iacec](http://www.votervoicenet/groups/iacec)

All user information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any solicitation.

## A View from the New

In an effort to get to know the four new Directors on the IACEC Board, the Network staff asked them about the purposes and benefits of the IACEC, as they see them. The four new board directors are Scott Bahr, Hardin County (Central); Dawn Marnin, Cass County (Southwest); Rick Rosburg, Emmet County (Northwest); and Caroll Schreiber, Allamakee County (Northeast).

### What do you see as the major purpose of the IACEC?

Bahr: To provide leadership and guidance by focusing on opening the lines of communication within Extension.

Marnin: I believe the major purpose of IACEC is to facilitate communication among the different counties — to discuss problems and what works for others. Most ideas come out of discussions with people from a variety of backgrounds; this gives us the opportunity to hear those perspectives.

Rosburg: The major purpose of IACEC, in my mind, is to foster communication and to establish a link among local Extension services, ISU, and legislators in an effort to fund and implement educational and research-based programming that will leverage our investment in our land-grant university for the needs of community and individuals.

Schreiber: The purpose of the IACEC is to provide information from the state to the county and to work with Iowa State University Extension on the state

level to get answers to county extension council questions. The IACEC also does legislative work on behalf of extension councils.

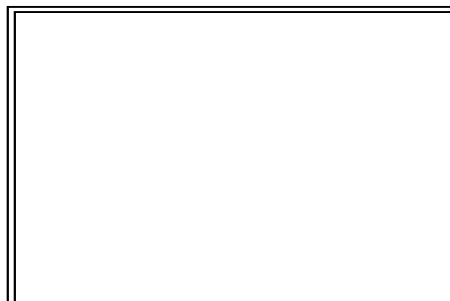
### How do you feel the IACEC serves as a benefit for county extension councils?

Bahr: IACEC has internally developed committees for promotion. These committees promote legislative activities and develop marketing plans for the benefit of Extension.

Marnin: IACEC serves as a benefit for county extension because of its numbers. If one county has issues, odds are good that another does as well. Together we can find ways to deal with those issues and everyone benefits.

Rosburg: IACEC serves as an important liaison for county extension councils. Advancements are being made to improve communications regarding current issues that affect their operations and funding. IACEC works closely with ISU staff and administration, offering direct input from councils as received through area meetings and liaison conference calls. IACEC is the county's voice, both legislatively and administratively.

Schreiber: IACEC benefits county extension councils through its marketing and legislative work. Its marketing work serves to educate legislators and the general public so they know the benefits of their local extension service. The legislative work helps to secure state funds



### 2007—2008 Board of Directors

(L to R): Ron Fransen, Caroll Schreiber, Scott Bahr, Denise Maier, Rick Rosburg, Sybil Soukup, Brian Waldstein, Tom Ullrich, Kenny Hennings, and Pat Griffin. Not pictured: Connie Cannon, Tori Grantz, Russell Kurth, Dawn Marnin, and Cindy Shelley.

for the counties to use in carrying out their local programs.

### How do you see is the relationships among the IACEC, county extension council members, and ISUE administration?

Bahr: Simply stated, organized and informed partnering. County Extension, Council Members, and ISUE administration all act as a beneficial education resource. We partner with the same goal and collaborate with ideas, experience, and planning. Working together we will provide the broadest and best possible resources to the public.

Marnin: Everyone in IACEC, County Extension Councils, and ISUE administration are all working toward one goal. Together we can promote and strengthen programs statewide. We can take advantage of what each has to offer and accomplish this on a statewide level.

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## Partnership Agreement Committee Recommends Minor Changes

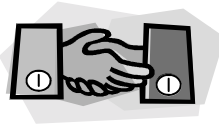
We are now entering the final year of the current partnership agreement between county extension councils and ISU Extension. Vice President Jack Payne along with The Iowa Association of County Extension Councils appointed a committee to review the current partnership agreement and propose changes for FY09-11.

This committee met in May. At this point, they have put forth the following recommendations to be included in the proposed agreement.

- Population and county valuations will continue to be used to determine the amount paid by counties.
- Councils will continue to receive credits for housing field specialists, at the rate of \$500 for the first field specialist, \$2,000 for the second field specialist and \$2,750 for the third specialist.
- The date used to determine the credits will be November 1. Counties will continue to receive the revenue generation credit at 10 percent of the formula.
- Extension Councils will pay the agreement quarterly.

One of the more difficult issues

that the committee has not yet approved, deals with options to reduce ISU's annual loss of \$225,000 due to the cost of current CEED sharing agreements.



The committee met again August 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss solutions to handle this loss. Those solutions include options reducing the percentage paid to counties sharing a CEED and/or increasing every district's partnership share for other support.

"We agreed that we need to keep a presence in every county and to work within the parameters of the budget for county director salaries. I think if councils want the quality staff and programming in their counties, then they need to be open to creative ideas to pay for the staff and programs," said Jayne Lupkes, Worth County Extension Council Member.

Once the committee finalizes a proposed agreement, it must be approved by both the IACEC board and Vice-President Payne.

A finalized version of the proposed partnership agreement

### Partnership Agreement Committee Members

#### Extension Council Members:

Sue Boettcher, Dickinson County; Russell Collingwood, Iowa County; Kathy Deibert, Marshall County; Tori Grantz, Clinton County; Pat Griffin, Greene County; Jayne Lupkes, Worth County; Kathy Meyer, Butler County; Gary Smith, Mills County; Tom Ullrich, Woodbury County and Alan Umbenhowe, Lucas County

#### Staff:

Rhonda Christensen, Buena Vista CEED; Alan Ladd, Southwest AEED; Dale Miller, Marion CEED; Al Ricks, Black Hawk CEED and Janet Smith, Henry CEED.

was not yet available at the time this newsletter was sent to print. IACEC will mail each county extension council member a copy of the proposed agreement along with instructions how they can submit comments to the IACEC Board of Directors. The IACEC board will vote on the proposed agreement at their October 10 meeting.

"This partnership agreement is possible because of the dedication of our Extension Councils across the state," said Mary Holz-Clause, interim associate vice president of Extension and Outreach. "It is truly a two-way agreement."

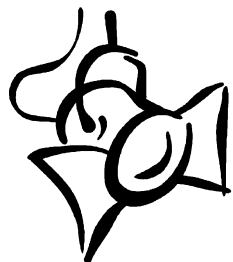
## A View from the New...CONTINUED from page 3

Rosberg: Our relationship is very simple: we are all part of a single mission to share information, research, and education. Like a three-legged stool, if one leg is missing it is difficult to find

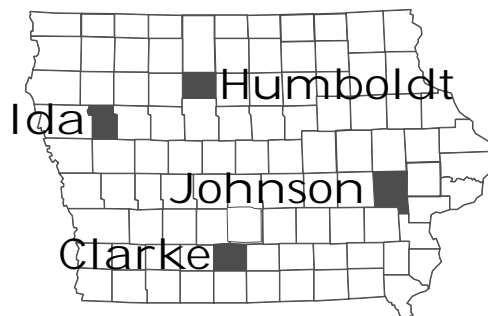
balance.

Schreiber: I would refer to my response to the first question. Communication between extension's state and county levels is very important. I very

strongly believe in extension councils and what they do for programming in every county. I would like to help them work through the IACEC to continue to strengthen those programs.



# County Spotlight



## Early Childhood Reading Program is a Community Effort in Ida County

An innovative literacy program encouraged parents to read with their preschool children, and it received tremendous local support in Ida County.

With funding totals beyond \$5,000 from the Ida County Betterment Foundation, Dollar General, and Target literacy grants, the *Family Storyteller Program* rallied families with

preschool children via five weekly sessions.

Local youth volunteered for child care. Adult facilitators donated contact time with participants, as well as time for training and preparation. Free meals, child care, educational door prizes, and take home literacy activities were added benefits that were made possible by the financial and in-kind support of Ida County Extension partners.



A participant in the literacy program reads to his children.

Many families chose to continue attending ISU Extension-sponsored parenting classes offered in Ida County, which adds to the program's success.

### Quick Facts for Ida County

Population (2006 est.): 7,180  
Pop. Change 2000-2006: - 8.4%  
Minority Population: 0.8%  
Land area: 432 square miles  
Med. Household Income: \$40,421  
County Seat: Ida Grove

"We find ourselves reading more books, and the extra family time is great," said one of the participants.

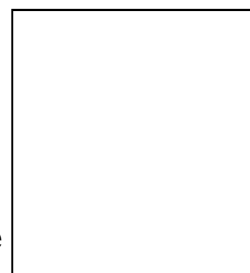
## Community Diversity Garden Growing For Clarke County Extension

Starting five years ago with very little money, a small grant, and a goal to provide garden plots to families who otherwise have no space for gardening, Clarke County has developed a

community garden is blossoming.

"We started with eight plots and we now have over 20 plots", said Master Gardener Marilyn Dorland, volunteer garden coordinator.

Tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, tomatillos, cilantro, and peppers are popular."



Participants at the Community Diversity Garden tour.

Extension sponsors an open house and mini-field day each year. Three or four plots are used by Extension for demonstrations.

### Quick Facts for Clarke County

Population (2006 est.): 9,156  
Pop. change 2000-2006: + 0.3%  
Minority Population: 1.3%  
Land area: 431 square miles  
Med. Household Income: \$38,793  
County Seat: Osceola

About 60% of the participants are Hispanic, promoting cultural diversity. There is also diversity in what the gardeners choose to grow. Dorland said, "We see a variety of produce grown here.

## Involvement is Key to the Humboldt County Extension Council

Extension Council members are very active and involved with different projects in Humboldt county. The members have varied backgrounds and experiences, which helps them represent the people of Humboldt County.

Two council members, Kim Adams and Pam Norman, have been developing the Humboldt County Barn Quilt Project.

### Quick Facts for Humboldt County

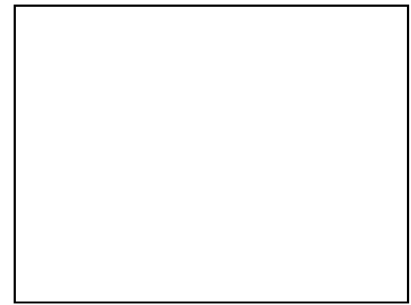
Population (2006 est.): 9,975  
 Pop. change 2000-2006: -3.9%  
 Minority Population: 1.3%  
 Land area: 434 square miles  
 Med. Household Income: \$42,717  
 County Seat: Dakota City

Another council member, Larry Lane, helped establish a four-County Horticulture Program.

Other council members, Janelle Wigans, Caroline Thompson, Shelly Haselhuhn, Teresa Bleich, and Gary Erickson are involved in 4-H programs as community club or Clover Kids leaders.

“We have a good group on the council and we work well together,” said Mike Ubben, Council chairperson.

Ubben, Lane, and Adams have also represented Humboldt County Extension at area and local meetings.



Front row (L to R): Larry Lane, Mike Ubben, and Kim Adams. Back row (L to R): Teresa Bleich, Caroline Thompson, and Pam Norman. Not pictured: Gary Erickson, Janelle Wigans, and Shelly Haselhuhn

Along with Extension Council responsibilities, members are active in other organizations, churches, community groups, and schools.

## Johnson County Extension Council Is a True Partner

For the nine members of the Johnson County Extension Council, service is a strong part of the job description. Their service leadership is demonstrated in a number of ways.

The Sixth Annual Pancake Breakfast in July 2007 raised money to fund the program development fee for every 4-H member in the county. Council members helped serve 1,500

### Quick Facts for Johnson County

Population (2006 est.): 118,038  
 Pop. change 2000-2005: + 6.3%  
 Minority Population: 9.5%  
 Land area: 614 square miles  
 Med. Household Income: \$44,426  
 County Seat: Iowa City

people in an event that functions as the kick-off for the county fair. “We get good community support — donated items for a silent action at the breakfast,” said Denise Maier council member. Maier also serves on the state IACEC Board and the “Overall Women’s Conference” planning committee.

Maynard Hebl, the most tenured member of the Council, has been involved for over 25 years. John Schneider, Council chair, is the project leader for the 4-H Beef Department. Bill Terry, a Master Gardener for twenty years, provided leadership for the Adopt-an-Acre program for the Southeast Iowa Research Farm.



Council members work at the annual pancake breakfast. Pictured (L to R): CEED Gene Mohling, and council members Maynard Hebl, Bill Terry, and John Schneider

Donna Ruth is on the 4-H Beef Committee and garnered support for the 2007 Youth Beef Blast trip to Ames. Ronda Beasley, has provided strong support for fundraising efforts.

### 2007 Scholarship Winners

The Iowa Association of County Extension Councils is pleased to announce the presentation of five \$300 college scholarships for 2007.

Recipients include Jessica Slavik, daughter of Crawford County Extension Council member Doyle Slavik; Nilan Lansing, son of Fayette County Extension Council member Neil Lansing; Elizabeth Baudler, daughter of Adair County Extension Council member Sondra Baudler; Mallary Steinhart, daughter of Keokuk County Extension Council member Brad Steinhart; and Andrew Martin, son of Wright County Extension Council member Doug Martin.

This scholarship program recognizes the outstanding contributions students make to their communities.

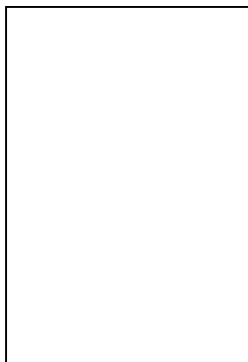
Baudler demonstrated dedication to her community by spending weekends and summer days volunteering for Extension programs geared toward school-age children. She also initiated the "Nutrition for the Brain" project, working with over 100 children served by Greenfield



Elizabeth Baudler, Adair County, receives her scholarship from Gary Smith, IACEC President.

WIC. Each child received a book and their parents received information about helping their children become good readers. Baudler plans to attend Iowa State University.

Through 4-H, Lansing helped with beautification of a local park, visited with nursing home residents, led project workshops for younger 4-H'ers, and served in



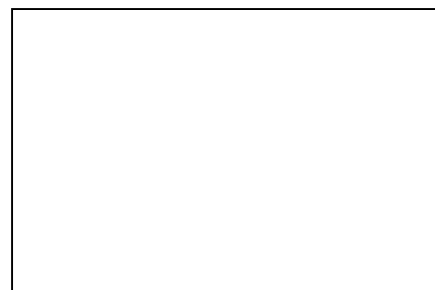
Nilan Lansing, of Fayette County, received the IACEC scholarship for the Northeast Area.

numerous ways at the county fair. He volunteered at the Iowa State Fair, was a camp counselor for younger 4-H'ers, and helped with the annual omelet brunch.



Andrew Martin, Wright County scholarship recipient, at Glenwood Cemetery. He maintained the site for the past four years.

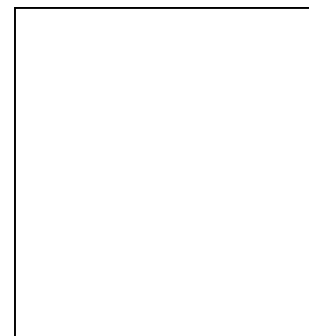
Martin took on the responsibility of maintaining the Glenwood Cemetery for the past four years. He mowed, trimmed around the stones, cleaned up debris, and seeded grass. He also took the initiative of resetting some of the older monuments. He will attend Drake University.



IACEC Board member Russell Kurth presented a scholarship to Jessica Slavik of Crawford County.

Slavik began her service involvement through 4-H, participating in many service activities. She served as club leader after she graduated from high school. She is a county rabbit project leader, superintendent, and a judge for 4-H rabbit, dog, and pet shows. Slavik attends Iowa State University.

As a 4-H member, Steinhart was a junior leader for dog obedience, served on the county 4-H council, and raised money for the carcass fund. Over the past six years, she has helped with 4-H summer day camps. Steinhart will attend Kirkwood Community College.



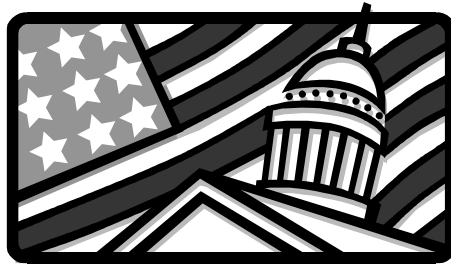
Mallary Steinhart of Keokuk County was presented her scholarship by Kay Witte, Keokuk County Extension Council member.

## IACEC Represented in Washington

Gary Smith and Margaret Mordan, of IACEC, represented District 3 and 5 at the Public Issues Leadership (PILD) Conference in Washington, D.C. April 23 – 25. The PILD Conference teaches leadership and advocacy skills to participants in an effort to positively address public issues.

This conference is sponsored by the Joint Council of Extension Professionals. PILD provided opportunities for delegates to interact with federal decision-makers and delegates from other states.

“The conference confirmed that Iowa State University Extension is moving in the right direction to fulfill its mission as a gateway for every person in the state to have access to his or her land grant university,” said Mordan. “We were given the opportunity to tell our personal



stories and to discuss the needs of Iowa County Extension Councils with our Iowa senators and representatives during our visit to the hill on Wednesday of the conference.” Mordan also appreciated the opportunity to visit with other volunteers about state programs.

“The theme for the conference was *Connectivity: Community to Capitol*,” said Smith. “I thought it dovetailed nicely with IACEC Legislative involvement back in Iowa.”

Smith attended a session called *Involving Extension Councils and*

*Boards in Advocacy*. “The methods were consistent with what we have been trying to do in Iowa...making yourself known to your legislator,” said Smith. “They emphasized spreading the word to any elected official who will listen to how extension programs benefit constituents and their communities.”

Participants visited Capitol Hill. “I felt like we were well received by Senator Harkin and Representative King’s staff. They seemed particularly interested in how extension partners with other community organizations to solve problems and achieve success,” Smith said.

Both Mordan and Smith felt the trip was very worthwhile and would recommend it to anyone who is asked to attend.

## Legislative Day Yields Positive Results

The sixth annual Legislative Day was held on March 14, 2007.

About 60 people from 27 counties came to Des Moines to ask their legislators to support Governor Culver’s budget request for Board of Regents institutions. Participants experienced a very positive reception from most of the legislators. Follow-up contacts

were made with four legislators who were not supportive.

“Partially due to our efforts, ISU Extension had one of its best budget appropriations from the Iowa Legislature in years,” said IACEC President Sybil Soukup. The legislature passed 3% salary increases funded through the Board of Regents. There was an additional \$25 million approved for the appropriations bill.

“We are hoping to maintain financial support by continuing and

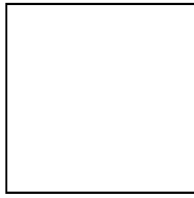
increasing our lobbying efforts as a group; we are confident that *voterVOICE* [see page 1] will make our interactions with elected officials more uniform in message and, best of all, more frequent,” said Soukup.



Dues are due on September 30. To ensure your county’s membership for the upcoming year, please send in your dues today!

### From the President...

Greeting IACEC members! It is my honor and pleasure to be writing my first "From the President" column as your newly-inaugurated president.



IACEC President  
Sybil Soukup

When I took office, I was asked to think about what kind of goals I would like to set for IACEC and how I would like to see the organization work for its members. As I thought about this, I kept going back to our mission statement for guidance. It states that IACEC is "A vehicle for networking between county Extension Councils of Iowa, Iowa State University, and

government leaders to promote and strengthen all local and statewide Extension programs."

With that in mind, it is my goal to perpetuate the mission of IACEC by educating the public and the Iowa Legislature about the benefits and accomplishments of ISU Extension, serve the needs of our member counties, and create ways for IACEC to have a unified, strengthened, and statewide voice to communicate our message.


One immediate tool that is being implemented to achieve these goals is a program called *voterVOICE*. This is an internet-based program designed to allow multiple users to lobby elected

officials in an easy, "point and click," streamlined way. See the article about *voterVOICE* on the front page for more details.

IACEC will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008! Many things have changed over the years, but one thing has stayed the same: our commitment to our member counties.

IACEC strives to advocate for, promote, and support our member counties as well as Iowa State University. If you have any suggestions, comments and advice on how we can do this better, please, never hesitate to call me.

Thanks!



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