Jay’s Comments

I like to do woodworking. This started well over 20 years ago because I needed a tangible feeling of accomplishment. Growing up on a farm made it easy to look back most days and see a plowed field, a barn full of hay or a newborn litter of pigs. Even our weekly effort to get everything mowed on Saturday so the Sunday drivers would see a well-manicured place was a feeling of accomplishment. (To this day I still like to mow.) Those things elicited a feeling of tangible accomplishment and satisfaction that was good for my soul. In the academic world I think we see accomplishments but in less tangible ways and sometimes we’re planting seeds that will not bear fruit for quite some time. Perhaps even someone else will make that “harvest”. In doing extension, research or teaching, things happen an inch at a time, or so it seemed to me. There may be an event, a published paper, or a class completed that brings things to a grand finale eventually, but there often wasn’t a daily accomplishment and I missed that. I started woodworking to fill that need for tangible results, building mostly furniture. I don’t know that I’d say I’m talented. I think with the right tools, patience, and a drive for precision most anyone could do it. I needed it and still do, though I don’t do it as often as I’d like. Working with whirling razor-sharp blades if you’re mentally distracted is not a good idea. I enjoy the silky smoothness of sanded hardwood, the dusty smell, and the decorative dance of the grain that grew rather than was manufactured.

As I build things, I tend to use a plan that someone else developed, but I think
about better ways to do it, more innovative, simpler. It takes a thought process to make sure your steps are in the right order, working with the end in mind. My latest project is a barrister bookcase. It has raised panels in the sides and each end has seven different pieces to create the whole. Each piece had to be cut to a precise length, then mortise and tenons formed to fit just right. It’s tricky to get all the pieces to fit together well, snug but not too snug, with consistent lengths, square and uniform. These pieces are all glued and clamped in place to complete one end, forming one out of many. As I assembled the seven pieces there were times that one would be stubborn or perhaps, I was off just a few millimeters, and it left a gap. I’m told that even good woodworkers make some mistakes, they just know how to cover them better. It takes all seven pieces, along with glue, to make a whole that turns out beautiful and useful. Sanded and finished it makes one unit.

ANR Extension is a lot like this. We have many pieces that all need to fit together well to be a well-functioning organization that makes an impact on the state of Iowa. Every piece is unique, important and valued. If one is missing the result just isn’t the same. Good communication and respect are the glue that holds us all together. Will there be flaws in our work? Of Course! We just pitch in to work through the rough spots. We smooth them over, sand them flat and learn from the mistake. We’re in this together even if we have to use “wood putty” or even a little baling wire or duct tape now and then. We are one, for the good of all Iowans. Thank you for all you are doing to make ANR impactful!
ANR Update

Congratulations to the Southeast Area Ag Team on receiving a County Services award for your outstanding work with ISU Extension and Outreach and Southeast Iowa!

MyData Reporting
Thank you to everyone that diligently entered their MyData numbers. This has been a learning process and it will continue to get easier. I would encourage you to put a reminder on your calendar to do updates periodically. I know some do this weekly (some do it weakly) while others choose monthly. We would like to have numbers entered monthly at least so we can pull reports whenever the request comes in. Thanks again for working at this. Change is hard and I appreciate that.

Area Ag Team Updates
A new area ag team is forming in the South Central area. There were several people responsible for this idea to better meet the needs in that area. Area ag teams are an important part of how we work together. If you do not currently attend one, I would encourage you to check out the one in your area. Let me know if you need help making a contact or visit the Area Ag Team page on MyExtension for team contacts and meeting schedules.

Extension Annual Conference: Together for Tomorrow
Extension Annual Conference is March 7-8. Please register by Feb. 18 for the early registration rate. You may register until Feb. 25 for a late fee. The theme for this year’s event is Together for Tomorrow. After two years of virtual conferences, the planning team is excited to host colleagues and interact with one another in person. Keynote speaker, Paul Long, will share a message about communication skills and efforts to create both a positive work culture and provide excellent customer service through his “FUNdamentals”.

2022 Extension Awards
Nominations are due February 10th by 12:00 p.m. A list of awards and nomination guidelines can be found on the [2022 Extension Awards](#) webpage.

**New ANR Publications**
The following publications were added or updated in the ISU Extension Store during January:

- FM 1712: [Estimated Costs of Crop Production in Iowa – 2022](#) by Alejandro Plastina
- FM 1421: [Deductible Livestock Costs for Adjusting 2021 Income Tax Returns](#) by Alejandro Plastina
- FM 1815: [Livestock Enterprise Budgets for Iowa – 2021](#) by Tim Christensen and Lee Schulz
- FS 51: [Using Potassium Sorbate to Inhibit Yeast Growth in Bottled Wines](#) by Maureen Moroney and Jennie Savits
- PIDC 45: [Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic Sample Submission Form](#) by Laura Jesse Iles
- SOC 3102: [Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll - 2021 Summary Report](#) by J. Gordon Arbuckle
- Another 14 existing publications were remediated to be digitally accessible, increasing ANR's total number of accessible publications to 900.

**February Staff Spotlight:** [Rachel Kennedy](#)

**Personnel Changes/Updates**
Searches:

- Extension Ag Engineering Field Specialist – SW, verbally accepted
Assistant Professor & NCRAC director (NREM) – 20% Extension – advertised

Assistant Professor & Dairy Specialist (AnS) – 60% Extension - advertised

Assistant/Associate Professor & Cow/Calf Specialist (AnS) – 60% Extension - advertised

Associate/Full Professor & Swine Nutritionist (AnS) – 17.5% Extension - advertised

Exiting:

Dr. Joe Morris – Professor & Ext Specialist (Fisheries) & NCRAC director – retiring in March

Brian Tapp – Program Coordinator – FFED – resigned as of January 19th

Annika Koppes – IPIC resigned in December

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Extension Professional Development Resources and Opportunities

MyData Help Sheets, Training and Virtual Office Hours Schedule

Apply Now for Excellence in Extension Grants
Due February 10, 2022

Everything DiSC Workplace Community of Practice Offered in 2022
Tuesday, February 8, 2022 - 10:00am to Tuesday, December 13, 2022 - 10:50am

New Staff Webinar Series
Tuesday, February 15, 2022 - 1:00pm to 2:00pm
Extension Engagement Essentials Zoom Series
Tuesday, March 1, 2022 - 1:00pm to 1:50pm

Emotional Intelligence: A Pathway to Self-Understanding and Improved Leadership
offered March 22
Tuesday, March 22, 2022 - 12:30pm to 4:30pm

Virtual Organizational Professional Development Book Club - Privilege, Power, and Difference
Thursday, March 24, 2022 - 10:00am to 11:00am

Additional Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Professional Development events