

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## University Extension



### Poweshiek County Extension

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*Get inside Extension and discover how we support healthy people, healthy environments, and healthy economies. Read about some of the ways ISU Extension meets local needs, improves quality of life, and helps make Poweshiek County a better place to live. You'll be amazed at what we do.*

### County Extension Staff

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*County Extension Education Director*

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*Extension Council Chair*

Deborah Van Arkel  
*County Extension Education Director*

### Leadership Program Spurs Healthy Community Projects

Adam Grier, safety director at Manatt's in Brooklyn, is a May 2008 graduate of the Poweshiek Leadership Program – an experience he calls “one of the main reasons I decided to take a more active role in the community.” In August he was appointed to serve on a local city council.



Looking ahead to improvement projects and since he is a jogger, biker, and takes his kids for walks, he'd like to improve city sidewalks and streets. It will be a matter of funding these projects—but that is the challenge he is ready for.

“I thank Manatt's for sponsoring me to be in the leadership program,” Grier noted. “With the daily humdrum of work and family, a lot of us don't think to become involved in the community. But that program really motivated me to become involved.”

### Healthy Work Environments at Local Industries

During this past year, four industries in Grinnell, Malcom and Brooklyn initiated projects with Iowa State University Extension's CIRAS to improve their work environment.





Joel Kelling, Ron Haworth, Lee McFee, Dan Doty, Standing Kevin James, Liz Roberts, Connie Mathes, Janet Sears, Vicki Blomme.

## Poweshiek County Extension Council

Every Iowa county has an elected Extension Council that guides local educational programming by partnering with staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the issues and people of the county.

We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Agriculture/Natural Resources: improve enterprise strategies for marketing and production
- Business/Industry: building networks for growth
- Communities: leadership development
- Families: parent education, healthy lifestyles, financial wellness
- 4-H Youth Development: meeting needs of youth through mastery, generosity, belonging, independence



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for campus enrollment, continuing education, campus visits, campus exhibits, conferences, camps, and sporting events.

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## Healthy Work Environment continued

CIRAS (Center for Industrial Research And Service) exists to carry out the land grant university mission to improve the quality of life in Iowa by enhancing the performance of Iowa industry. Identified issues can be resolved using resources from many CIRAS partnerships facilitated by a regional account manager.

## Arts, Culture Project To Boost Local Economies

What is a barn quilt?



A quilt block pattern is painted on 2 plywood sheets to form the 8 foot square that is mounted on a barn.

A Poweshiek Barn Quilt Committee formed in October 2007 to explore if there was interest to develop this project to support tourism and economic development. There was! The Poweshiek Barn Quilt project compliments Grinnell and Poweshiek county's efforts as an Arts and Culture Area by highlighting the strong rural history and culture of the area. To capture Poweshiek rural history, the group has researched each of the 16 township's history and each barn owner shared the history of the barn.

A tourism rule of thumb is for each hour of drive time, 3-4 hours of experiences need to be available for visitors to enjoy. The payoff is increased revenue to the county because the tourists will spend money locally during the hours they are here. People visiting the area

will be able to drive to different communities and experience local history via brochures available at public and tourist locations.

To date, the group project has secured almost \$4,000 from Poweshiek Alliance, Grinnell Arts Council, Grinnell College, and individual donations. As of September 2008, 7 barn quilts are ready. In this initial phase of the project, the committee's goal is to have a barn quilt in each of the 16 townships in the county. Poweshiek Extension serves as fiscal agent and helps link people and resources for project implementation.

## Impact Youth for the Future

A new dimension was added to Poweshiek County's 4-H annual recognition process: youth-adult conferences. Ninety-six youth participated from across the county.



Through a conversation with an adult to practice verbal communication skills, youth reflect on their total 4-H year by sharing their goals, what they learned and how they shared experiences with others through citizenship and leadership activities in their project areas. They share their plans for the future as well.

These are building blocks for future success in life. The experience is another building block to prepare for future job interviews and careers. Seven adult volunteers were trained to prepare for conferencing with youth in fourth through twelfth grade.