



## IOWA RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

### From the President Jeanne Handeland

After taking a breather since the state meeting, it's time to get down to business once again. We had a wonderful state meeting in District 4 at Creston. Our thanks to the Creston unit for a well-planned meeting with great speakers, great facilities, and great food.

The September newsletter contained a list of attractions to check out traveling to or from Creston. The murals were beautiful and fun to spot in Creston's downtown area. I stopped at the Wallace Center—the birthplace of Henry Wallace with a promise to return when I have more time. October is the perfect time to travel throughout Iowa, and I'm amazed at the variety of landscapes.

Those who attended the state meeting received a nylon bag that fits into an attached case along with an IRSPA pin. Following the banquet Wednesday night, we enjoyed Linda Betsinger McCann speaking about the books she had written about the Prisoner of War camps in Iowa and her background in writing the books.

The PH balance scholarship winner, Callie Steva from Perry, was introduced. She is our third scholarship recipient, and what a pleasure it is to be able to award it to such deserving young people.

Thursday morning began with Dr. Jill Tussey, a Creston native and granddaughter of one of our IRSPA members, as the keynote speaker. She told about her educational background in literacy and the books she has written to be used in the classroom.

The rest of the morning was spent hearing from Paul Strid and Garrett Mowery with AMBA, Brad Anderson with AARP and Phil Tetzloff with a legislative and IPERS report.

The business meeting was held in the afternoon with reports by Treasurer Bob Swanson, Membership chair Barb Bielenberg and Supportive Services chair Sandy Thede. The amendment to add scholarship as a standing committee was approved. The budget for next year which is a de-



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crease from the previous year was also approved.

Our new vice president, Anne Cowley, was installed by Linda Miller. Anne is from the Sioux City area, and we welcome her to our board.

We said farewell and thank you to Judy Jepsen, district 1 coordinator; Phil Tetzloff, legislative representative; and Jean Hoffman, president. Thank you all for your years of service to IRSPA. You will be missed.

The board had the opportunity to interview candidates for the legislative position in August. John Hieronymus was selected and was introduced at the meeting. John will be a great addition to our board.

Next year's state meeting will be in District 2, the north central part of the state, on October 2nd and 3rd. If you haven't already attended a state meeting, please consider attending.

Unfortunately, we were not able to introduce new district coordinators for Districts 1 and 5. Please give this opportunity some thought. It involves visiting local units once a year, if possible; attending IRSPA board meetings in April, August and October and helping local units with the district meeting. If you have any interest or any questions or know someone you would recommend, please contact me. Each year we need to elect a new vice president so keep that position in mind, too.

There has been a push to decrease the number of newsletters that are mailed. If you are willing to read your newsletter on the IRSPA webpage ([irspa.org](http://irspa.org)), please contact us via the Contact Form Submission; an email to Bob Swanson [rmswanson1936@gmail.com](mailto:rmswanson1936@gmail.com) or to me at [jhandy@rvtc.net](mailto:jhandy@rvtc.net). The webpage has been improved this past year and will continue to be improved. We just need to receive the updated information from your units. Send your information to Jean Hoffman [42teacher@gmail.com](mailto:42teacher@gmail.com) in a PDF format.

I found this quote by one of our members in the Creston newspaper after our meeting. "There are friends here. I think we all enjoy the camaraderie as we all have similar backgrounds." That statement is so true of membership in IRSPA, of attending unit, district, or state meetings, and serving on the board. Although I've only been on the board for two years, we have become like family. It has been a privilege to serve with so many great people. Please consider our motto "Proud to Serve."

Jeanne Handeland, IRSPA President

# District 1

## DICKENSON EMMET AREA DEARSPA

Dickenson Emmet Area Retired School Personnel Association (DEARSPA) is the newly reorganized group for Dickenson and Emmet Counties. We have been enjoying getting to know each other as we explore what our counties have to offer.

In August we had an enjoyable lunch and toured Round Lake Winery in nearby Minnesota. Our September meeting took us to Lake Okoboji where we learned the history of a long time family owned resort known as Fillenworth's Beach.



Round Lake Winery

In October we closed our meeting season for the year with a visit from the police dog, Pepper, a three year old Dutch Shepherd. Pepper is trained in drugs, tracking and take down. Pepper's best story is finding a child that was lost. Search teams had looked for the child for a couple of hours and Pepper located the child in a matter of minutes after being on the scene.



Police dog Pepper and Officer Reinike

DEARSPA and the Estherville Police department partnered together for a fundraiser for Officer Cram's family from Algona. Office Cram lost his life while performing his duties as a police officer this fall leaving a wife and three small children. Our sympathies go out to the Cram family and our hearts go out to all of the police and law enforcement officers that work to protect our communities. A collection was taken at a football game and over \$3700 was collected.



Estherville Police and Dearsipa members at Cram Fundraiser

Submitted by Jean Hoffman

# District 2

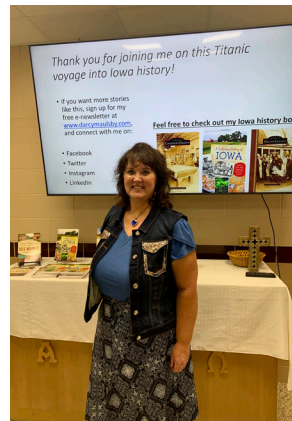
## WEBSTER COUNTY IRSPA

Our first meeting of the year in August usually has the best turnout of members. This year was no different as we had 68 in attendance! We welcomed potential new members at this meeting. Our unit has created a new membership status for those people who can no longer continue regular membership due health or mobility issues. These friends pay no fees but will get a card or call frequently from their contact person so we can keep in touch with them. Our guest speaker was Melanie Fierke, Executive Director of the Lord's Cupboard, one of our largest food pantries in our community. We have been monetary and product donors for many years. This year we collected over 200 items and over \$300 to help those in need in our community.



Gary Astor, Webster County Unit member helps "pull" the wagon's load of nonperishables for the Lord's Cupboard.

In October, we welcomed guest speaker Darcy Maulsby, Iowa's Storyteller. She spoke on Iowa's Lost History: The Iowa-Titanic Connection. Ms. Maulsby had the group enthralled with her stories of Iowans connected to the Titanic. We all would recommend this fabulous speaker!



Darcy Maulsby, Iowa's Storyteller

In November, we welcomed performers from Comedia Musica singing song from "Seussical The Musical" which they will be performing for the public soon. Our unit continues to collect volunteer hours to send to state. We also collect toilet paper tubes for schools in Webster County who use them for STEM, art and other creative activities. Additionally, members donated \$403 more to give to the Lord's Cupboard!

Sheri Maehl

Comedia Musica performers entertain with a song from Seussical The Musical.







## HUMBOLDT COUNTY IRSPA

### September

Humboldt's IRSPA unit met at 9:00 a.m. on September 14th, 2023. President Anita Fagen-Miller was unable to attend; Cindy Reher led the meeting. Darlene Stirling and Barb Zabel provided the morning treats. The officers are: President, Anita Fagen-Miller; Co-Vice Presidents, Pat Worthington and Cindy Reher; Co-Secretaries, Darlene Stirling and Carol Jensen; Treasurer, Barb Zabel; Legislative, Candyce Carson.

Candyce Carlson shared news from the latest legislative report; IPERS appears to be stable. Our unit's volunteer hours were tallied. Our members accumulated 1,544 community hours and 736 youth hours.

Two former Humboldt Community School Teachers, Pam Swan and Lisa Wagner, presented a program about



**Lisa Wagner and Pam Swan, Humboldt IRSPA members, shared highlights of their memorable trip to England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.**

their 15-day European trip. They joined 40 other travelers, some of whom were also former educators, who toured Scotland, England, Wales, and Ireland. Every country has its own ambience and culture; they enjoyed guided tours of famous areas as well as less familiar sights. Pam and Lisa commented on the food, the

scenery, and the local people. Our group enjoyed their anecdotes and the colorful pictures they shared. Even though it is a cliché, they commented on Ireland's lovely and green vistas. It's no blarney, we were thoroughly entertained by their presentation.

The 13 members who attended the September meeting wrote personalized notes to all the new Humboldt school employees as well as to those who have new assignments. Many IRSPA members donated school supplies and miscellaneous items, and Humboldt schools received large bags filled with school supplies, socks, hats, and other needed items.

### October

Humboldt's IRSPA unit met at 9:00 a.m. on October 10th at the Senior Center. There were 14 members present. President Anita Fagen-Miller conducted the meet-

ing and addressed old and new business. She reminded the members that beginning in March the IRSPA newsletter will not be mailed to members unless they notify Bob Swanson that they want a mailed copy. Members are encouraged to read the issues online at IRSPA.org

Anita reported that the 2024 State meeting will be in Mason City. District 2 will host the district meeting in Marshalltown, and the PH Balance (Parent in Heaven) Scholarship will go to a District 2 high school senior. Anita and Barb Zabel reported on the State meeting in Creston. They enjoyed Creston's attractions, the program, and the wonderful meal. Judge Brown, District 2 coordinator, spoke about his duties and reminded us that our state membership is down; units should make new memberships a priority.

Four members of the Humboldt Veterans Memorial board attended and reported on the project that is slated to begin in spring of 2024. Every veteran who at one time resided in Humboldt County is eligible to have their name, service organization, and years of service sandblasted in a 4"x8" granite paver; KIA veterans' pavers will be an 8"x8" darker paver with the date they were killed in action. The memorial will be in Worthington Park on Highway 169 in Humboldt. Humboldt IRSPA member Patty Worthington's late father-in-law Bob donated the two-acre piece of land to honor his father Roy. His son, Patty's late husband Mike, continued the family tradition of making Humboldt a better place for all its citizens.



**Patty Worthington presented a donation from Humboldt IRSPA's unit to the Humboldt Veterans Memorial board.**

Daryle Zwiefel, the program's spokesperson, said that prior to beginning this project he was not aware of how many veterans are in the area. Zwiefel spoke about his experiences during and after his tour in Vietnam. Two other veterans spoke about their tours in Bosnia, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan. The memorial, in addition to honoring the men and women who have served our country, can help heal a veteran's family's heart and soul.

Humboldt's IRSPA unit donated money to the PH Balance Scholarship fund in memory of two area teachers who recently passed away; former unit President Gary Newell and Cal Muller.

Toni Hood

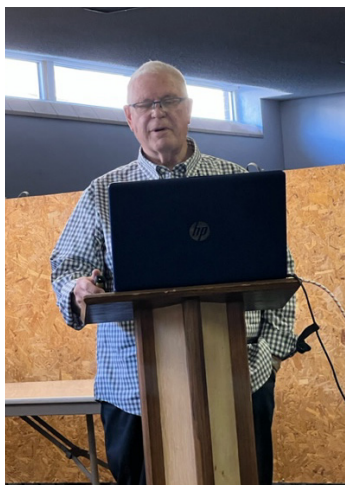
## District 2

## BOONE COUNTY IRSPA

The Boone County Retired School Personnel Association met on October 10th at the United Methodist Church in Boone. Eighteen members and guests were present.

Following a delicious lunch served by the United Methodist Church women, Mr Jim Carlson presented a very interesting program on OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, at Iowa State University.

Submitted by Sue Duffee

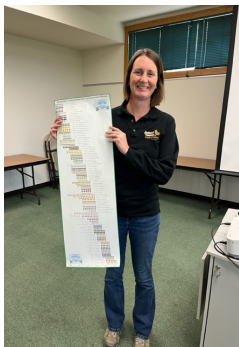


## District 3

## JACKSONVILLE CO. IRSPA

We met at the Hurstville interpretive center on Oct 6. Nancy Wagoner made the bouquets for door prizes. The potluck meal was perfectly delicious. Jessica Wagner gave a great presentation on Native Plants.

Submitted by Roberta Rosheim



## District 3

## DUBUQUE AREA IRSPA

DARSPA meets second Thursdays in September, October, November, March, April and May at Dubuque Best Western Conference Center. Meetings are called to order at 11:00 am. The Pledge of Allegiance and singing "God Bless America" are followed by a program, meal and business meeting concluding by 1:00 pm.

The September 14th program featured retired government/history teacher and author, Bill Mueller of Maquoketa, Iowa.

Entertaining stories were shared from his book, *Come Drive With Me!* about adventures, perils and insights of a driver's ed teacher.

Audrey Mueller, his wife and a former teacher and



Bill Mueller, Audrey Mueller  
Maquoketa, Iowa  
Sept 2023 program

coach in eastern Iowa, shared her book *Take a Visual Walk* with beautiful photography. 48 people attended the meeting.

October 12th meeting was attended by 45 members. Stan Rheingans former Dubuque School District Superintendent and current Chief Administrator of Keystone Area Education Agency presented program "VOTE YES on NOVEMBER 7." Dubuque Community School District proposed 150 million dollar bond referendum to build a new middle school and air condition 8 elementary schools and other projects. The Proposal was defeated by a narrow margin on Nov. 7th.

The November 9th meeting was attended by 49 members. Paul Strid, Advisor from AMBA, presented "AMBA: Benefits that Come with Membership." Out Membership is approximately 308 in the local DARSPA for 2023.

The local unit supports various community projects: 1) Beds for Kids - fill table containers with bills/change each meeting; 2) Donations of books, knitted hats and mittens and snacks donated to fill adopted Little Libraries throughout the city, and 3) Collection of tabs "Pulling Together" Awareness of Human Trafficking in Iowa- from beverages, cat



food cans and other aluminum sources accepted. Tabs recycled to generate funds for 3 Safe Houses in Ames, Des Moines and Sioux City areas. Human Trafficking programs had been presented at previous meetings.

Submitted by Sue Hattel, DARSPA member  
shattel220@aol.com c 563-599-4497



## DES MOINES CO. IRSPA

The Council Bluffs Retired School Personnel met on September 20, 2023 at the Council Bluffs Country Club with 31 members and 1 guest in attendance. We welcomed two new members, Sandy Leaders and Marilyn Linkletter. Nancy File and Diane Johnson showed us how to navigate the IRSPA website.

We met again on October 18, 2023. There were 33 members and 4 guests in attendance. We welcomed four new members, Gjoa King, Debbie McQuigg, Lori Thomas and Johnny Lynn Williams. Dr. Brent Hoelsing spoke on the Lewis Central Bond Issue.

Elaine Goodwin, a paraplegic, shared her delightful children's book, Bozo's Big Adventure. Elaine wrote the book last winter for something to do. The book is based on a bedtime story she told her children and grandchildren. She has dedicated it to all Moms and Dads who tell their children bedtime stories and attempt to stay awake until the story is told. She is working on an idea for another book about Bozo. Books were available for sale.



Elaine Goodwin shares her book.

David Dillehay

[www.irspa.org](http://www.irspa.org)

**Check it out!**



## JASPER COUNTY IRSPA

Hello Fellow Retired School Personnel

Our Jasper County Retired School Personnel Association (JCRSPA) has gotten off to a great start this 2023-2024 school year! This is our 50th year as an association and we are happily celebrating! Last spring at our District meeting, we were recognized for having increased our membership and we decided to amp that up even more. We challenged ourselves to continue increasing our numbers. Our goal for our November meeting is to have FIFTY retired school personnel in attendance for our blow out party! We have had fun with the '50 theme' ... just as an example, we're telling '50 lies' ... taking turns relating Two Truths and a Lie about ourselves as our members guess the lie!

We've also had some interesting programs. In September we had an excellent presentation from our friends at AARP regarding Brain Health for seniors.



September Meeting

In October we had a presentation about Children in Need of Assistance, which highlighted things we seniors



October Meeting

can do to help and the state of our Iowa Foster Care program. (See pictures) For our 'blow out' luncheon meeting this month we are having one of our community's public librarians present "The Real Story About Banned Books" with added input from another of our community's school librarians. In December, we usually don't meet but we're going to meet socially for fun and sing Christmas carols and have a '50 cookie exchange'! We'll let you know if we hit our November 50 people goal!

Denise Bontrager and Lana Wohlers  
JCRSPA Co-Presidents



# District 5

## DAVIS COUNTY IRSPA

Davis County Retired School Personnel met on **August 23** at Ray's Longbranch in Drakesville, Iowa to celebrate the first day of school. The 17 members present enjoyed good food, received our 23-24 program booklets, and discussed our monthly meeting and program schedule.

Davis County Retired School Personnel met on Tuesday, **September 12** at Jane Hutchings' with 21 members present. We were treated to lunch in Dan's Museum. Dan Hutchings introduced us to how his museum of thrill shows and auto racing came about and talked about his addition of county fair memorabilia, toys, and nostalgia items that he has accumulated over the years. We were especially interested in his museum items about Bloomfield and Davis County history. Our afternoon was spent touring the three sections of Dan's Museum, reminiscing, and asking questions.



Dan Hutchings explaining how his museum items were collected over the years and just recently put on display. He is standing beside a car used in Ajoie Chitwood Thrill Show held at the Davis County Fair.

Dan's name for this section of his museum.



Janet Guthrie was a Davis County resident and was the first woman ever to qualify for the Indianapolis 500 and the Daytona 500. This is her book about her career in car racing.

These are posters in the County Fair area of the museum.



This is a section of the tellers cage from the Exchange Bank of Bloomfield. The uninsured bank was closed in 1983 by the Iowa State Banking Commission. This is in the museum section of Bloomfield and Davis County history.

Davis County Retired School Personnel met on **October 3** for a tour of Wells Dairy Farm in Van Buren County. Our hosts were Paul and Jayne Wells and their grandson McKane Wells. Jayne is retired from teaching at Davis County Elementary.



They gave a brief history of their family farm and how and why they decided to start a dairy operation. When grandson McKane joined the family operations, the dairy became automated and the cows are milked with robotic machines. The process is all computerized from tracking the production of each cow, the testing of the milk and then determining which tank to deliver the milk to. The computer keeps track of how often each cow is milked.



It was interesting to watch the cows get in line and wait their turn to move into one of the two stalls where the robotic milking machines are.

Jayne arranged for the group to have lunch at the home of her Amish neighbors Marvin and Leanna Detweiler. We were treated to a delicious lunch served by Leanna and her daughter.

Rebecca Shively





## District 5

## APPANOOSE AND WAYNE UNIT



Twelve members of the Appanoose/Wayne Retired School Personnel met at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Corydon on October 6. After

a brief business meeting, Dave and Patty Mason from Corydon gave the program in which they described highlights of their recent 7 day cruise on the inside passage of Alaska followed by a five day land tour. Other members added comments regarding their own Alaska trips.

Richard Keilig

## District 6

## DAVENPORT AREA IRSPA

Laurie Marple and Chryss Hartman (co-presidents), Judy Shannon (vice-president), Dean Breneman (treasurer), and Cheryl Sly (secretary) will continue to serve in their positions this next year. We met in June to begin planning for the 2023-2024 year. We have a new membership chair - Kelly Janoski. She is taking the place of Sharon Simmonds - who worked so hard in this position for many, many years! We thank her so much for her dedication to the organization.

An August meeting was held, as well, which included committee chairpersons. Half of our upcoming monthly meetings will feature musical entertainment and the other half will feature interesting speakers.

Our new budget has been approved. The Davenport chapter has strong involvement in volunteering. Our number of hours from June 2022-May 2023 totaled 17,796 hours!!!

We will have several members attending the IRSPA meeting in Creston, IA. in October. Our first local meeting will be at the Best Western Plus Steeplegate on Tuesday, September 12th with a luncheon, business meeting and a program to follow. We are looking forward to seeing our "old" friends again!

Cheryl Sly

## District 6

## DAVENPORT AREA IRSPA

Our local group has had a great start - our board officers remain the same as last year and have worked hard to plan entertaining meetings with good food, as well as an organized business meeting.

We have a new membership chair - Kelly Janoski. She is taking the place of Sharon Simmonds, who worked diligently in this position for many, many years!! We thank her so much for her dedication to our organization.

The new budget for the year was approved and speakers/musical entertainment are in place for our meetings (Sept.-Dec. and Feb.-May). We typically have around 80 members attend our monthly luncheons. Our meetings always end with door prize give-aways...it's always fun to see if our number is called!

We were happy to have Beth Hieronymus (IRSPA vice-president) join us at our September meeting. Ann McGlynn, from Tapestry Farms, was our speaker and shared information about the organization that helps families from refugee camps, etc.



Ann McGlynn

We had several members attend the IRSPA meeting in Creston in October and they shared the experience with us at our October meeting. Our October entertainment was Ray and Scott Wiersen - a father/son duo who shared their gift of song and music.



Scott and Ray Wiersen

At our upcoming December meeting, our speaker will be from the Astronomy Club. We will also have our annual white elephant gift exchange.

Submitted by Cheryl Sly  
- Secretary of DARSPA

## District 6

## LEE COUNTY IRSPA

Lee County Retired School Personnel recently met at the Pilot Grove Community Room in Donnellson. The Tri-T organization served a delicious lunch to nearly 40 attendees. Dave Tull presented the program on beekeeping. He learned the art from his grandfather, Leonard Krebill. Mr. Krebill's family sold



enough honey each year to pay their way to the Iowa State Fair. Tull shared that a typical snack at his grandparents' home was a honey sandwich consisting of bread, butter and a generous amount of honey. Dave started his first hive in

6th grade and this journey has taken him master beekeeper status. His honey is sold locally at Harvestville Farm, Jim's Greenhouse, and Apple Berry Orchard.

Pollination is the most important job of honeybees. The first documented bees in North America were in 1622 in Jamestown VA. The bees were brought over from Europe mainly for the wax used in candles. Pollen that the bees collect is their main source of protein. One hive requires approximately 125 lbs. of pollen a year. The queen bee can sting numerous times while worker bees can sting one time which causes their death. CRP fields help feed the bees as well as flower gardens. Tull urged the reduction of insecticides especially in the spring as dandelions are one of the first pollen and water sources for the bees.

The next meeting for this organization will be October 4, 12:00 noon at the Montrose Riverfront Building in Montrose. Mary Sue Chatfield will present the program on River Boat Captains. For more information call 319-524-2220.

Jill Andreson - Cox

## District 6

## LEE COUNTY IRSPA

Lee County Retired School Personnel met recently for their October meeting at the Montrose Riverfront Building. The pledge was led by Jim Merritt and new members, Janet O'Brien and Linda Moander were welcomed.

Retired Lee County Educator, Mary Sue Chatfield presented the program on Riverboat Captain Robert, (Zip), Scipio Owen.

Robert 9, his family, and many others were members of the Latter-Day Saints.

After having been driven out of western Missouri the families moved to Montrose and Nauvoo in 1839. In Montrose they relocated in the Fort Des Moines buildings down along the Mississippi River. At this time Iowa was not an official state and was occupied by the Sac and Fox Native Americans, respectfully.

Robert, 18, found himself plying the rapids between Montrose and Keokuk and became a pilot in 1852. Robert married Eliza Peck in 1856 and they had one child Zach. During Robert's lifetime Montrose became very important from its position at the head of the Des Moines Rapids. Due to increased trade on the river, Robert and 3 others formed the Des Moines Towing Company. This opportunity allowed Robert to pilot on the river 40+ years.

Robert lived out his last years in a fine residence in Montrose. He also owned 500 acres of the best farming land in Lee County. He passed away in 1895 and was laid to rest in the Montrose Cemetery along the bank of Jack Creek which flowed through his farm ground and then into his beloved Mississippi River.

The group will meet again on November 1, 12:00 noon at the Denmark Congregational UCC. The program will be presented by Linda Sammeli on the Honor Flight.



**Mary Sue Chatfield sharing a replica of Robert. The carving was completed by Al Moander**

Jill Andreson - Cox





## LEE COUNTY IRSPA

Lee County Retired School Personnel met recently in Denmark at the Congregational United Church of Christ. Members were treated to a delicious traditional Thanksgiving meal.

Tom Oleson, Jerry Derr, and Linda Sammeli presented their experiences having traveled to Washington D.C. on the Great River Honor Flight. Veterans from WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Cold War, and the critically ill are eligible to travel free of charge. Spouses are not allowed to travel unless they each are



L-R Oleson, Sammeli, Derr

veterans. Great River is the farthest west to be able to go to and return from D.C. in one day. Veterans and guardians leave via coach either from Quincy, IL or Hannibal, MO and travel to St. Louis. From there, they fly into Baltimore and return to a coach.

Veterans can travel with a guardian/helper if needed to carry items, push their wheelchair or assist in other ways. Guardians pays \$200 to attend. To date, 2,193 veterans have traveled on the Great River Honor Flight. Forty-Four states participate nationally in the flights. One hundred twenty-four active groups exist, like Great River.

While in D.C. the group is bussed to the Arlington National Cemetery, Lincoln, WWII, Korean, and the Vietnam Memorials and other memorial military sites.

Jill Andreson - Cox



## CEDAR VALLEY IRSPA



Newly Installed Officers of Cedar Valley Retired Teachers Lto R Janice Pezek, Treasurer, Kathy Spillman Secretary, Dianne Souder, President, and Jan Kreitzer, Vice President.



Members of Cedar Valley Retired Teachers gather in St Lucas IA for a luncheon tour of the American-German Museum there.



Cheryl Erb shared about Carrie Lane Chapman Catt's girlhood home located in rural Charles City and presented a book to Charolette Kirkgaard, Member

## Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the March Newsletter are due  
no later than **Friday, Feb. 11, 2023**

Email info to Toni Hood at [tonihood@g.com](mailto:tonihood@g.com)

Home: 515-332-5819 • Cell: 515-269-3823



## CEDAR RAPIDS IRSPA

We began our new year in September 2023, meeting at the American Legion in Marion, Iowa. Our officers are President – Bob Gilchrist, Vice-President – Sunny Story, Secretary – Mary Muehl, Treasurer – Anne Angerer. Other leaders include Membership – Kathy Shelton, Arrangements – Cindy Monroe, and Book Club – Linds Meyer. Many members help with set up and clean up at each meeting.

The presenter for this month was Judy Mitchelen, a former teacher from Vinton-Shellsburg. She spoke about the Sew Powerful organization. It is a non-profit in Zambia helping moms with the goals they have for their children – education, food, safe water, health, and good jobs. Volunteers in several countries make school uniforms, and cloth purses that hold reusable hygiene pads, soap, and farm fresh food. You can find out more at [www.sew-powerful.org](http://www.sew-powerful.org).

Bob Gilchrist reminded us of the upcoming school board elections and the need to learn who the candidates will be and what their beliefs are.

In October, Art Staed, Iowa State representative in the Cedar Rapids area, spoke on the upcoming legislative session. He explained the 2-year cycle for bills moving through the legislature. There are approximately 200 bills of which 55 deal with education that must be acted on this year. Representative Staed spoke about several of them and explained what passing them would mean for Iowa schools. Many of them are part of the current "Culture War" trend that are supposedly designed to protect children's innocence, such as the gender identity bills, limiting school librarians to one per district, and banning certain books. Many educators and others think that these bills, if passed, would hinder student learning. For more details and explanations for these and other legislative happenings, check out Art's Facebook page and sign up for his newsletter. (<https://www.artstaed.com/news/>) There was a brief question and answer period with the biggest take-away being the need to vote.

Our November meeting came early because of the Thanksgiving holiday. Dale Todd from the Cedar Rapids City Council spoke on a variety of topics. He said some reasons why school bond issue

failed were that it had too many vague details when it was announced, there was some opposition, and the lack of trust in the school board. He said one will be passed eventually. Mr. Todd briefly described growing up his family and their emphasis on voting and keeping track of what was going on in the city. Nowadays, he said, most people don't know and don't vote. He explained the city has a strong foundation and made it through the. k days of the Flood, the Derecho, and other events. Right now, the City is in a good place. Next, he spoke on the homeless population and stated that the City is working to unify the efforts of several agencies that aid the homeless. An example is that homeless people are being paid to pick up trash in Green Square. In terms of violence, the City knows who and where the "bad guys" are. Mr. Todd said efforts are made to find out what each person needs rather than being judgmental and critical.

We do not have a December meeting, so the next CRISPA is Jan.24, 2024 at the American Legion in Marion.

Mary Muehl

### Letter from Past President Jean Hoffman

Thank you to all of the wonderful members of IRSPA and our wonderful business associates at AMBA and AARP for making the last few years as I served on the board of IRSPA such a wonderful experience! It doesn't matter if I got to know you personally or just as a member of IRSPA you all hold a very special place in my heart. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you and getting to experience little corners of Iowa that I had not experienced before. With the pandemic it was a wild ride at times, but look at all we learned during that time and how we had to drop back 5 and punt at times. We have grown and become stronger. I am excited to work with the scholarship program in the future. I strongly feel that it fills a niche in scholarship opportunities that did not exist in many scholarship programs before and also shows the heart of IRSPA.

Thank you all for the well wishes. I am deeply humbled.

Jean M. Hoffman



# District 6

## JOHNSON COUNTY IRSPA

Johnson County RSPA has had a busy year that began with an August Exec Board program meeting to plan for the year ahead. We decided on one outing and one meeting per month September through June. The change of venue for the regular meeting includes lunch from the menu at the Blackstone restaurant. Beth and John Hieronymus, Jon Noel, Cathy Schiele, Mary Mascher collaborated for a great year of programs. Results are in this article.

We began the fall with an excursion on the Mississippi River boarding the Mississippi Belle. The day trip included "Hits of the Decades" with a fun DJ and dancing and a buffet meal. Fun and laughter and ability to spend lots of time on deck due to the great weather definitely enhanced the good times and a fun trip! The ship leaves and returns to Davenport.

Our first meeting of the school year was at Blackstone Restaurant. We ordered off the menu and enjoyed a presentation as well as time for visiting. Deb Dunkhase presented programs and activities at Open Heartland. This outreach program is located on E Benton St. It caters to immigrants new to Johnson County. Weekly packets of food are available especially packaged for families of central American origin. A beginning of the school year event included eye checks, school registration, and filled backpacks gifted for students. Deb retired as executive director of the Children's Museum and found a friend to help establish this worthwhile venture. They are always in need of volunteers, money, diapers and diaper wipes.

In September our outing was to Brucemore, a mansion in Cedar Rapids that occupies 26 acres and has provided space for years for outdoor concerts and productions during the summer.

Mary Mascher's nephew is leading restoration of



**Mary Mascher talks to state VP Beth Hieronymus at the September meeting. Mary and Beth and John were supreme program planners for JCRSPA this year.**

the grounds partially because of the tremendous damage caused by the 2020 derecho. Brett Seelman brought his knowledge and program to our indoor meeting at the Blackstone on October 22, too.

Our outing in November was touring Kalona, Iowa. Through the Kalona Museum the Hieronymus' were able to arrange a guide and a delicious "Menno-nite complete lunch".

We spent little time at the Museum and didn't go through their outdoor display of buildings. We



**Mary Mascher had taken this tour before and highly promoted it. We're glad she did. She also seems to be a 'goat whisperer'!**

visited a goat farm and learned about the growing industry of producing goat milk. We went to the Stove and Buggy making and repair shop. Each place was so interesting and educational, it was hard to leave and move on to the next activity. Our guide, Daniel, was so helpful, patient and knowledgeable.

Nancy Porter  
Past President



**State VP Beth Hieronymus listens intently to the goat farmer.**



**Over twenty of our JCRSPA visited a goat farm, the buggy and stove build and repair shop, the Kalona Museum, and ate a fabulous meal prepared by Ila who cooks for tours sponsored by the Museum on November 6.**

**The brainstorm session of events by the Exec Board paid off. This tour really pleased everyone. State Government Affairs chair John Hieronymus handled the money collected and delivered to the Kalona Museum.**



Dear AMBA,

I have a standard Medicare Supplement plan since turning 65. I am now 70 years old and each year my premium goes up a little bit, on my anniversary month. I wasn't too concerned at first, but living on a fixed income as a retired school employee, I am starting to feel a bit squeezed financially about the increases. Is there anything I can do to alleviate these continual rate increases and do I have to make these arrangements at a particular time of the year.

Sincerely,  
Molly Money Conscious

Dear Molly,

Very good question. With the economy and inflation and the cost of gas and food right now, we are all feeling the pinch. To answer your question, YES, there is a way to offset the rate increases we receive every year from our Medicare Supplement providers. If you are in relatively good shape, health wise, and can answer no to the medical questions, a person can change from one insurance company to another insurance company and receive the exact same coverage and go to the same doctors and hospitals. Nothing changes except you will enjoy paying a lower premium. In 1990, Congress authorized the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) to standardize the coverage provided under Medicare supplement policies. The purpose of the law was to eliminate questionable marketing practices, provide consumers with a degree of protection and standardize the protection afforded. The NAIC developed standard Medicare Supplement plans that feature the exact same benefits for all companies offering Plans F and G. The differences will be found in the level of underwriting and the premiums which vary from company to company.

Your timing is very good also, in that we are in the Open enrollment period. This means that a person who has a Plan D for prescription coverage can change their provider if they have also experienced rate increases. Many people go on new prescriptions as they get older and their existing prescription plans may not cover the cost very well, for these new prescriptions.

We all experience rate increases with our standard Medicare Supplement plans. Our trusted partner, AMBA, works with several different insurance companies when it comes to Medicare Supplement. They are able to find companies who have very competitive pricing. By just answering a few health questions, it is possible to enjoy the exact same coverage at a lower monthly premium, by medically qualifying.

Please note that if you have any questions about your existing Medicare coverage please reach out to Paul Strid, our AMBA representative at 708-347-7081 or paul.strid@amba.info.

Thank you for your inquiry.  
AMBA

**Paul Strid**

**AMBA Senior Benefits Representative**

**PH. 708-347-7081 • email: paul.strid@amba.info**

## PH BALANCE SCHOLARSHIP Awarded to Callie Steva



In the words of Callie Steva, receiving a scholarship provides a "stepping stone toward realizing my full potential and achieving my life goals." That is what the PH Balance Scholarship is meant to do as well as to remind our recipients that we understand their loss and are proud of their resilience and desire to move forward in life. In the realm of the expenses of college, this amount is peanuts, but it carries a heartfelt recognition of your accomplishments.

Callie lost her father, a teacher, to heart problems in 2016 just when a young girl needs her daddy the most.

Callie is from Perry High School with a desire to continue her education at UNI with a major in education following in the footsteps of both of her parents. Leadership and compassion for others are two qualities that came through loud and clear in her letters of recommendation. She has demonstrated a care for others, especially those who seem to be struggling with some of life's challenges; and she lets them know they are not alone. She understands and I know how important that empathy for others is needed in the classroom.

Callie has been active in many sports, clubs, and school activities while maintaining exemplary grades.

IRSPA wishes Callie much success in her future.

Jean Hoffman



## Volunteer Hours -What You Can Do

When IRSPA members work for no pay or reimbursement, they should keep track of that time and submit VOLUNTEER HOURS to their units. Hours are divided into two categories: Youth and Education and Community.

### Youth and Education Hours

- Working with youth in schools in activities such as speech/drama/music, classroom aide, spelling bees, testing sites, sports activities, etc.
- Volunteering in youth programs such as Dollars for Scholars, Kids Against Hunger, scholarship committees, youth shelters, etc.
- Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H chapters, church groups, or any youth group
- Babysitting grandchildren or other children
- Hours spent driving to and from volunteering in any of the above activities

### Community Hours:

- Volunteering at libraries, museums, churches, food banks, hospice facilities, meals on wheels, humane societies, fairs, political efforts, soup or community kitchens, mission work, theater groups, fund raising activities, gardening or beautification work, etc.
- Working with organizations such as AARP, Lions, Elks, NAACP, Knights of Columbus, the American Legion, VFW, auxiliary units, or any service group, sororities, etc.
- Assisting or visiting the elderly in their homes, in care centers, assisted living facilities, rehab centers, etc.
- Any care you provide for family members of any age who need assistance
- Helping with tax, legal, and financial matters
- Providing rides to appointments, shopping, etc.
- Hours spent driving to and from volunteering in any of the above activities

Sandy & Jay Thede  
Supportive Services

## IRSPA Volunteer Hours for 2022-2023

The Iowa Retired School Personnel Association Volunteer Hours for 2022-2023 totaled 268,570 (down 8,531 hours from last year). We are also down 221 members in that time; but because the national value of each hour is more, we actually increased 6.2% in this time frame. Our total value of volunteer hours is \$ 8,540,526.00.

Iowa's hourly value per hour is \$28.09 and we rank 40th out of the 50 states in value of volunteer hours. Surveys found that older volunteers gave more hours to fewer organizations while the younger volunteers worked less volunteer hours but with more groups.

Seven, out of 41 IRSPA units, increased their volunteer hours for three consecutive years.

Congratulations to:

UNIT	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Carroll-Greene Co.	1,556	3,406	5,092
Council Bluffs Area	1,104	3,254	4,619
Crawford Co.	722	1,152	1,838
Creston Area	1,104	1,844	1,987
Des Moines Area	2,924	3,958	4,295
Jasper Co.	1,525	2,201	10,958
Mason City Area	9,412	11,289	11,558

Sandy & Jay Thede  
Supportive Services

### Honoring a 30% Discount on Rooms for IRSPA Members.

Show them this advertisement or your IRSPA Membership Card.

Known as one of the Finest Historic Boutique Hotels in the World, the Hotel Pattee is a destination unto itself. The property boasts 40 individually decorated and themed guest room, a state of the art bowling center, a full service dining room and lounge, and its own dedicated library. Additional services include the Full Service Copper Door Spa along with many other Amenities.

#### Contact:

Event and Sales Department

515.465.3511

Hotel Pattee

1112 Willis Ave., Perry, IA 50220

sales@hotelpattee.com • www.hotelpattee.com



# 2023 IRSPA Annual Meeting & Conference

The 2023 IRSPA Annual Meeting & Conference was held October 4th and 5th in Creston. Fifty-nine members were in attendance from around the state. Diane Burgmaier and Deb Lilly from District Four lead their group in organizing this event. This year's focus was "Literacy."

On Wednesday morning, October 4th, the Executive Council met. In the afternoon everyone was encouraged to visit Creston and surrounding communities to explore historical, artistic, and cultural sites. The paint-



ed murals on buildings in Creston's uptown area and Creston's restored depot with its art gallery of local art work were enjoyed by many.



**Author Linda Betsinger McCann speaking about her book Prisoners of War in Iowa**

The PH Balance Scholarship this year was awarded to Callie Steva, a senior at Perry High School in Perry, Iowa. She is the daughter of Rachel and the late Darin Steva. She plans to attend college to become a school psychologist.

There were nine applications received this year for the scholarship from six schools located in District



**Scholarship winner Callie Steva from Perry. Pictured with her mother, Rachel Steva, & Jean Hoffman.**

Four. District Four includes Clarke Area Unit, Council Bluffs Area Unit, Creston Area Unit, Dallas County Unit, and Decatur County Unit.

On Thursday morning during registration, refreshments were served (compliments of IRSPA). During that time, a memorial slide show was presented honoring deceased members from the past year. President Jean Hoffman welcomed everyone and made introductions. Diane Burgmaier led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Jill Tussey, a 2001 Creston High School graduate, was the morning speaker. Dr. Tussey's credentials are: Assistant Professor of Education – Literacy/Early Childhood; Division Chair, Literacy/Early Childhood and TESL; B.A., M.Ed. Buena Vista University; Ed.D. Capella University.



**Dr. Jill Tussey**

Dr. Tussey spoke about the content and importance of two books she co-wrote about literacy development: Disciplinary Literacy and Gamified Learning in Elementary Classrooms and Disciplinary Literacy and Gamified Learning in Middle School Classrooms.

After a short break, Garrett Mowery representing AMBA spoke about "Know Your Who" and proceeded to give units ideas about how to recruit and activate members.



**Garrett Mowery spoke about the many benefits that AMBA provides IRSPA members.**



Brad Anderson represented AARP. He spoke about the organization's recent successes, their dedicated workers, and their hopes for the near future. He urged us to be volunteers.



**Brad Anderson, AARP, shares successes and encourages volunteering.**

Phil Tetzloff gave a glowing report on the status of IPERS. As of fiscal year 2022, the funded ratio for IPERS is 89.50%. IRSPA members showed their appreciation for Phil's dedication through the years. He is retiring. He will be missed! He introduced his replacement, John Heironymus.



**John Hieronymus is on a steep learning curve as he prepares to replace Phil Tetzloff as Legislative Chairperson.**

Group pictures by District were taken before a delicious lunch.

The annual meeting followed.

Submitted by Angie Ford



**Nomination Chair Linda Miller and President Jean Hoffman introduce IRSPA's new vice-president Anne Cowley**

Paul Strid is our AMBA representative who serves on our IRSPA executive board and helps IRSPA members with financial, medical, and insurance issues."



**The Creston hosts prepared beautiful decorations. The quotes on each table were so appropriate for retired school personnel, and they were great conversation starters.**



**IRSPA Officers - Not all work & no play!**



# State Meeting District Attendees

*Congrats to District 4 for the most attendees!*



**District #1**



**District #4**



**District #2**



**District #5**



**District #3**



**District #6**



## John Hieronymus replaces Phil Tetzloff as IRSPA's Legislative Chairperson



Marshalltown IRSPA member, Phil Tetzloff, is retiring after 12 years as IRSPA's Legislative Chair. Phil was a special education teacher with an EDD who spent 40 years in the education profession. Phil commented that even though his duties involved a high learning curve he always had great support from the IPERS staff and the Benefits Committee. Thank you Phil, for your dedicated and competent duties as our IRSPA Legislative Chairperson!

**Due to rising postal costs,  
we are encouraging IRSPA  
members to read the IRSPA  
Newsletter online; go to  
irspa.org, under "news" you will  
see a selection of newsletters  
in color that go back six years.  
This is the last issue that IRSPA  
members will receive in the mail  
UNLESS they notify  
rmswanson1936@gmail.com**



## BENEFITS STILL FIT?

## CONSIDER ADDITIONAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

As your life changes, consider some of these benefits and discounts from **IRSPA & AMBA**:

- Dental & Vision Plans
- Long Term Care & Home Health Care Insurance
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- Cancer, Heart & Stroke, and Accident Insurances
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Learn More: **1-877-556-4582**

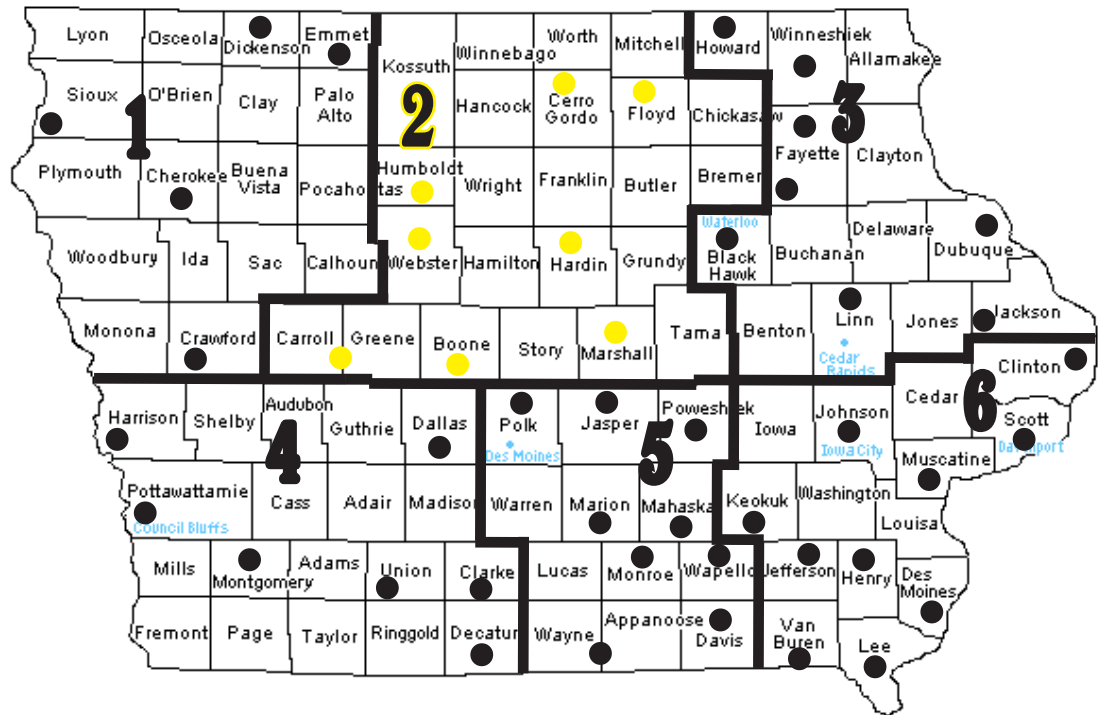
**myambabenefits.info/irspa**

IRSPA - Iowa Retired School Personnel Association



**IRSPA** is the only organization working primarily to protect and improve the financial benefits of Iowa's retired school personnel. Recruit a new member today!

# Local IRSPA Units



## ~ WE REMEMBER ~

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Anderson, Bill</b> L Omaha, NE - No Unit                         | <b>Marks, Frank</b> Greenfield, IA - No Unit                        |
| <b>Anderson, Carole</b> Sioux City, IA - No Unit                    | <b>Muller, Calvin</b> Norwalk, IA - Humboldt Area Unit              |
| <b>Baldes, Arlene</b> Sioux City, IA - Sioux City Area Unit         | <b>Nelson, Mary</b> Cherokee, IA - Cherokee County Unit             |
| <b>Barrett, Charles</b> Davenport, IA - Davenport Area Unit         | <b>Newell, Gary</b> Humboldt, IA - Humboldt Area Unit               |
| <b>Bolton, Jerry</b> Jessup, IA - No Unit                           | <b>Otten, Eva Marie</b> Mason City, IA - Mason City Area Unit       |
| <b>Cassidy, Nelda</b> Walcott, IA - Davenport Area Unit             | <b>Peterson, Francis</b> Decorah, IA - Winneshiek Co Unit           |
| <b>Cervin, Marcia</b> Corning, IA - Creston Area Unit               | <b>Rawson, Tom</b> Dubuque, IA - Dubuque Area Unit                  |
| <b>Downing, Craig</b> Sigourney, IA - Keokuk County Unit            | <b>Reistoffer, Diane</b> Granville, IA - No Unit                    |
| <b>Ervin, Tom</b> Davenport, IA - Davenport Area Unit               | <b>Schaefer, Carla</b> Coon Rapids, IA - Carroll-Greene County Unit |
| <b>Ginapp, Ron</b> Marshalltown, IA - Marshall County Unit          | <b>Scharff, Jean</b> Ankeny, IA - No Unit                           |
| <b>Green-Dickerson, Grace</b> Des Moines, IA - Des Moines Area Unit | <b>Thomas, Carole</b> Dubuque, IA - Dubuque Area Unit               |
| <b>Hackler, Alan</b> Knoxville, IA Marian County Unit               | <b>Vandenberg, Jim</b> Keokuk, IA - Lee County Unit                 |
| <b>Hardy, Donna</b> Greene, IA Big Four Unit                        | <b>Wall, Helen</b> Donnelson, IA - Lee County Unit                  |
| <b>Hawkins, Marie</b> Coralville, IA No Unit                        | <b>Wangsness, Lorraine</b> Calmar, IA - Winneshiek Co Unit          |
| <b>Iverson, Ona</b> Sioux City, IA Sioux City Area Unit             | <b>Williams, Bonnie</b> Iowa City, IA - Johnson County Unit         |
| <b>Jay, Ivy Ferne</b> Centerville, IA Davis County Unit             | <b>Windehausen, Pat</b> Sioux City, IA - Sioux City Area Unit       |
| <b>Jochum, Anne</b> Bettendorf, IA Davenport Area Unit              | <b>Winegar, Larry</b> Runnells, IA - No Unit                        |
| <b>Koob, Irene</b> Plainfield, IA Big Four Unit                     | <b>Wyatt-Hanes, Kathy</b> Iowa City, IA - Johnson County Unit       |
| <b>Lohr, Frances June</b> Osceola, IA Clark County Unit             |   |



## Little Swan Lake Winery



Little Swan Lake Winery is a family owned and operated business located 1-1/2 miles north of the small town of Superior in Northwest Iowa. In May of 2002 our doors opened to the public. The tasting room, our remodeled 1920's barn, features 35 different wines all produced on site, a selection of gourmet cheeses, and buffalo meat from our own herd which roams nearby. Our vineyard consists of two acres of northern cold hardy grapes. The gift shop features clothing and wine related items. We are dedicated to producing the finest and most enjoyable wines and invite you to spend an hour or an afternoon with us.

Our newest addition, our bed and breakfast, opened in September of 2011. This renovated grain elevator is a great place to relax and enjoy the beauty that is Little Swan Lake!

Scott and Diane Benjamin and Family



Little Swan Lake Winery offers a 10% discount on bottled wine to IRSPA members when you show your membership card or the ad from the newsletter. Offer good at the winery only.

[Lslwinery.com](http://Lslwinery.com) • Phone: (712) 858 - 4592

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## Hawkeye Buffalo & Cattle Ranch



<https://www.facebook.com/hawkeyebuffaloranch/>

Hawkeye Buffalo & Cattle Ranch is a family farm in northeast Iowa. Our heritage dates back to 1854 when my great-great-grandparents settled in a sod house just a mile from our farm. The bison have returned, and we invite you to connect with the land, our family, and our farm.

Tours include an informative lesson on the history of buffalo in Iowa and a chance to feed the buffalo. Tours are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children. With an IRSPA membership card or showing your copy of the IRSPA newsletter with the Hawkeye Buffalo advertisement, the **cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.** Tours are set up on an as needed basis so you must call in advance to set up your tour. The Buffalo Ranch is southwest of Fredericksburg next to Split Rock Park and Campgrounds at 3034 Pembroke Ave. Visitors often get a chance to see other wildlife too - deer, sandhill cranes, hawks, songbirds, and occasionally eagles. Buffalo meat is also sold on location.

Check us out at [Hawkeyebuffalo.com](http://Hawkeyebuffalo.com)  
Phone: 641-229-6701

**Newsletter**  
**Iowa Retired School Personnel**  
**Association**  
3221 Cheyenne Blvd.  
Sioux City, IA 51104

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**Permit #145**



HAPPY  
**HOLIDAYS**



PLEASE NOTE: Send relevant notices, change of address,  
and/or subscription cancellations to rmswanson1936@gmail.com

**LEGISLATIVE FUND**

Contributions to the Iowa Retired School Personnel Association legislative fund for the improvement of retirement benefits are being accepted for the current year (Oct. to Oct.) Please make your contributions as generous as possible.

\$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If Member of Local Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL EITHER FORM TO:**

Robert Swanson, IRSPA Treas. • 3221 Cheyenne Blvd.,  
Sioux City, IA 51104 • Make Checks payable to IRSPA

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Iowa Retired School Personnel Association

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last

First

M.I.

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If Member of Local Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues: \$15 • LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$300