



# Newsletter

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## Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development County Wide Breakfast



The annual Kossuth/  
Palo Alto County Economic  
Development Corporation County  
Wide Breakfast drew a crowd of  
140 interested individuals on August  
3. Following the breakfast served at St.

Michael's Parish Center in Whittemore,  
Executive Director Maureen  
Elbert welcomed everyone and  
proceeded with the program.

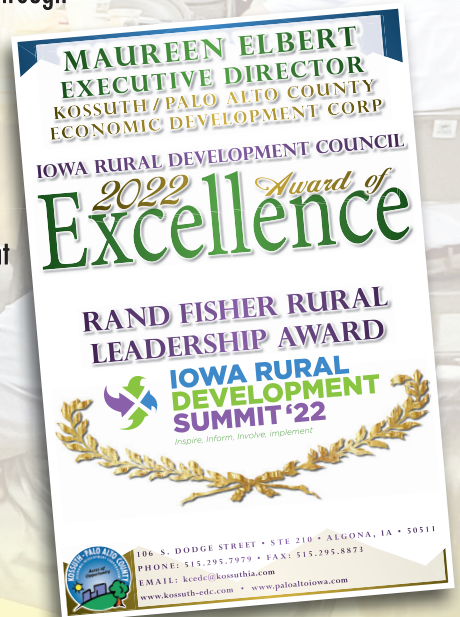
Several people were  
recognized for their service  
to Economic Development  
within the two counties. The  
Outstanding Leadership award  
was accepted by Ellengray  
Kennedy and Roberta Meyers on  
behalf of their husbands, Charlie  
and Craig. Brianna Marso was named  
Volunteer of the Year.

The board members for the

two-county development group were thanked for their  
commitment and work. Appreciation was extended  
to Jason Wartick from Algona and Rick Brennan from  
Emmetsburg for their leadership as shared board  
presidents.

What Elbert failed to announce was a special recognition  
of "Rural Heroes" that she had recently received. At the  
sixth annual Iowa Rural Summit Maureen Elbert was  
recognized for the honor. "Her work shows how small  
towns can thrive through  
great leadership  
and innovative  
projects," were  
words Mark  
Reinig, Board  
Chair of the Iowa  
Rural Development  
Council used to  
describe Elbert's  
work.

This year's





breakfast theme was, "Ignite Your Path to Success!". Finding an economic development sticker underneath a chair meant that the centerpiece highlighting the theme was a take home gifts for that person.

In a power point presentation, the keynote speaker Kit Welchin provided hints and tactics for Communicating Across the Generations at Work.

He was skillful at offering facts and sprinkling humor. He kicked off the presentation with the following statement, "I can't be critical because I have a brother that just found out a 401K is not a type of marathon." He proceeded to identify the traits and work expectations of five generations. Included were the Veterans/Traditional generation, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, Millennials/ Gen Y and Gen Z/IGen. He stated that communication is important because "A culture that has been shaped by the values, standards and policies of one generation isn't necessarily going to be compatible with the next generation."

In the U.S. by 2030, Millennials and Gen Z will make up 85% of the workforce. The workplace continues to be an important facet of people's lives. According to Welchin it is imperative for managers,

owners and workplace employees to understand the different generations and their approach to the workplace.

In the end, there should be four intentions that those in charge take into consideration when hiring, retaining and promoting individuals. These include getting the work done, getting it done right, getting along and showing appreciation. To accomplish this, other generations need to be understood. Welchin went through the characteristics of each generation, their expectations and their understanding of the world. It was great information, especially when

dealing with various ages within the workplace.

Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation is making Welchin's presentation available on their website at [www.paloaltoiowa.com](http://www.paloaltoiowa.com). Scroll down to the 2022 County Wide Breakfast.

Following the presentation, photos were taken of the board members and those in the audience that were elected officials. Welchin's books were made available for sale. This was welcomed by those who wanted to benefit more from someone who has had extensive experience in public speaking, operating manufacturing plants as the CEO and is a college instructor for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

*Diane Weiland, Reporter-Democrat*





# Welcome to Cylinder

Mayor Harry Bormann says it's a great community. The population of Cylinder? 82.

"We have 5 - 6 operating businesses. It's been a nice place to live. We've been here 48 years, just love it," Borman said.

Spoken just like you would expect the town's mayor to do, but the truth is, like many rural Iowa towns, Cylinder is a shadow of what it once was.

Born in 1885, Cylinder is on the comeback, just not like what you might expect.

"Arnie Heng, the ex-mayor of Cylinder came to me and he says our old depot is about ready to fall down. Could you make me a copy of it before it does," said Joe Joyce.

Joyce made a living in the grocery business. In the 70s, he owned and operated five grocery stores and always made sure that the meat and produce made the cut.

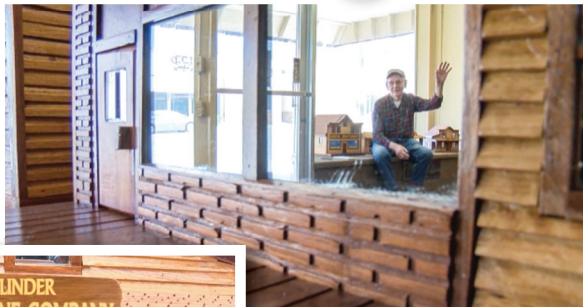
At 81 years old Joe is now retired, but he continues to cut away. His work now, however, is priceless and takes place in his woodshop. That deteriorating Milwaukee Railroad Depot was the start of something.

"We had a community event December 17 and 18 and people came and couldn't believe it looked so detailed," said Bormann. "A year later, Joe came in and said I'm going to make more of those buildings."

"I got reading through that and it got so interesting. I said, 'By God, I'm going to make some more of those buildings,'" Joyce added.

Since completing the depot in 2018, Joyce has replicated 19 of the town of Cylinder's original business buildings. He uses the town's centennial book as a guide.

"Here's the livery and stables that I built. Martini gas station, I built. There's First Bank, the original bank. Tilford Egland has come up with a lot of images," said Joyce. "Most of these buildings I'll



get them done in a week or a week and a half."

Along with walnut harvest off the family farm, Joyce uses floor underlayment for the walls and floors, cutting strips of wood to a

sixteenth of an inch for shingles.

"I tip the blade 4 degrees and that makes a nice shingle and siding. When I started this, I couldn't believe all the businesses in that town," Joyce said.

Of the buildings now on display, including the depot moved to the city park in the 70s, five are still standing.

Some like what's now known as the Haacks Nest, reborn several times over.

"A lot of people don't remember how vibrant turn of the century communities were. That's probably the high point for our population in rural Iowa," said Borman. "Been the hardware store, the grocery store and now a bar and restaurant. People remember the post office, the telephone company."

"There was a jail in town and supposedly it got moved to a farm and if I get a picture I'm going to build it," said Joe. "I think life was a lot better when the small towns were alive and going. I'm not a Walmart man. I'd rather go to the corner store."

Thanks to Joe Joyce, the small town of Cylinder and the businesses that once lined the streets won't soon be forgotten.

"I think it's getting some notoriety. It's been a great way to remember our city," Bormann said.

Joe said there is more building to be done.

"If I live long enough. I enjoy it and what I really enjoy is people looking at it and giving me a compliment. Getting a compliment out of people this day and age is hard to do. It's been a fun project for me," Joyce said.

And for all those who now know a bit more about the town of Cylinder.



## Maureen Elbert Named to the Institute for Decision Making's Advisory Council

Maureen Elbert, Executive Director of the Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation, has joined the Institute for Decision Making's Advisory Council. The Advisory Council's role is to provide IDM with input on economic development trends, challenges and opportunities Council members see Iowa communities and regions facing, and provide suggestions on how IDM might be able to better assist Iowa communities and regions, and the economic development organizations that serve them. Advisory Council members are economic development thought leaders from across Iowa. Members include representatives from local and regional economic development groups (chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, Main Street programs, regional economic development organizations, council of governments, etc.), the rural electric cooperatives, the investor-owned utilities, community colleges officials,

Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Education, and members of the Iowa Legislature.

IDM is the community and economic development arm of the University of Northern Iowa's Business and Community Services. Since 1987, IDM has been delivering tailored, innovative community-wide planning, straightforward organizational planning, technical assistance, applied research, and training to Iowans concerned about their community's economic vitality. IDM proudly serves over 850 communities, non-profits and economic development groups throughout Iowa and around the country.



**BANCROFT** Iowa  
GARDEN SPOT OF IOWA



## 2022 SAFETY

### WOMAN OF THE YEAR KRISTA LOOFT OF BANCROFT

On October 20th Krista Looft attended the Iowa Women in Safety Conference and was recognized as the 2022 Safety Woman of the Year:

The Safety Woman of the Year award recognizes one woman in safety for her overall achievement over the last year at reducing injuries in the workplace and growing the safety culture of her workplace.

"This award also speaks volumes about the support I receive from my friends and coworkers, and even though I may not have planned on becoming a safety coordinator when I started working for the City of Bancroft, it has become one of my

favorite parts of the job." Krista Looft

"The City of Bancroft is excited for Krista receiving this honor. It is well deserved. Krista recognizes the importance and the responsibility that comes with the position of safety coordinator." Said Crysti Neuman, City Director. Krista is always looking for ways to make safety topics more engaging and part of everyone's daily routine. Staff appreciates all her efforts."





# Investing in Your Board Training



## K/PACEDC Investing in Your Board Training was Held.

Board members met for an evening strategy session. Kiley Miller, President and CEO of Trees Forever and a former economic development executive director served as the Facilitator.

The main discussions points were:

- What value must K/PAEDC provide over the next few years for the region to fulfill its promise?
- What value must board members provide to K/PACEDC?

There was a clear consensus that K/PACEDC should focus its energy on talent attraction and retention in Kossuth and Palo Alto counties. Local attributes that should be emphasized in talent attraction include:

- Recreational amenities, particularly outdoor amenities such as parks, lakes, bike trails
- Broadband infrastructure
- New homes
- Quality of life as demonstrated by community celebrations and events
- A key program offering substantial advantage in talent attraction is the K/PAEDC Intern program.





# State Auditor Rob Sand Announces 2022 Public Innovations And Efficiencies (PIE) Winners

August 29, 2022 - Auditor of State Rob Sand today congratulated counties, cities, and school districts across Iowa for participating in the Public Innovations and Efficiencies (PIE) program.

"The Auditor's Office is excited to see local leaders share our passion for saving tax dollars," said Sand. "Collectively, we have the potential to unlock hundreds of millions of dollars in savings for our communities."

Sand created the PIE program in 2019 to encourage governmental entities to implement cost-cutting measures and spark innovative ideas to save public funds. The PIE program also provides local leaders with tools to collaborate and share their concepts, known as PIE recipes, via the Auditor of State website.

"If someone has a great idea on how to save tax dollars, we want them to spread the word," said Sand. "PIE provides local leaders with an easy, streamlined sharing process."

In the last year, PIE participation in Iowa has increased by more than 55%. Eighty-four counties and 310 cities submitted entries in 2021, and for the first time, 121 school districts participated. The PIE program has proven so successful, that the Mississippi Auditor of State, a Republican, launched the program in his state.

"This shows that when you put people over partisan politics, we all win," said Sand.

Auditor Sand congratulates the 2022 PIE winners listed below and thanks them for their participation. He will hand-deliver a pie to officials in each community at a later date.

For more information or to schedule an interview with Auditor Sand, contact Public Information Officer Sonya Heitshusen at 515-744-8755 or [sonya.heitshusen@aos.iowa.gov](mailto:sonya.heitshusen@aos.iowa.gov)



## COUNTIES

Largest County: Polk

Smallest County: Ringgold

Best Performing County: Johnson

Best Performing Largest Fifth County: Johnson

Best Performing Second Fifth County: Clayton

**Best Performing Middle Fifth County: Kossuth**

Best Performing Fourth Fifth County: Louisa

Best Performing Smallest Fifth County: Ringgold

Most Improved County: Jackson

## CITIES

Largest City: Des Moines

Smallest City: Beaconsfield

Best Performing City: Des Moines

Best Performing Largest Fifth City: Des Moines

Best Performing Second Fifth City: Guttenburg

Best Performing Middle Fifth City: Milo

Best Performing Fourth Fifth City: Plainfield

Best Performing Smallest Fifth City: Fostoria

Most Improved City: Gilbertville

## COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Largest Community School District: Davenport

Smallest Community School District:

Gilmore City-Bradgate

Best Performing Community School District: Hamburg

Best Performing 4A Community School District:  
College

Best Performing 4A Runner Up Community School District: Bettendorf

Best Performing 3A Community School District:  
Howard-Winneshiek

Best Performing 3A Runner Up Community School District: Sioux Central

Best Performing 2A Community School District:  
MFL-MarMac

Best Performing 2A Runner Up Community School District: Missouri Valley

Best Performing 1A Community School District:  
Hamburg

Best Performing 1A Runner Up Community School District: Belle Plaine



# IEDA DIRECTOR TOURS BUSINESSES *in Algona and Bancroft*



Director of Iowa Economic Development Authority, Debi Durham, toured various businesses in Algona and Bancroft to learn more about our local companies, their business operations and workforce statistics.







## SBDC Iowa Announces New Regional Director

Larry Wajda Announced as  
New Regional Director  
for Northwest Iowa SBDC

AMES, Iowa – America's SBDC Iowa (SBDC) is pleased to announce that Larry Wajda is the new Regional Director for Northwest Iowa SBDC at Iowa Lakes Community College, located on the Spencer Campus. Wajda will advise and train entrepreneurs and existing business owners in Dickinson, Clay, Emmet, Kossuth, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, and Sioux counties.

"We are more than excited to have Larry Wajda join our team. His background and skills will be a wonderful addition to the statewide services provided," says SBDC State Director Lisa Shimkat.

Wajda was born and raised in Council Bluffs, graduating from the University of Iowa and receiving his M.B.A from Wayne State College. During his time at the University of Iowa, Wajda was a member of the wrestling team and involved with R.O.T.C. After military service and graduation, Wajda owned and operated Iowa Health Associates, which expanded across the Midwest into Nebraska and South Dakota. His agency accumulated many awards and recognitions, including Wellmark's top individual producer award 2 times. He sold that company and spent the next chapter of his life in marketing and sales with Community First Broadcasting, focusing on the Northwest Iowa region and small business owners. Most recently, Wajda spent almost 9 years with Coca-Cola and Atlantic Bottling, focusing on new tavern and restaurant installation and development. This includes over 250 new businesses and expansions in

Northwest Iowa and Southern Minnesota! Away from the office and activities of his 4 children, Wajda owns and operates Ironhawk Wrestling Academy, and loves to fish, hunt, and enjoy country concerts with his wife Abbi of 21 years. Wajda is excited to partner with America's SBDC and small business owners in Northwest Iowa, to develop, assist and create successful entrepreneurs. As a fun fact, Wajda is trilingual, offering services in Spanish and American Sign Language.

America's SBDC Iowa is an outreach program of Iowa State University's Ivy College of Business and the Office of Economic Development and Industry Relations. Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. Veteran. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity, 3410 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, Tel. 515-294-7612, Hotline 515-294-1222, email [eooffice@iastate.edu](mailto:eooffice@iastate.edu).

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, America's SBDC Iowa has 15 regional assistance centers located strategically across the state. Since the program's inception in 1981, the SBDC has helped Iowa businesses and entrepreneurs through no-fee, confidential, customized, professional business counseling and practical, affordable training workshops.

\* \* \* The \* \* \*  
\* \* Whole World \* \*  
is short on  
\* \* Staff. \* \*  
\* \* \*

\*\*\*\*\*  
Be Kind & Invest  
to those that  
show up.  
\*\*\*\*\*



# Tjaden honored with “Emerging Leader” award



Algona City Administrator Jacob Tjaden was the recipient of the “Emerging Leader Award” at the Iowa City/County Management Association (IaCMA) summer conference in July.

Tjaden initially joined the City of Algona staff in August of 2018 as the Community Development Director, was appointed Interim City Administrator in June of 2022 and permanently appointed to the position in September of 2020. Amongst the ongoing adjustments in operations related to COVID-19, Tjaden faced additional hurdles related to staffing. The position of Public Works Director, Recreation Director, and his former position of Community Development Director, were all open as he stepped into his new role. Jacob led the staff and city council through these challenges and has continued to develop and grow City staff.

“Jacob has made a significant impact in our community, even in the short amount of time that he has been with us. The result of his work and commitment has been better roads, updated facilities, park improvements and much more,” said Mayor Rick Murphy.

In the past 18 months he has managed several major projects, including an aggressive street improvement plan that included two street reconstruction and more than 30 blocks of mill and overlay on city streets in 2021. For 2022 he has initiated two additional street reconstruction projects, a municipal parking lot reconstruction project and another 25 blocks of mill and overlay work.

In addition to street improvements, Tjaden has worked with Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission to redevelopment Central Park and bring new amenities to other parks, pursued transportation improvements through the Community Visioning Project and spearheaded the construction of Snap-on Drive as the phase one development of the Kueck Industrial Park project.

IaCMA’s Annual Awards program honors creative contributions to professional local government management and increases public awareness of the value of professional management to the quality of life in our communities. The Emerging Leader Award is presented to a local government and the chief administrator or assistant chief administrator in recognition of his/her innovative and successful programs.

When you shop locally you support  
an entire community,  
not just a business.





# ECDC Receives Workforce

# Housing Tax Credit For Rockport Project

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) recently announced \$35 million in workforce housing tax credits to develop new housing across Iowa. The awards were made to support the construction of 57 housing projects in 30 counties statewide.



"Housing is a critical part of Iowa's efforts to attract and keep a skilled workforce, strengthen quality of life in our communities and grow the economy," said Debi Durham, executive director of IEDA and the Iowa Finance Authority. "The awards announced today will help more communities thrive and more families move where opportunities await them."

Emmetsburg Community Development Commission's Rockport program was included on the list of recipients for the FY23 workforce housing tax credit. The program was awarded \$260,677 toward new construction of seven units.

"This is the third time the Housing Task Force of ECDC has applied for the tax credit," said Gretchen Reichter, Marketing and Retail Coordinator for Emmetsburg. She noted that with each application, the information had to be strengthened each time.


IEDA received 133 applications requesting nearly \$79 million in tax credits. IEDA had \$35 million available for fiscal year 2023. Of that amount, \$17.5 million in credits were set aside for projects in small communities defined as those in Iowa's 88 least populated counties.









## LOT 62 DUPLEX - NOLAN DRIVE


EMMETSBURG, IOWA



  
**2**  
BEDROOMS

  
**2**  
BATHROOMS

  
**2**  
CAR GARAGE

  
**1,455**  
SQ. FEET

INTERESTED? CONTACT ECDC: 712-415-1142 | EMMETSBURGEDVELOPMENT@GMAIL.COM



Projects were scored competitively based on readiness, documented financing, need, local support and participation.

The Workforce Housing Tax Credit program provides tax benefits to developers to build new housing in Iowa communities, focusing especially on those projects using abandoned, empty or dilapidated properties.

"The tax credit will benefit the purchaser and ECDC in the Rockport program," said Reichter.

She added, "This program has a per unit cost cap to ensure units created under the program are workforce housing." (see info, below)

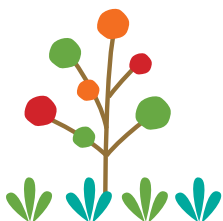
"The ECDC project consists entirely of single family units – some detached (3 single family homes) and some attached (2 duplexes)," Reichter explained. "The cost cap ensures that quality affordable homes are being built rather than large homes with extravagant features and finishes." The ECDC housing project at Rockport began in 2019. Four single family homes were built and all have been sold. ECDC has an additional five lots which are eligible for the tax credit. This includes two duplex units, and three single family residences.

Currently, a duplex unit is under construction at Rockport. Contractors are once again working alongside students from the Iowa Lakes Construction Technology program to complete the project.

*Credit: Jane E. Whitmore, editor emeritus, The Reporter-Democrat, Emmetsburg, IA*

*For FY 2023, project costs may not exceed the following per unit cost caps:*

- Single family unit in an urban area - \$266,320 per unit
- Single family unit in a small city - \$266,320 per unit
- Multi family unit in an urban area - \$218,022 per unit
- Multi-unit in a small city - \$218,022 per unit





## Law firm meets with area Human Resource Directors



*Sara Blair, Brianna Marso & Jodie Rath*

Joni Ploeger & Katelynn McCollough with Denton, David, & Brown Law Firm met with area Human Resource Directors to discuss temporary leave under FMLA, ADA and Workers Compensation. HR Directors were able to network to learn more about legal obligations for employers, basic facts, and medical documentation and communication. Special thanks to Snap-on for sponsoring our speakers.



## Kossuth and Palo Alto County City Clerks listened to guest speaker



Jeff Jensen with Trees Forever speak about the different programs they offer and encouraged everyone to apply for the various grants.

## Food Pantry donations for Kossuth & Palo Alto Counties

K/PACEDC Committees are showing support for Kossuth and Palo Alto County food pantries by collecting non-perishable food items.



*Henry Ricke & Robin Parker*

## WE BACK THE BLUE



**ALGONA POLICE & SHERIFF DEPARTMENTS**



**EMMETSBURG POLICE & SHERIFF DEPARTMENTS**



*K/PACEDC supports our law enforcement officials and thanked them for all they do for our counties.*



# K/PACEDC Business & Individual Recognitions

## Fidelity Bank & Trust



Maureen Elbert congratulated Fidelity Bank & Trust of Bancroft by presenting them with a plaque.  
*Pictured are (front row): Renee Funke, Maureen Elbert, Teresa Kennedy (back row) Jeff Theisen, Crysti Neuman*

## Kinetic Technologies



Maureen Elbert congratulated Kinetic Technologies by presenting them with a plaque.  
*Pictured with Maureen are Mark and Betsy Barglof.*

## Tom Eischen



Maureen Elbert acknowledged Tom Eischen with a Certificate of Recognition for his outstanding leadership and years of volunteerism for serving as Chair on the K/PACEDC Ag Committee. We have appreciated his Can-Do attitude and his dedication of time on the Ag Committee.

## PHMIC Employee Foundation



*Pictured are Maureen Elbert, Jodi Alt & Steve Hoskins*

Pharmacists Mutual Insurance Employee Foundation graciously donated Teddy Bears to the K/PACEDC Project Hope program which provides a sense of relief for people in need. The annual Project Hope program is a way for our counties to show that we care about all who live here.

## Mallard Paint & Body



Maureen Elbert acknowledged Eric Rubel for opening his new business, Mallard Paint and Body.  
*Pictured are: Ron Larson, Mayor of Mallard, Eric Rubel and Keith Wirtz, Palo Alto Board of Supervisor.*

## Leadership Training



Participants listen to Brenda Clark-Hamilton as she presents information on the Power of Nonverbal Communication in the Workplace. The four part leadership series covers team building, communication skills, customer service, building better relationships, and careers. K/PACEDC holds the Leadership Training sessions during the months of August, Sept, Oct, and November annually.