

Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development President's Report

Tom Pollock, board president

It seems that another twelve months have flown by and it is time for me to summarize and evaluate the activities of our organization from a leadership perspective. Although we have not garnered many headlines this year, we have made some solid advancements and shared accomplishments, along with encountering some significant challenges.

Our organization is fortunate to have many talented and skilled people to draw from in our efforts. We have changed some membership on the board of directors this year. We appreciate the time and effort of our retirees and the commitment of our new members. The addition of the NCAT organization to our learning center location has been advantageous as well. Their mission fits well with our organization and their staff has been helpful to us from time to time. Considerable time and effort was spent this year in coordinating the planning and research activities of the Neely-Kinyon and Armstrong Research Farms. Thanks to the skills and cooperation of university and extension personnel, farm staff, board members, and other committed individuals, I think we have a much better understanding and working arrangement between the two farms.

The culmination of a major long-term effort occurred in January with the physical launch of staffed activities for the Rural Development Resource Center and the Iowa Sales Network.

Our organization has been working with the Southwest Iowa Coalition and the Grow Iowa Foundation for more than two years to make these dreams finally become reality. Many hours of planning and effort have gone into these projects. We look forward to the advantages the resources of these organizations can provide southwest Iowans.

We also share in the excitement and anticipation as the SIRE organization begins construction of their ethanol plant near Council Bluffs. The SIRE project evolved from the IQPA group and the IQPA organization has its roots in the Wallace Foundation. The hours committed by members of these organizations is unimaginable. We rejoice with them in their accomplishments and wish them well in their future endeavors.

As we look to the future, our organizational focus will return to fundraising. Through the efforts of the executive committee and the board of directors, new options are now available for endowed giving through our organization. We encourage all of our members to visit with family and friends who are interested in sharing their legacy in southwest Iowa. An endowment gift through the Wallace Foundation may be just what they had in mind. This program is a way for all our members to actively support our organization and get involved in its activities. We look forward to another exciting year ahead.