



*Iowa County Engineers Office Organization  
Growth-Progress-Unity*

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## **2010 ICEOO CONFERENCE**

West Des Moines Marriott  
1250 Jordan Creek Parkway  
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Thursday, October 14, 2010

Registration for the 2010 31<sup>st</sup> ICEOO Annual Conference was held in the southeast foyer from 9:00-10:15 a.m.

As members arrived they were greeted by the Registration Committee, given their conference materials packet and a registration gift of a very nice black/lime green carry-all bag personalized with the ICEOO logo, and inside, it had a first-aid kit and a lime green small flashlight. Also donated as gifts, were the ever-favorite boxes of Suzette Candy donated by Frank Dunn. Solutions, Inc kindly provided pens and 2011 computer screen calendars.

A selection of pastries and fresh fruit, coffee, tea and other assorted drinks was offered, as well as an opportunity to view many scrapbooks from prior conferences. Our Historian, Denise Gradeless, also set up a nice power point show of many group pictures from last years conference.

Debbie Salter, President, opened the conference by welcoming everyone, thanking the Board for all their work, introducing the 2009 ICEOO Board members by committees, the new 2010 board members, and new members of ICEOO. The new board members are as follows:

District 1 – Danielle Simmons, Jasper  
District 2 – Mary Ann Knapp, Fayette  
District 3 – Kathy Lundergard, Harrison  
District 4 – Kathy Copeland, Dallas  
District 5 – Tammy Van Gorp, Marion  
District 6 – Becky Wilkison, Scott

New ICEOO members are from District 1, Ann Clemons, Hardin County; District 3, Michelle James, Palo Alto County; District 4, Darla Welter, Audubon County; and District 6, Jen Moore, Johnson County.

A few moments of silence were taken in remembrance of our deceased members.

President Salter told everyone about their information packets, that are put together by our IDOT representative, Gail Nordholm, and Debbie acknowledged her as being an invaluable asset to our organization. Again she offered a hearty welcome, hoped everyone would have an enjoyable conference, and then introduced Todd Fonkert, P.E., Bremer County Engineer, and President of the Iowa County Engineers Association (ICEA). Mr. Fonkert told us about some of the issues going on in Iowa. He then commented that these conferences were a good time to gain information and especially to have one-on-one interaction with our peers.

After the first drawing for prizes and some district pictures taken, Pam McCracken had the pleasure to introduce our key note speaker, Peggy Kline, who spoke on “How to do MORE than Survive After Five.” Peggy had the audience laughing right away, as she had all the board members stand up front. Each board member had a balloon and would blow into it every time a statement relating to stress was read by Peggy. None to soon, our balloons were full, and we were told to let them go...the sight of that was enough to start the laughter and it kept going throughout Peggy’s presentation. She spoke on “Ten Rituals of Daily Retirement,” “How to Get Back Your Get-Up and Go,” “What To Do When Life Piles Up Like Your Laundry,” and “Decompress Life’s Stress.” Along with laughter, Peggy offered a lot of good advice and encouragement. We were given a wealth of good information to take back to our offices and homes.

After more drawings and pictures, a delightful lunch buffet was presented consisting of various lunch meats and breads, cheeses, salads, and fruits. After lunch everyone reconvened for our next speaker, Brian Mennecke, Ph.D. Dr. Mennecke spoke on “Social Media and Networking.” He said he often spells Media, Me-dia, as it is all about each person and how she/he uses it as an individual. Social Media is so popular that it even gets out information before the press can. Dr. Mennecke predicts our cell phones will have capabilities to do what you have done on your computer. Several types of Social Media were listed and explained, so this was a very informative presentation. The possibility of creating an ICEOO Face Book could be a good thing, as far as our being able to make connections, share problems and solutions—talk to each other!

After another drawing and more pictures, we had the introduction of our next popular speaker, Chris Anderson, Program Coordinator, Hartman Reserve Nature Center, Cedar Falls. He talked about what we could explore in Iowa, and how Iowa is the most changed landscape in North America. Mr. Anderson’s main message was how important it is for us to get our kids outdoors, as well as for ourselves. He encouraged us to never lose our childlike sense of wonder. And what’s the most important equipment to get outdoors? A door knob.

Next on the program was an inspiring message from John Shelton, a retiring member from Harrison County. His journey in the engineering office from Instrument Man to Assistant to the Engineer stopped there when he became blind due to a stroke in his optic nerve. His engineer wanted him to stay in the department, and that is when he started working in the office. He kept busy answering the phone, buying materials, helping the walk-ins, and filing. Mr. Shelton showed us that he kept his sense of humor, even having been through this trial. We heard some

funny “telephone” stories, and we appreciated Mr. Shelton’s tribute to his Engineer, Tom Stoner, and last but not least to his wife. Mr. Shelton received a well-deserved standing ovation.

President Debbie Salter ended the program with announcing the awards and recognitions. Given awards for retiring were the following: Elaine Soyer, Carroll County; Jan Hendrickson, Sac County, and John Shelton, Harrison County. Members receiving 20-Years of Service Awards were Martha Cavanaugh, Floyd County; Shelly Bleam, Calhoun County; Juanita Murphy, Monroe County; and Elaine Bolton, Benton County. Congratulations to all of these people for their milestones.

Following next was recognition of those board members who have completed their 3-year terms: Debbie Salter, Wapello County; Vicki Hillock, Story County; Sandra Walker, Black Hawk County; Janet Payne, Buchanan County; and Kathy Burson, Montgomery County. These women, some having held offices, have done an exemplary job in their positions on the Board, and we are appreciative of that. And last but not least, once again, the Traveling Trophy Award for the district who had all members in attendance at the conference, and acknowledging their achievement and contribution, went to DISTRICT IV!!

A very good banquet was enjoyed, with good food, and a very funny entertainer, Nathan Allen, comedian/magician. The theme of the hospitality room was “Tailgate Party.” Congratulations to the committee that organized that. Everything from the clever “Tailgate Party Tickets” to advertise the event, and the fun games, to the door prizes and decorations, made for an entertaining evening. And how about that District IV again, with their “team shirts” honoring those lost to, battling, and surviving Cancer. The picture taken of the group in all of their pink paraphernalia will be a highlight at next years conference.

#### Friday, October 15, 2010

After a delicious breakfast buffet served by the Marriott, President Debbie Salter opened the Business Meeting. Treasurer, Vicki Hillock, reported registrations at \$14,915.50 and donations at \$3,380.00 for a total of \$18,295.50. Vicki showed some helpful averages of expenses over the last years. All expenses this year came in under budget, thanks to the prudence of the board committees with today’s economics. With a balance forwarded from 2009 of \$7,629.94, the projected 2010 ending balance is \$5,937.23. Shelly Tuttle, Cerro Gordo County, moved that the Treasurer’s Report be approved. Belinda Ogle, Taylor County, seconded the motion. The motion was approved by all ayes.

In light of the economic downturn, the board has been discussing a carry over dollar amount as a line item, and then budget out for each committee expense. An agreed upon amount would be \$2,500. The show of hands for that amount of carryover was a majority, but it was agreed to table this item until next year.

New officers for the 2010-11 year were announced as follows: President, Angie Roderick, Webster County; Vice President, Katie Bidwell, Butler County; Secretary, Tammy VanGorp, Marion County; Treasurer, Kathy Lundergard, Harrison County; and Historian, Denice Gradeless, Wayne County.

A motion to close the Business Meeting was made by Shelly Bleam, Calhoun County. A second to the motion was made by Carrie Lopez, Howard County. The motion was approved unanimously.

Next on the program was an excellent female Iowa County Engineers question/answer session. The two engineers present were Mary Kelly, Cerro Gordo County and Catherine Nicholas, Black Hawk County. The third engineer, not present due to unforeseen circumstances, was Christy VanBusirk, Keokuk County. Her answers to the questions presented were given by Jan Hix of Black Hawk County. They shared how they became county engineers, and other items of interest to our group. They agreed that being able to communicate and to educate were a couple of the most important aspects of their jobs. They encouraged us to encourage our daughters to go into math and science and that one can do anything they set their mind to.

The grand prize drawing for the \$50 bills was held as follows: District 1: Tara Breon, District 2: Cindy Wilkinson, District 3: Becky Randeris, District 4: Glenda Edwards, District 5: \_\_\_\_\_ and District 6: Janet Payne. Congratulations were made to each of them.

Our closing speaker was a popular comeback from last year, Dr. Celina Peerman, Ph.D, PHR, who spoke on “You’re Jumping on My Last Nerve!” She started out with a challenge: “Do something with this when you go back to the office.” She talked about behavior types that we probably encounter in the office or from the public. As customer service “specialists,” she offered that with a difficult person, we should try to diffuse the emotion. She gave much more helpful advice. In the end, she asked some of us what we do to handle a difficult conversation. Shirley Johnson from Buena Vista County said it best, “I have two ears—one for inlet; one for outlet.”

President Debbie Salter gave closing remarks, and as she handed over the gavel, she introduced our 2010-11 ICEOO President, Angie Roderick.

Pam McCracken  
Secretary