The Iowa Barn Foundation is grateful for the effort of volunteers. Donated his time and talents to the Iowa Barn Foundation Magazine.

Roxanne Mehlisch, Elizabeth McDorman, Ken Starek, Lee Kline, Steve Lekwa, Michael Harker, Neil Harl, Connie Nancine Bruxvoort, Don Geiger, 2

The surveying of barns in their counties, encourage membership in the Iowa Barn Foundation, and help with fund raising. Working with members of the board from each of nine areas of the state, they also oversee projects. Many of Iowa’s 99 counties have representatives to the Iowa Barn Founda-

tive. We welcome volunteers to represent those counties that do not yet have a representative.

County Representatives

The Iowa Barn Foundation’s county representatives help to promote the preservation of barns, organize the surveying of barns in their counties, encourage membership in the Iowa Barn Foundation, and help with fund raising. Working with members of the board from each of nine areas of the state, they also oversee projects. Many of Iowa’s 99 counties have representatives to the Iowa Barn Foundation.

We welcome volunteers to represent those counties that do not yet have a representative.

Adams: Kathy West (641) 335-2334
Allamakee: Marlene Finstrom (536) 382-3439
Appanoose: Brent Schimid (641) 896-7334, Willard Vandervelken (641) 856-2152
Audubon: Paul Walker (712) 563-2779
Black hawk: Keith Oltrogge (319) 984-5292
Boone: Jim Jordan (515) 432-2376
Bremer: Keith Olrog (319) 984-5292
Builer: Michael Keop (641) 983-2351
Calhoun: Joel Rud (702) 297-6516
Carroll: Lawrence Schmida (72) 763-9369
Cass: Gary and Pam Wood (702) 544-5770
Cerro Gordo: Dale and Judy Miles (641) 424-1197
Chickasaw: Carolyn Gilking (641) 394-5067
Clayton: Brian Larson (563) 424-716, Michael McConnell (206) 406-9380
Clayton: Robert Johnson (563) 675-2376
Dallas: Maggie O’Reake (515) 758-2787
Davis: Judy Cinema (640) 672-3545, Sharon and Bill Hardx (515) 722-5224
Delaware: Richard Hellums (563) 927-4064
Dubuque: Rachel Schimmel (515) 351-9193
Emmet: Gail Mathies (712) 966-2208, Darrel Kalv (72) 362-2001
Fayette: Vernon Oakland (630) 531-7223
Floyd: Roger Reth (641) 228-4094, Jean and John Schen (641) 228-2654
Franklin: Joe and Shirley Pitsor (641) 456-3994 and the Franklin County Historical Society
Greene: Nancy and Larry Richards (556) 386-4750
Hamilton: Clark and Laura Value (515) 625-5413
Hardin: Ken Starek (647) 847-3038
Humboldt: Kent Weimer (515) 322-4477
Ioa: Don Pannegro (72) 364-3494
Iowa: Bill and Lois Randolph (319) 679-2486
Iowa: Bill and Lois Randolph (319) 679-2486
Johnson: Paul and Jo Anne Neuzil (319) 679-2486
Keokuk: Ken Augustine (515) 233-1633
Lee Kline, long-time agricultural reporter, shared this story about moving a huge round barn near Manson. The story was carried on WHO Radio and WMT Radio.

Everyone had a good time at Twin Lakes, near Manson, Iowa. The occasion was the moving of a round barn one and-a-half miles from the farm to the church camp on the west side of Twin Lake.

It was like a county fair! Everyone on blankets, soccer chairs, eating, drinking pop—round barn T-shirts for sale. It was like a gathering for fireworks.

The barn is 61 feet in diameter and perfectly round—not hex-sided or eight-sided, but round. The recently wood-shingled roof is a perfect dome with a cupola on top. It was built in 1920 by an Illinois doctor.

A round barn this size pretty well fills up a gravel road, both ditches, fence row to fence row.

The event was supposed to start at 2 p.m. Ten minutes before the barn was on the road and ready to roll. I expected it all to be hours late.

The barn rolled down the gravel road at five miles per hour. It took only 25 minutes to move the barn.

While the barn was hauled for 10 minutes, I walked under the structure to see how the movers managed all of this. It’s a three-point carry: more stable that way.

Two sets of tires, eight tires each, carry the load at the back. The front of the steel beams under the barn rest on the rear of a 95x66 semi tractor.

These “trucks”—the sets of eight wheels—were manufactured by the mover, Ron Holland of Forest City. He says they sell them all over the country. Each “truck” has a built-in hydraulic cylinder to level loads. There are 24 rubber tires carrying the load.

Standing underneath this barn positioned to move on the gravel road, I had the same feeling as standing under a DC-10 jumbo jet.

Our cover photograph “Barn and Windmill” is by Michael Harker, photographer and author of Harker’s Barns. Published by the University of Iowa Press. His photographs are featured in a traveling exhibit, “Barns Again! Celebrating an American Icon” sponsored by Humanities Iowa and organized by the Smithsonian Institution’s Traveling Exhibition Service and the National Building Museum.

They’re ready to roll and emerging from under the barn, I spot a sparro flying into a hole on the wall, to its nest.

It’s a sight to see a domed, round barn moving above the corn and soybean fields. It was one of those perfect summer days—deep blue skies, white fluffy cloud, and comfortable temperature.

I talked to Milton Heins as the barn moved to its new foundation. He and his brothers, Harold and Warren, gave the barn to the campground. Milton is 75. I asked him if he played in that barn when he was a kid growing up.

He said—not so much played—but in worked. It was the hottest place in the world to mow hay because there were no doors or windows to open for ventilation.

It was 10 degrees warmer than the other areas. It was a complete place for animals. A concrete block silo stood in the center. The hay was distributed in the top by unique circular track. The Percheron horses and the milk cows were stanchioned below. There were some oats and corn in.

In its new location, where there was hay, now kids will play. Instead of Percheron horses and milk cows, a nature center, and meeting rooms will be constructed.

The barn will continue to “do good” but in a different way.

On the Cover . . .

Peg Barn — detail
Claw-Crab

Door: Window, Stairs

The Iowa Barn Foundation Magazine
Spring 2004 Vol. 7, No. 1
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The Iowa Barn Foundation is grateful to Michael Lanning, a graphic artist living in Ames, who has generously donated his time and talents to the magazine. The Iowa Barn Foundation, along with this magazine and the Web site, are the effort of volunteers.

Editor: Jacqueline Andre Schmeal
Assistant Editor: Michael McConnell


Iowa Barn Foundation Magazine

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T H E  I O W A  B A R N  F O U N D A T I O N

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June Picnic & Barn Tour

A tour of unique and historic eight barns in Marion and Mahaska Counties and a Dutch-flavored picnic will highlight the Iowa Barn Foundation spring event the weekend of June 5 and 6.

Rob Vos, of Pella, Iowa, and the Iowa Barn Foundation’s Marion County representative, has worked for months to organize the out-of-the-ordinary picnic and tour. He researched and photographed the barns for us.

The barns will be opened from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday. The picnic will be at the Nelson Pioneer Farm, Oskaloosa, Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. To reach the farm, take Market Street off Highway 63 north out of Oskaloosa 1.5 miles. You will see signs guiding you to the historic farm which will be opened for the Foundation tour.

The cost of the authentic Dutch lunch, focused on Dutch spiced beef and Dutch apple pie, will be $10 per person and $4 for children. The cost includes food and a donation to the Nelson Pioneer Farm.

For reservations, please send a check donation to the Nelson Pioneer Farm.

A tour of unique and historic eight barns

The barns include:

A rare round barn owned by Amy Young and Marlys (Young) and Jack McMeans. The barn was built in 1911 is 76 feet in diameter and houses a 14-foot cement stave silo. The barn features feed bunks, grain cribs, and a wing shed for horses. The barn was bought by J. Thomas Young in 1958 for use in his feed and grain business, Marion County Produce, Knoxville. (The barn is at 708 Rutledge Road, Knoxville. From Knoxville, go south on Highway 14 17.5 miles to G 76. Turn west 2.8 miles to 80th Avenue, then north 1.5 miles to Rutledge. Go west ½ miles.)

The Vos family farm was built in 1929 by the De Kock family of Pella. It was constructed with commercial milled lumber, round nails, and factory-made windows—modern materials at the time. The barn featured a 10-stanchion milking parlor with cement gutter, stalls for four draft horse teams, and a large hayloft. The barn was purchased in 1992 by Rob and Teri Vos. (From the northeast corner of the Pella square, drive north 1.5 miles on Main Street/Highway T 14. The acreage is on the west side of Highway T 14 (541 Highway T 14).)

The Slycord barn, which housed Gar- den City Dairy, is a landmark in Pella. Once two clay block silos separated the barns. These were later removed, and the barns were joined by a breezeway, now a workshop. The Langstraat family built the south barn in 1909 and the north barn in 1925. The south barn is pegged and has a limestone parlor with cement gutter, stalls for four horse teams, and a large hayloft. The barn was purchased by Don’s foundation. Don and Marcia Slycord own the barn which was purchased by Don’s grandparents in 1944. The Slycords use the barn for Simmental cattle. Artist Frank Miller, long-time Des Moines Register artist, painted a Dutch scene on one of the grain bin doors. The barn is at 1856 Highway 163 in Eddyville, turn east on 340th Street. Go 1.5 miles to 330th Street.

John and Doris Nibbelen’s barn was built in the 1840s and has been in the family for 95 years. The wooden track is still in the peak of the barn. Once John’s father had a team of horses on the second floor, accessed by the earthen ramp on the north side. One horse lost its footing and fell down while hitched to its teammate. (Ask John to tell you the story when you visit the farm.) (From the northeast corner of the Pella square, drive east 10 miles on Washington/Vermeer Road/G 3T. Turn east on paved highway. If you arrive in Pecora, Iowa, turn around and drive south one mile. Turn east. Drive one mile. The barn is on the north side of the highway. 1439 Highway 162.)

Chuck and Barbara Oldham’s historic barns near Eddyville will be on tour. A barn built by Robert Oldham in 1855 is still used by his great-great grandson, Charles. It was hand-hewn of oak and is on a foundation of rocks cut at a quarry cross the Des Moines River from the farm. The wooden floor was pegged. The barn was used for the family’s dairy, Eddyville Dairy, beginning in 1915. The “younger” barn was built by Robert’s son in 1885. It is believed oak timbers were taken from a previous barn torn down on the site. (From the grade school on Highway 63 in Eddyville, turn east on 340th Street. Go 1.5 miles to 330th Street.)

Grandview Farm barn was built in 1861 by Miles Prine who purchased the 95 acres from the James Pomeroy estate in 1861. The farm had been homesteaded in 1849 by the Pomeroy family. The name G.S. Prine is painted on one of the grain bin doors. George was a son of Miles who died in 1900. In 1905, Gerrit and Cornie Dykstra purchased the farm and owned it until Pete Vos, father of the present owners, Marion and Dorothy Vos, purchased it in 1945. The beams of the barn are oak and pine. Hand-hewn pegs can be seen in several areas. The ropes that were used for lifting hay to the loft are hanging where Marion placed them in 1953 after the last load of hay was raised. (The barn is at 1856 Highway 163 four miles northwest of Oskaloosa.)

The “Grandview barn” was built by A. J. Jewell for Daniel Nelson who arrived in Iowa in 1841. There’s a central drive through the barn and a granary on the left side. A storm in 1946 did some damage to the barn at which time a cement floor was added. The Nelson family donated the farm to the Mahaska County Historical...
Barn Dance

By Lori Anderson

The milker pump is humming
Our Guernsey chorus has begun
Bellowing at the barn door
Music rises before the sun

Inside the big white barn
Milkers pulse on ready cows
The steady beat persuades them
To let down when the udder allows

Hear the rubber barn boots shuffle
Across the fresh limed floor
Behind the cows, stepping heel to toe
Gracefully together Mom and Dad chore

Morning milkings sing a peaceful song
To welcome each new day
A glimpse of heaven on Prairie Moon
Morning milkings sing a peaceful song

Yesterday and today is a new generation of farm hands
Starting fresh with a new generation
Of strong, hard-working farm families
With a legacy of tradition and hard work

To the rescue you’d go rushing!
Out the spout on the other end
As soon as you heard milk gushing
A contented heart would suddenly race

Pure creamy milk strained into the tank
Echoed loud and clear
A clanging tune as the handle dropped
Swinging the gold on blistered hands

Then rocked it to the milk house
As the daily dance gets underway
A glimpse of heaven on Prairie Moon
Morning milkings sing a peaceful song

It could be the hired man
Starting his day on the farm
A relative, neighbor, stranger or friend
Or a salesman trying his charm

Visitors at milking time
Are welcome on Prairie Moon
To watch this daily barn dance
Or join right in the tune

But of course you must keep up
To the young beat of today
When the grandkids bounce through the door
Hip-hop music starts to play

Small and blonde, grinning ear to ear
Grandpa and Grandma are thrilled to see
Pure joy skipping into their day
Leeta, Lars, Ben, Landon, Katie and Leslie

The brightest stars on Prairie Moon
Shine light on every moment
To everyday work and family they bring
Much laughter, delight and enjoyment

A new generation reminds you
Why you took your wedding vows
So love could dance on forever
Through your children, if not your cows!

There will never be a last dance
For through your marriage you have made
40 years of musical memories
For a lasting moonlight serenade.
Grant form “A” are: Was the barn built before 1870? Is it large (over 40’ wide and 60’ long)? Was it built with all stonewalls? Is it of unusual shape? Was it where a first of a new breed was introduced or where an old breed was passed down? Was it a building that people gathered in and used for social occasions? Did it have a stone chimney? Was it a building that was a part of the community’s history? Did it have a specific function, such as a schoolhouse or a church? Did it have a special design or architectural style? Did it have a unique name or nickname? Did it have a special event associated with it, such as a parade or a competition? Did it have a special мission or purpose, such as a place for prayer or a place for recreation?

Grant form “B” is for those who have livestock and wish to introduce a new breed or to restore an existing breed. Is the barn located on an active farm? Is the barn used for livestock? Is the barn large enough to accommodate the needs of the livestock? Is the barn in need of restoration? Is the barn being used for educational purposes, such as a farm tour or a program for children? Is the barn being used for research, such as a study on animal behavior or a study on the effects of livestock on the environment?

About Grants...

The Iowa Barn Foundation is giving grants for barns that are 50 years old or more. Grant form “A” is for those barns that, upon completion of work, will be eligible for the National Historic Register. Some questions to consider: Will the barn be used as homes before barns and country bridges offered them new opportunities?

For the Love of a Chicken House

By Nancine Bruvoort

I am sending a picture of our 1917 chicken house which I have kept scraped, painted, and put for 37 years. I assume ours is a half monitor. The upper and lower windows tilt open. As a young girl, I recall helping my Grandpa gather eggs. Quite often he put a broody chicken (broods the with us Dutch) in a crate for a few days. I’m told this was to convince her to stop laying on her eggs.

My grandparent lived on the edge of town, and people came by for eggs. Grandma kept a little notebook in the top drawer in the kitchen in which she recorded her egg receipts. I was fascinated! It was as if we were playing store. And, it seemed as if Grandma turned into a “lady businessman” for just a few moments each day. It was something quite unfamiliar to us in the 1950s. She hardly had the corporate look as far as her attire. I can see her yet bustling in from the garden or chicken house, her high-heeled Miller shoes clicking on the linoleum floor. The apron that covered her dress was always one she had sewn and trimmed in either rick-rack or bias tape. I was astonished to find that little notebook 50 years later in my Mother’s things. She must have been impressed with it also.

I remember Grandma getting into a huff because no matter how often she asked Grandpa to get the brooder house ready, he did not start until she left for town to get the baby chicks.

Iowa Barn Foundation to Have Presence in State Center

The Iowa Barn Foundation will have an office in an historic building when State Center’s Main Street project is completed. The residents and businesses in State Center, with the help of the State Center Main Street Program, have spent three years raising funds and working to restore the historic Main Street.

“It has been an all-community project,” said Mayor Craig Pfantz, a crop of glass or ceramic, they had no practical use, but added a decorative touch to the ends. The balls were usually about four inches in diameter. Glass ones were typically white and blue milk glass. Clear glass ones have often turned to amethyst from sun exposure to imperfections in the glass.

There are some 34 shapes or styles of lightning rod balls. The balls were lamp sold by salesmen going from farm to farm in horse drawn wagons from 1870 until the Great Depression closed businesses.

Lightning Rod Balls

Lightning rod balls have long been part of the American rural landscape. Some were made as early as 1840. They were originally sold as ornaments for lightning rods and are found in a wide range of shapes and colors. Made of glass or ceramic, they had no practical use, but added a decorative touch to the ends. The balls were usually about four and a half inches in diameter. Glass ones were typically white and blue milk glass. Clear glass ones have often turned to amethyst from sun exposure to imperfections in the glass.
A couple of years ago, the Iowa Barn Foundation received a membership check with a note scratched on an enclosed piece of paper: ‘I am from Iowa and work for Microsoft in Seattle. Let me know if I can help you with your Web site.’ Since that day, Michael McConnell has been editor of online Help and other documentation for the Microsoft Windows operating system.

Long before the Y2K scare, the tragic events of September 11th, and the stock market crash that prompted investors to buy farmland as a safe long-term investment, I had dreamed of owning land as far as the eye can see and running a diversified farm like people did in the 1940’s and 1950’s. Unlike some of my distant relatives, my parents and grandparents never farmed.

I’m not exactly sure where my desire to farm comes from, but I guess you could say it’s in my blood. I don’t come from a farming family, there was no farm to take over or inherit. There was no one to teach me how to farm and pass along the many lessons of farm life. Instead, I would have to find my own farm and learn how to farm it myself.

A needle in a haystack

Finding the perfect farm is a time consuming and often frustrating process, especially when you’re looking for a classic Iowa farm. To me, a classic Iowa farm is a square 160 with a farmstead set back gently rolling and beautiful, with a small creek or a pond, and a windmill. Finding the perfect farm would have taken me years, but I chose instead to travel, they made the difficult decision to sell the farm. And here is why I own three unrestored Farmall tractors: a 1950 Super A, a 1948 M, and a 1955 300 that fit very well with my farm’s vintage buildings. I haven’t been able to do much real farm work with them because I can’t afford any implements. I keep my eye on the fencerows in the hopes I’ll find enough cash to outfit my farm, and I’ll accept any donated farm equipment.

Most of the people I know think I’m crazy for buying a farm, especially since every vacation I take sounds like a lot of hard work to them. Buying a farm has certainly been a life changing experience. With it, Dad started calling me “Farmer.” I really hope I can earn that title one day because there is so much about farming that I still do not know.

I’d like to find a job in Iowa so that I can move back to live on my farm. With the way the economy is going however, it might take me a few years to find a decent job at the rate they are being outsourced away. I currently cash-tenant my land, but after I move to the farm I’d like to farm it myself and raise rare and endangered breeds of livestock. I’d like to turn my crop diverse hay farm where I can have a sheep, dairy goats, hogs, cattle, horses, chickens, geese, and turkeys. Perhaps I’ll sell fresh eggs, sweet corn, and organic meat off the farm. Maybe I’ll open a bed-and-breakfast and participate in agri-tourism. Due to my farm’s “small” size, I’m probably limited to niche farming if I want to make a living. I’ve decided that I would like to have an off-farm job to make ends meet. Until then, my farm is my escape from the big city and a place where I can enjoy a slower pace of life with old farm equipment, and see Spot run.
Iowa Barn Foundation Awards of Distinction have been awarded to Lori and Jim Evilsizer, Spragueville (Jackson County), and to the Marcus McCutchan family, Grand River (Decatur County), for restoring their barns. The Award of Distinction plaques are given by the Iowa Barn Foundation to property owners who restore their barns on their own. The Spragueville barn is known as the Stromeier Barn and was built in 1902 (see the Fall 2003 issue). The McCutchan barn was built in 1928 with supporting beams from trees on the farm. To be eligible for the Award of Distinction, a barn must be restored according to the Iowa Barn Foundation’s guidelines.

Dennis Schrout, who chairs the Iowa Barn Foundation’s State Fair effort, is looking for volunteers to work our booth during the fair. We need folks who will educate visitors about the Iowa Barn Foundation and the need to preserve barns. Please call Dennis at (515) 462-1681.

Gail Mathine organized an Emmet County barn jamboree in Armstrong, Iowa in July to celebrate our agriculture heritage and to honor the John Thomsen family who are going to restore their barn on their own. The Spragueville barn is known as the Stromeier Barn and was built in 1902 (see the Fall 2003 issue). The McCutchan barn was built in 1928 with supporting beams from trees on the farm. To be eligible for the Award of Distinction, a barn must be restored according to the Iowa Barn Foundation’s guidelines.

Lori Anderson, who grew up on a dairy farm in Allamakee County, was inspired to write the poem, “Barn Dance,” on the back cover of this issue, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of her parents, Frank and Carol Sivesind of Waukon, Iowa. Lori lives in Sydney, Australia, where she is a national administrator for a law firm and her husband has an importing company. Her fondness for Iowa does not diminish. “I miss rural Iowa a lot—life couldn’t be more different here in Sydney. I especially miss the cows….”

While researching the farm’s history, Lori found someone who worked on the farm in the 1940’s. He told Lori that the Sivesind farm was “one of the most beautiful in Allamakee County. The Sivesind family always took great pride in their dairy barn and Guernsey cattle, and many local people used to come out to visit their farm to see this milk operation.”

Lori added, “It was more than a dairy farm. Grandpa (John) ran a Guernsey milk bottling and delivery business from the farm in the 1930’s.”

Thanks to Kenneth Dunker of Ames, Iowa for his donation of “exclusive” and compelling Iowa Barn Foundation note cards. Sale of the cards benefits the Iowa Barn Foundation.

Ken’s love of barns goes back to a childhood in Michigan where his mother’s family had a farm near Frankenmuth. “My mother’s father had been part of a carpenter crew that built farm buildings in the early 1900s, and he had built both farmhouses on the family farm,” Ken recalled. “He always had tips for my small construction projects.”

After retiring from the Iowa State University civil engineering faculty, Ken took a job in the Office of Bridges and Structures at the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), where he writes the bridge design manual and is involved in technical issues related to bridges, sign structures, and lighting towers. After beginning his work at the DOT, he used the National Register of Historic Places to locate and photograph historic bridges in the state. He started drawing bridges from the photographs and added barn drawings to his resume after partaking in the foundation’s northeast Iowa tour.

It takes him a week—or more—to complete a drawing. He has created and donated cards featuring some of the Iowa Barn Foundation-connected barns as a fund raiser for the foundation. The 6 ½ x 4 ½-inch cards, on tan card stock, feature the barn drawing on the front with information about the barn and the foundation on the back. A card package containing 12 cards—one with each of four barn drawings—and 12 envelopes is available for $10 including postage!

 Roxanne Mehlsch, one of our busiest volunteers, has offered to mail the cards to those who send her a check for $10 made out to the Iowa Barn Foundation. Roxanne’s address is: 17590 730th Avenue, Zearing 50278.

These beautiful cards—a most generous donation—raise money for the foundation’s efforts and also promote the organization. They make wonderful gifts. A huge thank you to Ken and to Roxanne.

About Our Barns

Ken Starek, Ackley (641) 847-3018; Bertha Shaw, Eagle Grove (515) 832-9597; Karlene Kingery, Omaha (402) 556-9082; Bill and Fran Stone, Marshalltown (641) 753-8994; Paul Walther, Audubon (712) 563-2779; Mary Richards, Jamaica (515) 386-4750. Also, some members of the Iowa Barn Foundation board are sometimes available to give talks. Some of the speakers charge small fees to cover traveling and miscellaneous expenses.

All-State Tour Slated for September 25-26

The fourth annual all-state barn tour is scheduled for September 25 and 26. Some 40 barns around the state that have been restored with Iowa Barn Foundation matching grants will be opened for viewing. This self-guided tour is free and open to the public.

The tour encourages an understanding of our rural heritage and the importance of barn preservation. The barns on tour will be featured in the fall issue of the Iowa Barn Foundation Magazine. For more information, call Roxanne Mehlsch at 641 (487)-7690 or e-mail her at mehlsch@netins.net

The Hrdinas of Cresco sent this photograph of their barn built in 1893. They have shuffled part of the east side and are getting started on the west side. “It was really getting ‘bad’. Still have most of the horse stalls and mangers left. Still have the wooden cow stanchions in place. Hay now comes to the floor. Our hope is to preserve it for future generations of Hrdinas.”

Many groups ask if we have speakers to suggest. Here are some we know about:

The Iowa State Fair Photography Salon will salute the barns of Iowa in August. For information: Charley Starnes, Statehouse, 400 E 14th St., Des Moines 50319.

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Many groups ask if we have speakers to suggest. Here are some we know about:
More Vanished Barns

These once-stately barns along our countryside have sadly tumbled to oblivion. Ken Starek, a barn photographer and the Iowa Barn Foundation’s Hardin County representative, took these photographs before the barns were lost forever. The Iowa Barn Foundation is dedicated to encouraging the preservation of buildings like these—to make Iowa a living museum of agricultural heritage for the entire world.

Meet Rob Vos...

A busy family life, job with Rainbow Seeds in Oskaloosa, collecting antique farm equipment, and a barn renovation project did not deter Rob Vos, Pella, from organizing the Iowa Barn Foundation’s June barn tour and picnic in Mahaska and Marion Counties. He has known hard work since growing up on farms north of Monroe (K-6) and east of Bussey (7-12).

Rob volunteered to be Marion County representative to the Iowa Barn Foundation a few years ago. He immediately got to work bringing in new members, finding interesting area barns, and he didn’t say “no” when we suggested having a tour picnic in the Pella/Oskaloosa area—even though he and wife, Teri, were expecting a third child.

Barns were a central part of Rob’s life when helping with farm chores while growing up. Rob and Teri, who grew up in the farm and offered to remove the old paint and put on a new coat. “That was a no brainer,” said Rob. “What would have taken me six months, took him two days, and I did not have to climb a ladder.”

The barn, which will be used for 4-H projects, will be on the Iowa Barn Foundation tour June 5 and 6. Visitors will also get to view Rob’s 1939 Farmall M, one row International corn picker, and three bottom plows. He is active in the Red Rock Threshers Tractor Club.

While Rob works for Rainbow Seeds, a job he enjoys because it keeps him involved in agriculture, Teri is the public relations manager at Vermeer Manufacturing, Pella. Jessica is 7, Ben, 3. Jack was born in November.

Rob has a Dutch heritage and recalls his grandparents speaking Dutch when “they did not want me to know what they were talking about.” He is orchestrating a special Dutch dinner for the Iowa Barn Foundation picnic on June 6th.
More Revitalized Barns

“The year 1880 has always been painted on the south side of the barn,” wrote Lois Amundson of Cresco, Iowa about their barn. “The rafters are all timber framed with wooden pegs securing them.”

“I am in love with barns,” wrote Bill Thomas of Emerson, Iowa. “Every since I was a young man, I have been interested in keeping our barns in as good condition as can be financially feasible.” Bill spent three years restoring this barn, built in 1898 by his great grandfather.

Pictured is another now proud barn, north of Osceola, Iowa, that Bill Krause of West Des Moines restored.

Ellen Henn of Manson, Iowa spent her life on the farm her Grandpa Griffeth homesteaded in 1886. The Griffeth family came to the farm from Illinois in covered wagon. Ellen just painted the barn, built in 1917. “My mom had received a small inheritance and, instead of putting a good foundation in the house, they used the gift for building the barn,” said Ellen. The Griffeth-Henn barn has barn, corn crib, hog house, machine shed, brooder houses, two hen houses, and a 10-room home.

Merle and JoAnn Van Roekel of Rock Rapids, Iowa are obviously proud of their barn, built in 1906 and decorated for Christmas.

The historic Leet/Hassler Farmstead in Manning, Iowa is the site of this plank frame and masonry barn built in 1917. The farmstead was owned by William Leet and sold to Fred Hassler, known for his “Fashion Herd/Poland Chinas/Glenhaven Farm.” It was built by Hans Detlefsen and Fritz Thoms, who became acquainted in their native Germany and went into a 10-room home.

The Griffeth-Henn barn has barn, corn crib, hog house, machine shed, brooder houses, two hen houses, and a 10-room home.

Van Roekel barn

Amundsen barn

Teamwork Acres barn

A new barn is now owned by the Manning Heritage Foundation.

SUPPORT the IOWA BARN FOUNDATION

In just under seven years, the Iowa Barn Foundation has truly made a difference in saving and restoring old barns. With over $700,000 raised to support the Iowa Barn Foundation’s projects and with more than 60 barns either restored or in various stages of restoration, the Iowa landscape today looks different than it did in 1997.

So how can you be a part of this exciting grassroots effort? In short, in two ways, says Jacqueline Schmeal, one of the founders and its president. First, volunteer to work locally—as a county representative—to encourage barn restoration and to raise the profile of barn restoration in the area. The second is by gifts to the Foundation to support its growing list of restoration projects. Typically, the Foundation makes matching grants to owners of barns (and other buildings) that are candidates for restoration. A perpetual easement is signed that assures the structure will be maintained and will be open to the public for a minimum of two days per year between May and October of each year. Gifts to the Foundation include:

- Cash gifts, including membership dues, have been a major source of funding for the Foundation. Dues are $25 per year and can be mailed to the Iowa Barn Foundation, c/o Community Bank, Ibox 436, Nevada, Iowa 50201. The Foundation currently has more than 1,000 members. Remember, gifts to the Foundation are deductible for income, gift and estate tax purposes. The Foundation has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a Section 501(c)(3) organization.
- Gifts of appreciated stock or land offer even greater tax benefits with the fair market value sidestepping the usual tax bite.
- Property can be set up to pass to the Foundation at death through a will or as a trust. The property can simply be left to the Iowa Barn Foundation, an Iowa non-profit corporation.
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Remember, all of the work of the Foundation is done by volunteers, so 100 percent of contributions goes to support Foundation projects including the acclaimed Iowa Barn Foundation Magazine.

Farm Conservancy Project

Several months ago, the Foundation board of directors approved an initiative making it possible for entire farms to be given to the Foundation. Every effort is made to manage the property in accordance with the wishes of the donor. The center-piece of the Farm Conservancy Project is the plan which is written to reflect the donor’s objectives and addresses soil conservation, building maintenance and restoration and appropriate management practices. Preference is given to renting the farms to beginning farmers.

Adopt-A-Barn Program

The latest initiative focuses on barns along the major highways of the state. For property owners who cannot come up with the match for a regular barn restoration project, funds are sought from other sources to assure that the barn does not become an eyesore. The objective is for those passing through the state to see a landscape of carefully preserved barns, in keeping with the deep pride Iowans feel for their agricultural heritage.
The Iowa Barn Foundation Membership

$200,000
The Fred Meying Family Foundation, Des Moines

$140,000
The Pen of America, Des Moines

$125,000
Iowa West Foundation

$25,000
Linda and Ken Lay Family, Houston, Tx.

$20,000
Anonymous

$10,000 to $15,000
Jacqueline Andre and Richard Schmel, Des Moines

$5,000 to $20,000
Anonymous

Lund O'Lakes Foundation, Minneapolis, Mn.

$1000 to $5000
Anonymous

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All of our donations go into barn rehabilitation. We appreciate your donations which go into barn restoration and the publishing of the magazine. We are an all-volunteer organization and we appreciate your support in our efforts to preserve Iowa's rural buildings.

So that all of our funds can go into barn rehabilitation, we do not send out reminders. Please consider this issue of the magazine as a reminder to send in your donation. We are an all-volunteer organization and we appreciate your support.

If we have incorrect address information or if you'd like to add friends to our mailing list, please notify Ann Harvey, 2002 Cessna, Ames, Iowa 50014 (515) 292-9104.

Send Your Stories and Photographs

To send us your stories about rural life, send us your stories and photos about barns. We are trying to preserve not only barns but also their stories. Please send to:

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