

IOWA

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NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

DEAR READERS...

by Sarah Oltrogge, editor

Every day as I walk through the atrium of the State Historical Building, it puts a smile on my face to see all the kids wandering through the exhibits, learning about Iowa history and having fun while doing it.

This spring, throngs of students came to the building as part of National History Day. It's a popular event for youth in sixth through 12th grades. It gives them an opportunity to hone their research skills—and learn a little something in the process. Abby Bowman of Johnston is one of the students who attended and won in her division for her paper on Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. In June, she and the other winners went to Washington, D.C. for the national contest.

What makes Abby's project so special is that not only did she earn eighth place in the junior historical papers contest at nationals, but also an invitation to the Turkish Embassy and a trip to Turkey next spring for International Children's Day, an annual holiday created by her subject.

Ataturk founded the Turkish Republic and instituted sweeping reform to create a modern country. International Children's Day entrusts in the hands of the youth the protection of the country's sovereignty and independence. In other words, kids from all over the world come to Turkey and replace state officials, sign executive orders and replace parliamentarians in the Grand National Assembly in an effort to focus on children's issues.

Abby's going to see and be a part of it all. Not too bad for a seventh grader from Iowa. A little local press and some national exposure in Turkey, and Abby has an instant momentous life experience to look forward to. Her trip to Turkey next April will be something she'll likely never forget. I'm sure she'll represent the United States, and Iowa, well.



SARAH
OLTROGGE

Neymeyer re-elected to Historical Society board

Robert Neymeyer of Parkersburg has been re-elected to the State Historical Society of Iowa Board of Trustees.

This will be Neymeyer's third three-year term on the board. He has previously served as the board's chairperson. The election among board members to determine the next chairperson will be made in September. Neymeyer lives in Parkersburg.

The Board of Trustees is made up of 12 members, three of whom are elected and the other nine appointed by the governor. Ballots are mailed to Historical Society members each spring as the staggered 3-year terms expire.

Appointed board members are selected based on geographic location, gender and interest or experience in history-related topics. On July 31, Governor Tom Vilsack announced the appointment of Peggy Whitworth to a second term on the SHSI Board. Whitworth is the director of Brucemore Mansion in Cedar Rapids.

Annals of Iowa recalls Quakers in Iowa

The Spring issue of the *Annals of Iowa* recounts the history of Quakers in Iowa in the 19th century and dispels some misconceptions about the first Quaker president's early schooling in Iowa.

Thomas D. Hamm focuses on the divisions that emerged among Friends, or Quakers, in Iowa after the Civil War. Some of those divisions mirrored what was happening elsewhere in the country, but in other ways Iowa Friends took the lead in adopting controversial innovations that would eventually transform Quakerism nationally.

James Quinten Cahill reviews the evidence about Herbert Hoover's early schooling in Iowa, then traces how that story became distorted through journalistic carelessness, manipulation for political and public relations purposes, and Hoover's own psychological needs.

Single issues of the *Annals of Iowa* cost \$6 and can be purchased by contacting Publications, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240; by calling 319-335-3916 or by visiting the Museum Gift Shop at the State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines.

About the Cover

In the days before there was ever such a thing as Adventureland in the Des Moines area, there was Riverview Park. The caption for this picture, published in the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*, June 5, 1941, states, "Hundreds of boys and girls who during the school year see that their fellow students get safely across dangerous traffic intersections, Thursday had a picnic at Riverview park. Here, several members of the school safety patrol enjoy the 'chute,' one of Riverview's popular rides."

Riverview Park was in operation from the 1920s until 1978, when it was purchased by Adventureland. Some of the rides were moved to the new theme park in Altoona.

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To help Iowans comprehend who they are and what they can become, the State Historical Society of Iowa serves as a trustee of Iowa's historical legacy and an advocate for understanding Iowa's past.



The mission of the Iowa Historical Foundation is to raise funds to support the State Historical Society of Iowa and its programs, to preserve Iowa's heritage and to educate Iowa citizens so that they know and appreciate that heritage.

www.iowahistory.org

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Cultural Affairs

'If This Dirt Could Talk' fills in the holes of an older generation through their stories

by Mindy O'Neall

The sweat-stained hats, clad overalls and worn-out shoes knew the stories. These clothes lived with the farmers and kept them warm and dry. But the dirt they kicked around at the beginning and end of every day heard it all.

Stories from war, stories of their lives, stories that made them laugh and cry. Stories that many children and grandchildren grew up with and learned from. These are the stories that Shirley Long of Ankeny and Peg McCool of Shelby are trying to preserve.

It started when Peg and her husband bought Peg's grandfather's Century Farm. As they looked at the house in Harrison County in western Iowa, they started to remember the stories that were told about the same land—stories from decades before—and wondered how they could preserve them.

With this idea in mind, McCool and Long put their heads together to develop a project they have called "If This Dirt Could Talk," in which they interview senior citizens who reveal their lives on camera. From this, the two women want to create a documentary, telling the stories to younger generations before they are lost forever.

"We record people between 75 and 115 years old," Long said. "There is so much life in these seniors and so much wisdom. They are positively brilliant. These stories are fascinating."

The stories are also fragile. Since taping began in April 2000, three of the storytellers have passed away. "These stories are so important and without funding, they may never be documented for future generations to learn from," Long said.

The project has been getting recognition around the state. Long is working on a continuation of the project with defense attorney Bill Bracker from Council Bluffs, who believes that if young, delinquent children could see this film, they would earn a greater respect for the older generation.

"They would experience life in a different way. I wish these kids could see the film and see how they still worked harder then, but had more fun," Long said.

According to her, this generation is still kicking.

"There is so much life in these seniors and so much wisdom. They are positively brilliant. These stories are fascinating."

—Shirley Long

"One guy was 90 years old and told me he loved 'helping old people,'" Long said. "That was the guy who taught a blind man how to play pool."

Long recalls these stories of her interviewees with excitement and fondness in her voice. She remembers one elderly man, who could recall both world wars, check his stocks on the computer and tend to livestock all in the same day.

But a hint of sadness is woven through Long's enthusiastic voice. "We are at a standstill while the seniors are dying out. We don't have any more money," she said.

The extensive documentation and interviewing of these seniors has been a costly investment for McCool and Long. Start-up costs for the project were personal funds contributed from each woman. In 2000, the project was funded in part by the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act/Historical Resource Development Program (REAP/HRDP) administered by the State Historical Society of Iowa. The grant assists Iowans in educating about and preserving historical resources in Iowa.

"I cannot think of a better resource than the living stories of these individuals," Long said. "We have begun to initiate fundraising for this project."

Long said they are working on efforts to get 20-30 minute snapshots of the video in rest stops and welcome centers around Iowa to spark people's interest, and hopefully donations as well.

Other efforts have been ongoing, such as developing a Web site and introducing the project to other groups in which both women are active.

"We are deeply appreciative for the REAP grant. It has helped us get on our feet," Long said.

Cedar Falls Historical Society celebrates sesquicentennial

The Cedar Falls Historical Society continues a year-long celebration of its sesquicentennial.

The Sesquicentennial Exhibit at the Victorian Home and Carriage House Museum, 308 W. 3rd St., will run through Dec. 31. It featured information on the city's earliest settlers, including William Sturgis, the Overman Brothers, Andrew Mullarky, Peter Melendy and more. It also covers 150 years of business, government, education and entertainment history.

"Cedar Falls Cemeteries," presented by Dr. Thomas Connors will be held Tuesday, Aug. 20, at 6 p.m. at the Victorian Home and Carriage House Museum. Dr. Connors is a professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa and will be discussing the history of the Greenwood and Fairview cemeteries, as well as presenting

information on the symbolism and styles of various monuments.

Dr. Connors continues his discussion of cemeteries on Saturday, Oct. 26, with the Greenwood Cemetery Walk from 4:30-5:30 p.m. He will discuss the history of Victorian mourning customs and talk about famous aviators, veterans and pioneers from Cedar Falls.

Rounding out the sesquicentennial activities is the 20th Annual Christmas Walk on Dec. 1 from 2-5 p.m. This event allows for a peek inside the homes of the historic Overman Park vicinity, decked out for the holiday season.

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact the Cedar Falls Historical Society at (319) 266-5149.

State Historical Society libraries now online

Iowa's history is now more accessible to the public than ever before.

The holdings of the State Historical Society of Iowa Libraries, consisting of thousands of books and manuscripts detailing the history of Iowa, are now available on InfoHawk—the online catalog of the University of Iowa Libraries.

At first, 32,000 State Historical Society records will be added from both the Iowa City and Des Moines libraries, and over time an additional 218,000 State Historical Society records will be converted and added to the system. Also included in the State Historical Society collection is the Iowa Newspaper Project, a collection of 3,100 Iowa newspapers, many of which are rare.

"Even though online catalogs have been around for many years, we are excited about finally being able to provide electronic access to our bibliographic records. We are looking forward to a larger number of researchers discovering and using the unique resources at our libraries and special collections as a result," said Shaner Magalhães, SHSI bureau chief.

From now on, everything cataloged by SHSI libraries will go online, and a substantial effort will also be made to

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Iowa youth do outstanding job at National History Day competition

Ten Iowa students captured the attention of America at the National History Day contest in College Park, Md. in June. Several young scholars won top prizes with their documentaries, performances, exhibit displays, and papers.

Eight Iowa entries qualified for the national finals. Gabriella Green took first place with a junior individual documentary entitled "Solution to Hunger: Dr. Norman E. Borlaug and the Green Revolution."

"I think National History Day is a great program because it opens new doors into your education, then on top of that, it is a lot of fun," Green said.

Returning national champions Amy Paul and Katie Pauley again took first prize in junior group documentaries for "Grace Hopper: Expanding Computer Horizons."

"We had so much fun," Paul said. "It's hard to describe what History Day means...it's people skills and research and writing."

"We learned perseverance and that you can shoot for and reach any goal," Pauley added.

First-year participant Stephen Frese of Marshalltown took the second place medal for his junior historical paper entitled "Wrestling with Reform: Iowa Coal Communities and the Transformation of Childhood."

Other Iowa finalists included:

Alex Cahill & Emily Green—Fifth place in senior group performance with "The Works Progress Administration: Our Business of Relief." Both were also awarded the outstanding state entry in the senior division. "History Day has been a real supplement to my schooling," Green said. "I've learned much more than history—without it I feel there would have been a void in my education."

"History Day has been a very valuable and exciting experience in my life," Cahill added. "It enriches my learning by bringing the past alive."

Elyse Lyons—Seventh place in junior individual performances with "Alice Hamilton: Friend of the Factory Worker." She also was awarded the outstanding state entry in

the junior division.

Abigail Bowman—Eighth place in junior historical papers with "Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: Reformer of Turkey." See related story, page 5.

Laura Westercamp—Eighth place in senior individual exhibits with "Battle of the Bottle: The Women, the Reaction, the Reform."

Lauren Appley—Ninth place in junior individual papers with "Martha Graham: Revolutionary Genius of Modern Dance."

"History Day rocks! We can get excited about history, research, our topic, and even competition," Appley said. "All I can say is that History Day is the greatest project I have ever done in my entire life."

Across the U.S., nearly 700,000 students participate in National History Day each year. NHD requires rigorous research, analysis, and creative presentation of historical conclusions. NHD in Iowa is sponsored by the State Historical Society of Iowa with major funding by the State Historical Society, Inc. and the American Legion of Iowa Foundation.

IHPA hires executive director

The Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance (IHPA) has hired Dr. Michael Kramme to work as executive director.

Kramme began his duties with IHPA June 10.

Kramme, 55, was born and raised in Des Moines. He attended Grand View College and received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Northern Iowa. He earned his Ph.D in theater with minors in film and historic preservation from the University of Missouri.

Most recently, Dr. Kramme was a faculty member and director of theater at Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri.

The IHPA is a private, statewide advocacy organization. Its mission is to build partnerships that enhance Iowa's economic and cultural future through the preservation of the state's significant historic resources.



JOY RIDE

Exhibit opens Sept. 28

State Historical Building
Des Moines

History Day student wows Turkish Ambassador

When asked to find the country of Turkey, most middle school students would have to search the map. But seventh-grader Abigail Bowman from Johnston could tell you exactly where it is. She could even tell you how Turkey as it is known and governed today came to be.

For her History Day project, Abby chose to write a paper on Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic who served as its first president from 1923 until his death in 1938. During that time, Ataturk implemented sweeping reforms to create a modern Turkey, including secularization of the government and education, equal rights for women, and adoption of the Latin alphabet.

"My topic fit in well with the (History Day) theme 'Revolution, Reform, Reaction in History,'" she said. "Ataturk is practically the definition of reform, and the Turks reacted in a variety of ways. For the main part, the actual citizens of Turkey loved him. Ataturk's name has become as much a part of their nationality as their flag."

Not only did Ataturk's achievements complement the History Day theme, but also Abby wanted to draw attention to a great man who was not well known by many students in the United States. While writing her paper, Abby contacted college professors, people living in Turkey and the Ataturk Society of America. One of her favorite results of the project is that she has



Abigail Bowman pauses for a picture with, from left to right, Feliz Odabas-Geldiay, vice president of the Ataturk Society of America; Abby's father, Scott Bowman; and Dr. Faruk Logoglu, Turkish Ambassador to the United States. The photo was taken June 11 at the Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

established an ongoing e-mail friendship with a 14-year-old boy in Turkey.

Abby was one of 2,000 students selected nationwide to attend the National History Day contest in Washington, D.C. in June. While there, she was invited by the Ataturk

is a day when the President, Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and provincial governors all turn over their positions to children's representatives.

"Just the thought of traveling to such a far away place is exciting on its own,"

she said. "I'll also probably pick up some Turkish and the cuisine sounds delicious. I can't wait to meet new friends and

"Just the thought of traveling to such a far away place is exciting on its own. I can't wait to meet new friends and see new places!"

—Abby Bowman

Society of America to address the Turkish Ambassador Dr. Faruk Logoglu and other diplomats. The Ataturk Society of America also offered to pay for Abby to attend National Children's Day in Turkey next April. She will spend a week in the country, stay with a family, participate in parliamentary activities for Children's Day and talk about her History Day experience to other children and the press. Children's Day

see new places!"

Her topic proved to be a popular one as she was profiled in several Turkish newspapers, and in the national news, as well as local in the *Des Moines Register*.

The Ataturk Society of America is a nonprofit organization established to promote the principles of Ataturk as a model for peace. The Society will bestow honorary membership on Abby.

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put existing records online as well, Magalhães said.

The online catalog terminals are up and running at the Iowa City reading room, and will be operational in the Des Moines library soon.

The online cataloging project was funded by a grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, the largest private foundation in the state of Iowa awarding more than \$14 million annually to support scientific research, scholarships, libraries, general education and other issues related to the needs of Iowa youth.

The State Historical Society's online catalog can be accessed at www.iowahistory.org.



Newsletter Survey

Included in your *Iowa Historian* newsletter is a survey that we ask you to fill out and return to us.

The survey will help us determine how we can better serve those who receive the newsletter.

We want it to be about you. We want to hear your likes and dislikes, and we want to know what makes our faithful readers tick.

Please fill out the short survey and return it to us by Sept. 27. Your input will shape the future of the newsletter.

Conference focuses on rural tourism

Program development and rural tourism are two of the topics that will be discussed at the annual Country School Preservation Conference sponsored by the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance. The conference will be held Oct. 4-5 at the Nodaway Valley Museum in Clarinda.

Staff members from the Nodaway Museum and the Clay County, Mo., historic sites complex will outline program and marketing techniques they have developed for country school museums. There will also be teaching demonstrations at the Goldenrod School Museum in Clarinda.

Cynthia Nieb, Community Development coordinator for the State Historical Society of Iowa, will provide an update on the country schools grant program. Michele Walker, Western Iowa

Tourism Director, and Sue Schrad of the Carroll Chamber of Commerce will discuss how country school museums can be utilized as part of a rural tourism program.

Dr. Mark DeWalt of Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C., will provide an update on the status of one-room schools operated by the Amish.

Friday evening conference participants will tour and dine at the Swedish Cultural Center in Stanton. On Saturday, participants will visit country school museums in Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri.

There is a \$25 registration fee for the conference. To obtain a conference flyer, contact Bill Sherman at (800) 434-2039 or email, wlsberman@mchsi.com.

Yapp hosts class on historic preservation

By Bob Yapp

One of the biggest myths about preservation today is that it costs too much.

In many ways, we deserve this criticism. Education opportunities for property owners and contractors in cost-effective, preservation-based rehabilitation are virtually nonexistent. Building and home owners complain that it is impossible to find contractors to do the work in a practical and cost-effective manner.

We in the preservation movement are up against the replacement industry spending tens of millions of dollars to convince homeowners to buy their products while we sit back and let it happen.

In the spirit of "put up or shut up," the Kentucky Heritage Council, Pine Mountain Settlement School, and Preservation Resources have teamed up to create a national training center to teach cost-effective, practical preservation methodology. The school is located in southeast Kentucky in the Appalachian Mountains.

The first session will run Sept. 15-27. During these two weeks, I will be teaching wooden window restoration; and nationally renowned preservationist John Seekircher will be teaching steel window restoration. Students will learn the skills needed to restore original windows and to make them energy efficient for much less money than installing replacement windows. Students will work on windows from two of the school's historic buildings for a hands-on learning experience. There will also be preservation seminars for homeowners and contractors, field trips to nearby historic preservation projects, lectures on the culture of the area and performances by musicians and other artists.

Cost for the one-week session is \$1,500, or \$2,500 for the two-week session. Cost includes room and board expenses. For more details about the instructors, tuition, travel or history on the Pine Mountain Settlement School, visit www.pinemountainsettlementschool.com or call (606) 558-3571.

SHSI awards 2002-2003 research grants

The State Historical Society of Iowa announces the recipients of its 2002/03 research grants:

Jenny Barker (Iowa State University) for "'It Caused Quite a Ripple, But No Revolution': The Writings of Bess Short Newcomer and the Roles of Women in the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, 1936-1951."

Clyde Brown and Gayle K. Pluta Brown (Miami University) for "Iowa University Towns and the 26th Amendment: The First Test of the Newly Enfranchised Student Vote in November 1971."

Ronald E. Butchart (University of Georgia) for "Iowa's Teachers in the South, 1865-1875."

Judith M. Daubenmier for "The Meskwakis and Sol Tax: Reconsidering the Actors in Action Anthropology."

Teresa Garcia (University of Iowa) for "Mexicans in Iowa before 1960: An Oral History of Community Life in Fort Madison."

Joanne E. Passet (Indiana University East) for "'Yours for Liberty': Radical Women in Nineteenth-Century Iowa."

Michael J. Pfeifer (Evergreen State College) for "The 1857 Eastern Iowa Vigilante Movement: Popular Sovereignty and the Transformation of Violence in the Antebellum Midwest."

Leslie A. Schwalm (University of Iowa) for "Emancipation Day Celebrations: Iowans and the Commemoration of Slavery and Freedom."

The State Historical Society of Iowa awards research stipends of \$1,000 to support original research and interpretive writing related to the history of Iowa or Iowa and the Midwest. Applications are judged on their potential for producing publishable work and grant recipients are expected to produce an annotated manuscript targeted for the *Annals of Iowa*, SHSI's scholarly journal. The grants were funded by the State Historical Society, Inc.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For the most current events listing, please visit www.iowahistory.org or call (515) 281-4011.

September is National Archeology Month!

Sept. 21 *FREE*

State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines
Come learn what there is to know about this year's theme, "Containers." Listen and learn about pottery as both a useful tool and beautiful art; the Native American tradition of making parfleches, a type of purse; and the Amana basket weaving tradition. Call (515) 281-4011 for more information.

Joy Ride: Getting Out to See the Country

Opens Sept. 28 *FREE*

State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust, Des Moines
A light-hearted, artifact-based exhibit highlighting the mechanical marvels that have allowed Iowans to get out and see the countryside. The exhibit extends from an early two-wheeled boneshaker through the innovative designs of the Duesenbergs and the super-fast Rocket Ranger.

TRACES presents the Inaugural Conference on WWII-Era POWs

Oct. 6-9, Muscatine

With the help of its supporters, TRACES is calling this conference as a forum for scholars and community members to openly learn, think and speak about issues involving prisoners of war. Unearth an amazing legacy, nurture qualities of humane understanding, and foster thoughtful responses to today's challenges. Visit www.traces.org for registration costs and information.

Union Sunday School Programs

August, September, October *FREE*

Clermont

Aug. 25: Steve Story presents "David B. Henderson," the first Speaker of the House born west of the Mississippi. **Sept. 29:** Jack Noelman, retired from Scott Air Force Base, presents a children's program. **Oct. 27:** Northeast Iowa organ group August Knoll recital. All programs are presented at 2:30 p.m. and include tea following (except for the Sept. 29 program). Call (563) 423-7173 for more information.

Yes! I'm interested in becoming a member of the STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA.

Individual Membership \$40

- ★ *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* magazine
- ★ *Iowa Historian* newsletter
- ★ 10% discount at Museum Store & Cafe
- ★ Time Travelers Society
- ★ Exclusive member benefits

Heritage Circle \$100 & Over

- ★ Individual and family benefits
- ★ 20% discount on books at the Museum Store
- ★ *Annals of Iowa* scholarly journal
- ★ Premium Iowa history book
- ★ Special pre-opening access to new exhibits

Family Membership

- Add \$20 to the individual membership. If joining the Heritage Circle and desire family membership, check this box . Your family will enjoy the individual membership benefits plus:
- ★ Special notice of family activities
 - ★ Membership cards for each member
 - ★ Kids' events calendar & newsletter
 - ★ 20% discount at the Museum Store on children's books and toys

Supporter
\$10,000 & Over

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\$1,000 & Over

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\$5,000 & Over

Conservator
\$500 & Over

Advocate
\$250 & Over



Complete the form below and mail with your payment to:

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515-242-5217

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IN YOUR WORDS

Protecting Iowa's Historic Barns

by Senator Tom Harkin

Maintaining and enhancing our rural landscape is of great importance to me, as it is to many Iowans. Historic barns and farm buildings stand as monuments to our farming past, and as a reminder of the values and heritage we need to continue in the future. That's why, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, I felt it was important to establish a Historic Barn Preservation Program.



This program will help individuals and groups such as the Iowa Barn Foundation protect and preserve these national treasures. During the Farm bill debate I included the historic barn provision in my original bill defended in committee, and made sure it became law as part of the final farm bill.

The Historic Barn Preservation Program will create a national list of historic barns and sponsor historical research. It will also provide grants to rehabilitate, repair and protect historic barns. In order to qualify as a historic barn, the building must be at least 50 years old, retain the integrity of its original design, and meet the criteria for listing on national, state or local

registers or inventories of historic structures.

The new farm bill authorizes \$25 million over the next six years for the Historic Barn Preservation Program. As a senior member of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, I will work hard to make sure we fund this important program.

As the USDA works to implement the Historic Barn Preservation Program, I encourage anyone interested in this program to contact both the USDA's Office of Rural Development and my office with their ideas and thoughts. My hope is that this program will succeed in helping to preserve much of the unique architecture that covers the farm landscape.

When I drive across Iowa, I too often see barns that are literally crumbling to the ground. I do not want to see these important parts of Iowa's history disappear. Farming must always be a part of Iowa's livelihood and landscape. That's what the new farm bill and the Historic Barn Preservation Program is all about.

Senator Tom Harkin can be contacted at: 731 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; (202) 224-3254; Tom_Harkin@harkin.senate.gov.

If you'd like to be considered for In Your Words, contact Sarah Oltrogge at (515) 281-4011 or Sarah.Oltrogge@dca.state.ia.us.

