

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

University Extension

“Snow Angels” help Corydon residents survive long winter

Last year, The *Horizons* Project in Corydon, Iowa brought together a cross section of community leaders to discuss poverty issues and the availability of support services in their town. Iowa State University Extension-Wayne County, facilitated the community discussions, provided networking assistance to volunteers and helped initiate fundraising efforts. One of the many outcomes was formation of a non-profit, self help group called *Welcome, We Help*.



Many *Welcome, We Help* (WWH) members said an inability to deliver timely services to people in need was a major concern. The long winter of 2007-08 in southern Iowa provided a perfect service opportunity.

WWH committee member, Chad Wilson, an English instructor at Wayne Community School, organized a group of about 30 high school student volunteers affectionately known as “Snow Angels.” On days when

weather forced cancellation of classes, Wilson’s students met at the high school anyway—shovels in hand—then canvassed the town in small groups, clearing snow from sidewalks, driveways, outdoor steps and porches.

Among those targeted for the free services were senior citizens and shut-in recipients of “Meals on Wheels” in the community. “The ‘Snow Angels’ came to my house and I offered to pay them,” said Corydon resident, Martha Hughes. “They said it was all volunteer and I didn’t owe them a thing. I think it’s wonderful what they did.”

“We have caring students here willing to give back to the community. I think it’s important we offer them a productive way to volunteer whenever possible.”

—Chad Wilson, teacher, Wayne Community School, and *Welcome, We Help* committee member

The *Horizons* Community Leadership Program helps small communities with more than 10% of residents living at or below the poverty level to address local economic issues and implement change. *Horizons* is funded by the Northwest Area Foundation and implemented by ISU Extension in partnership with Iowa citizens.

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