



Grant Wood, *Stone City, Iowa 1930*

The Land Use Bulletin

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THANKS, TOM DUNBAR!

by LaVon Griffieon

It is with mixed feelings that I recently accepted the resignation of Tom Dunbar from the Board of Directors. Tom was a founding board member who provided strong and stable guidance during the formation of 1000

Friends. In the early days, we gathered at his office almost like a study group, to share information on the subject of land use. It had to be Tom's teaching background that provided the patience to endure some of those meetings, as he gently nudged us where we needed to go.



He has been such an asset, providing our organization with his time, experience, business sense, professional outlook as a landscape architect, practical advice, office and staff. We will surely miss him on the board.

Tom's departure also made me smile. It's wonderful when someone has to quit doing something because they are overwhelmed with their business and professional successes. It's also wonderful when they realize it. I serve on many boards where absentee board members continue to belong and contribute very little to nothing. But for the most part I was smiling because these are growing times. 1000 Friends has passed another bump in the road. Although Tom has promised to continue with his support and advice, I see his departure from the board as a vote of confidence in our abilities to continue in a manner he'd approve of.

JOE HENRY JOINS STAFF

We're excited to welcome Joe Henry to our staff. Joe is filling a newly-created position: Director of Development. He is working to increase our membership and funding base through a variety of grassroots events. His responsibilities will also include writing grants to support existing and new programs.



Joe brings a wealth of experience with him. Most recently, he coordinated Mike Huston's campaign for Congress. Prior to that, he was the field director for Iowans for Sensible Priorities. For eight years, he worked with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, both in Iowa and in Washington, D.C. He also worked

for sixteen years with UPS in Des Moines.

Joe's background and experience are huge assets as we continue to build a broader-based, more effective movement. We look forward to working with him, and we know you will too.

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THE BIG PICTURE

by LaVon Griffieon

I love reading articles about myself, because I learn so much. Recently, I read that I've been involved in land use for over twenty years. It was news to me! If asked, I'd say four years. OK, seven at the max (four years active and three in the closet)! And what a learning curve it has been for me.

Sometimes, when Ed and I are helping a group organize around a local land use problem, we find ourselves giving each other "the look". "The look" is our realization that these folks do not see the big picture. There was the time we were invited to help a group of rural citizens organize against a zoning ordinance proposed by the nearby city. We packed a firehouse full of angry citizens, only to have the crowd realize half way through our presentation that we agreed with the city. YIKES! We escaped without tar and feathers! In fact, being Iowans, our hosts were even kind enough to pay our mileage to tell them what they didn't want to hear.



"...I had generations of developer dirt under my nails."

Through this column, I hope to help people understand some things I've picked up over the years. The first pothole I hit on the land use learning curve was an elitist attitude. As a farmer, I felt I was a victim of urban sprawl. I had done nothing to deserve the impending threats to my pristine farmland. It was Tom Dunbar who reminded me in my very own living room, within minutes of meeting him for the first time, "LaVon, your farm was just as obtrusive to the landscape and the residents who lived here 100 years ago as that suburban development is to you today." OUCH!

He wasn't just talking about Native Americans either. He was talking about the wildlife that lived in a state 80% covered with tall grass prairie. If you consider agriculture a form of development (which few of us do, because we don't remember the grasslands that have been plowed, the woodlands that have been cut or the wetlands that have been drained) Iowa is the most developed state in the nation.

So in one easy sentence, Tom made me realize that I had generations of developer dirt under my nails. So much for my elitism! That was the day I realized that if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. The seed for 1000 Friends of Iowa had been planted.

GROWIN' TIMES

by Ed Fallon



The Land Use Bulletin has been around awhile.

In fact, its history predates the existence of 1000 Friends of Iowa by two years, with the first "issue" (a one page letter, plus an article) hitting the "presses" (the photocopier at Koch Brothers) in the spring of 1996.

We've since had one facelift, and our editorial staff feels it's time for another. We'd like to hear back from you, our members, with your comments and suggestions. Specifically, with this issue of The Land Use Bulletin, you'll see the following changes:

- A visually more attractive, well-organized format,
- More photos . . . and of better quality,
- More text, covering a broader range of activities and issues,
- Regular columns from the Executive Director and the President,
- No more photocopied articles, and
- No more Wal-Mart promotional pieces.

About this last item . . . contrary to what some of you may believe, neither LaVon nor I own stock in Wal-Mart. In the last Land Use Bulletin, we included an article about David Glass, retiring President and CEO of Wal-Mart Stores. The article was originally published in the Wal-Mart company magazine, so it was naturally favorable to Wal-Mart. But we found Wal-Mart's arguments in its defense, well, almost comical. So, in case you missed the article, here are a few heart-wrenching excerpts:

"While Wal-Mart is today one of the largest businesses in the world, its origins are purely small business. It is, in fact, one of the greatest American small business success stories ever told."

" . . . we struggled for years just to be able to pay our bills and to grow. So we understand all the things that small businesses are going through."

"The backbone of this country is all the small businesses that are out there today. And all they have to do is find a formula that works and apply it."

"Regardless of our size, we have far more opportunity ahead of us than anything we've experienced in the past."

Yes, these are growin' times. If Wal-Mart is expecting growth like nothing it's ever seen before, we'd better hope that growth management groups such as ours are smashingly successful. A rural landscape dotted with big box stores and an urban landscape of abandoned small businesses may suit Wal-Mart's drive for greater and greater profits. But it's a bleak future that 1000 Friends is willing to work hard to prevent.

"... contrary to what some of you may believe, neither LaVon nor I own stock in Wal-Mart."

Wal-Mart's Impact in Iowa

When Iowa State University Professor Ken Stone examined the sales changes in Iowa small towns from 1983 to 1993, he discovered "a huge shift of sales to larger towns and cities, with substantial amounts captured by mass merchandise stores."

Stone estimates that the total number of businesses lost in small towns and rural areas was 7,326 in the decade studied. Iowans spent \$425 million more at discount stores, but \$153 million less at variety stores, \$129 million less at grocery stores, \$94 million less at hardware stores, \$47 million less at men's and boy's apparel stores, and so on. In the 11 store types studied, businesses lost more than \$603 million in sales. **In this ten year period, Iowa lost:**

555 Grocery Stores
298 Hardware Stores
293 Building Supply Stores
161 Variety Stores
158 Women's Apparel Stores
153 Shoe Stores
116 Drug Stores
111 Men's and Boy's Apparel Stores*

* from www.sprawl-busters.com *The Case Against Sprawl*

REVITALIZATION PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

by Ed Fallon

Our three-year residential redevelopment project is fast approaching the end of its first year. The target site is the 1300 block of 7th Street in Des Moines, which was selected because of its extreme blighted condition.

Blighted? As someone with close ties to Ireland, the term “blighted” conjures up images of the fungus that, in the mid 1800s, decimated the Irish potato crop – and along with it, half the country’s population. “Blighted” in the context of 7th Street means prostitution, drug dealing, abandoned and run-down houses, and enough vacant lots to grow literally tons of potatoes.

Cataloguing 7th Street’s problems at the start of our project found:

- Fourteen vacant lots.
- Nine rental houses.
- Two single-family homes, both in need of repair.
- One boarded up home.
- Over the past 15 years, eight homes and one historic church had been demolished.
- Prostitution and drug dealing had been constant problems for most of ten years.

**FOR INFORMATION ON THE
IMPORTANCE OF URBAN
REVITALIZATION FROM THE NATIONAL
TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION,
CONTACT: WWW.NATIONALTRUST.ORG**

That’s not to say the street doesn’t have its assets. Even though every house on the street presents structural and aesthetic challenges, many have genuine historic appeal and architectural significance. One of the two single family homes is the main house for the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, which also occupies two houses on 8th Street. The Catholic Workers have been a major presence in the neighborhood for over twenty years, and provide a sense of permanence in an often troubled and unstable environment.



Other assets include fifteen older trees (most of them stately oaks), a thriving community garden, and a small park with playground equipment. The broader neighborhood’s rich diversity of cultures and ethnic traditions is reflected among the residents of 7th Street. Such ethnic diversity makes for an exciting mix of people rarely found in a state that is 96% Caucasian. While creating its own set of challenges, this cultural richness offers rewards that are impossible to quantify.





The goal of our project is to build on the existing assets of the street while addressing its problems in a comprehensive manner. To that end, since the project's inception in March of this year, we have accomplished the following:

- Assembled a seven-person steering committee to define objectives and keep the project on task.
- Developed a three-year plan.
- Completed mapping to inventory each parcel.
- Compiled a list of twenty-five possible partner organizations.
- Provided materials and volunteers to help paint one single-family home.
- Personally contacted all property owners to inquire as to their priorities for both their own property and the street as a whole.
- Purchased materials and recruited volunteers to help with minor repair work on the other single-family home.
- Organized volunteers to coordinate a clean-up of the entire street.
- Helped coordinate a successful grassroots effort to drive prostitutes and drug dealers off the street. This has been a major victory. For the first time in years, the street is quiet.

We'd again like to thank the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for their generous financial support. We'd further like to thank all those who have donated time and effort to this project: Sr. Stella Neill, Katherine Spencer, Lindsay Bonk, Tom Dunbar, LaVon Griffieon, Erick Davidson, Kristin Fallon, Mike Bryan and Richard Flamer. We look forward to your continued guidance and assistance!

Membership Drive 2000

Our membership drive is gearing up to make our name a reality. We now have 680 members in 65 counties. We hope to have 1,000 \$100 Founding Friends. An operating budget of \$100,000 will give us a solid position to move forward in our work.

If you would like to be a Founding Friend, but can't afford a lump sum contribution of \$100, we have developed a monthly pledge program for \$8.75 a month. Of course, we gratefully accept annual memberships at \$20 and up as well.

Clip and mail with your check, payable to 1000 Friends of Iowa

Enclosed is my tax deductible check for \$ _____

Name _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Address _____

Student/Senior \$20 Sustaining Friend \$1000

City/State/ZIP _____

Individual \$35 Other \$ _____

Home Phone _____

Family \$45

e-mail _____

Founding Friend \$100

A LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

Governor Tom Vilsack and Lt. Governor Pederson were unable to attend our annual meeting. The Governor sent his regrets and his thoughts on land use issues. The following are excerpts from his letter.

Dear Members of 1000 Friends of Iowa:

I regret that I am unable to join you for the meeting today to discuss very important issues currently facing our state . . .

Lt. Governor Pederson and I have advocated for a set of smart growth principles that would make much more efficient and effective use of land resources and existing infrastructure. This would be accomplished by encouraging development to areas with existing infrastructure or the capacity to avoid costly duplication of services and costly use of land. We understand the need for state government to play a role in encouraging local communities and governments to be strategic in their planning, growth, and development decisions. The idea is that communities ought to set some parameters, and local governments ought to plan and design incentives to ensure government funds are used thoughtfully, so we can preserve our open spaces.

We worked last session on legislation that would have encouraged local communities to follow smart growth principles in order to receive financial assistance from the State for development activities. While we've made some progress recently, we are still far from reaching our goal. The challenge is to balance the need for towns and cities to grow and prosper with the communities' needs to curb sprawl . . .

In addition to these efforts, we are also attempting to bring national attention to private land conservation as a whole. Through my position as Chair of the Natural Resources Committee of the National Governors' Association (NGA), I have announced the planning of a nationwide conference scheduled for mid-March of next year. A portion of this upcoming conference agenda will be devoted to smart growth and open land preservation.

Thank you for the invitation to participate in your meeting. Lt. Governor Pederson and I will continue to work to preserve our agricultural, natural, cultural and historical areas and encourage planned development by communities throughout Iowa.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack
Governor

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING GETS GOOD REVIEWS

1000 Friends of Iowa held its second Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 30th at the Hotel Fort Des Moines in downtown Des Moines. With speeches, food and music, members and guests celebrated the past year's accomplishments, exchanged information and ideas, and discussed the agenda for next year.

Executive Director Ed Fallon and President LaVon Griffieon welcomed the crowd of 50 to the event. Attendees then heard about activities around the state, including reports from Rachel Engwall of Fairfield, Wende Elliott of Colo, Keith Forman of Glenwood, Jay Howe of Greenfield, Mary Ellen Miller of Mason City, Norm McCoy of Cedar Rapids, and Michelle Magyar of Davenport. The speakers covered a range of local issues, including historic preservation, redevelopment efforts, protecting farmland and natural areas, annexation battles, and abuses of tax increment financing.

The Hotel Fort Des Moines provided an excellent Iowa grown meal while farmer and board member L.T. Bhramdat spoke on the importance of buying locally grown food. For L.T., buying from local farmers is as much an issue of consumer health as it is a sustainable rural economy. As a dietary enhancement, entertainment during dessert was provided by Larry Cleverley and Ed Fallon.



Following lunch, Pat Cancilla gave a presentation entitled "A Tale of Two Counties". Pat's presentation focused on the quality of life and tax base contrasts between two Virginia counties: one that opted for all-out development and the other that opted to preserve its rural character.

During the formal annual membership meeting, Mary Ellen Miller of Mason City was elected as treasurer and Allison Brummel of McGregor was elected as a new board member. Alisa Meggitt presented recommended modifications to the three-year long range plan. Comments were accepted and the final draft of the plan will be discussed at the fall board meeting on December 9th. Finally, a budget for 2001 was approved, and participants were invited to come tour the new office and the Highland Park Business District.

All in all, the annual meeting was a successful event. Please plan to join us again next year!

CELEBRATE PRESERVATION DAY!

The Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance will host Preservation Day at the Iowa State Capitol Building on January 31, 2001 from 3:00 – 4:30 on the second floor of the rotunda. The general public is welcome to attend. Organizers will discuss Iowa's Ten Most Endangered Properties and also present a legislative agenda for historic preservation. For further information, contact Tom Smull at (515) 280-7234 or tsmull@inanews.com.

AWARM, DRY TOUR DE SPRAWL

by LaVon Griffieon

This fall, over forty soil commissioners from across Iowa participated in their second Tour de Sprawl bus trip featuring development trends in the greater Des Moines area. 1000 Friends was pleased to be asked to participate again in this fall's annual meeting of the Conservation Districts of Iowa.

Administrative Assistant and recently elected Polk County Soil and Water Commissioner Phil James made his debut as a tour guide, giving the trip an international flavor by comparing sprawling Des Moines with Angers, France, a compact, well planned, centuries old city where he used to live. Veteran tour guide LaVon Griffieon (this is her second year, after all!) directed the driver on a 115 mile tour featuring small towns with great potential to develop sustainably, sprawling suburbs with cookie cutter homes built on prime farmland, inner city neighborhoods that are seeing revitalization, and older Des Moines buildings -- many on the National Registry of Historic Places -- that may still be threatened by the wrecking ball.



Four hours is a long time. So about half way through, we unloaded the bus in Highland Park, toured our new office, had a cool drink and walked the local business district. Bill Wheeler, of Highland Park Hardware, was delighted to have so many farmers in his store. He explained the streetscape project that is Highland Park's plan for renovating their business district. And as always in Iowa, someone's neighbor's cousin was the local barber, so we had to stop there for a visit too!

"These tours are the best way to explain land-use problems to people," Phil stated. "They encapsulate many problems into one event that people can really immerse themselves in. It's rather hard to deny something exists when you are looking at it! And the similarities between small town Iowa and our inner cities is usually an eye opener."

Another Des Moines tour for an international convention is being planned for next year. This is such a valuable tool 1000 Friends wishes to expand on it. Eventually, we'd like to offer similar tours in other Iowa cities. If you know of an interested group, please get in touch with our office at (515) 288-5364.

FROM GREENFIELD, IOWA TO CARNEGIE HALL?

Do you like music? Do you want to help 1000 Friends of Iowa grow? Do you want to prevent Ed Fallon and his family from getting bored in their spare time? If you answered yes to these three questions, consider organizing a benefit concert featuring the Fallons. Kristin plays harp, Ed plays whatever he can get his hands on, and Ben and Fionna ... well, we'll just let them surprise you.

The Premiere concert was organized by Jay Howe at his church in Greenfield on Sunday, October 29th. About 75 people showed up, and \$400 was raised for the cause of responsible land stewardship. The program was an experience in musical diversity including classical, baroque, Irish and pop. Instruments featured were the pipe organ, piano, harp, accordion, folk guitar, classical guitar, Irish whistle, Irish drum, other percussion and various vocals.

If you're interested in bringing this musical extravaganza to a venue near you before the Fallon troupe head for their first Carnegie Hall appearance, call Joe Henry at (515) 288-5364.

A WATERY TOUR DE SPRAWL

by Ed Fallon

Tours de Sprawl can come in a variety of packages. To paraphrase Paul Revere's rallying cry: we've done two by land, why not one by sea?

Sea? In Iowa? Well, we checked around, but the closest we could come was a river. With the Dallas County Conservation Board organizing and yours truly narrating, twenty brave souls floated down the Raccoon River on a frosty morning in early October, viewing the impacts of development on the watershed and discussing land use from the perspective of a canoe.

"...twenty brave souls floated down the Raccoon River on a frosty morning in early October..."

Admittedly, you get a much more thorough feel for development patterns from a bus. But a bus ride is so . . . well, confining, almost sleep-inducing. What can compare to the sheer exhilaration of sitting in an aluminum canoe in 35 degree weather, water temperature in the 40s, the snow flakes dancing around your face? Really, is there anything a reasonable person would rather be doing?



Further enhancing the experience was the fact that the river was so low paddlers repeatedly found themselves enjoying the refreshing experience of wading through shin-deep water, dragging a 75 pound canoe (plus passengers!) behind them.

All said, the event was a success at getting people from a variety of backgrounds together to talk about responsible land use. (We even had a reporter from Channel 13 pack his camera and ride with us.) A lot of the discussion focused on the nearby proposed Jordan Creek Mall, though large lot development and rural sub-divisions entered into the conversation as well. It was agreed that Tours de Sprawl by canoe are worth repeating – though perhaps not in October.

MAKE IT A PARK, NOT A PARKWAY!

1000 Friends of Iowa is working in partnership with a coalition of community groups to convince public officials that another proposed four-lane highway is not what Des Moines needs.

"We are thrilled to be a part of this project," said Phil James, the 1000 Friends staff person working on this project. "We hope to build community support to the point that this road can be stopped."

The coalition includes neighbors, conservationists, mountain bikers, planners, and others opposing the proposed extension of MLK Parkway. The extension would run north from Euclid Avenue through a flood plain along the Des Moines River and connect with Interstate 80. In addition to its impact on a popular natural area having tremendous untapped potential, the coalition is concerned about the road's impact on farmland in the unincorporated area north of Interstate 80 and about the continued drain of people and tax base from the urban core. If you are interested in getting involved with this project, give Phil a call at (515) 288-5364.



Section of Des Moines River included in proposed extension.

A SCENIC ROADS ORDINANCE FOR JOHNSON COUNTY

by Alisa Meggitt



Johnson County residents recently responded to unwelcome road expansions by presenting the Board of Supervisors with a Scenic Roads Ordinance, which would protect roads with outstanding or unique natural, archeological or historic features. Several roads in Johnson County could qualify for this designation. Unfortunately, the County has scheduled these same roads for invasive expansions that, ironically, are referred to by the county as "road enhancements".

Road enhancements have become very unpopular with Johnson County residents because they destroy the County's rural integrity and scenic landscape. They turn winding, low volume roads into straight and wide highways, thus increasing traffic volumes to accommodate urban sprawl. Very few people want them, yet they are being forced upon us. Many feel like they are a high-priced subsidy for developers.

Supporters see the Scenic Roads Ordinance as a win-win situation that will save millions of tax-payer dollars, limit urban sprawl, promote smart transportation, and improve the quality of life for local residents. Across the country, scenic roads have been adopted and embraced successfully by other communities.

Last year Prairie du Chien Road was "enhanced" at the expense of 200 trees that provided a beautiful canopy, a century farm (whose land previously belonged to Colonel Johnson -- the County's namesake), several land condemnations, public participation in the decision making process, and 1.4 million in tax payer dollars. There was no legitimate traffic count or accident history to justify the road expansion. The only reason was to accommodate urban sprawl. This soon became a reality. Within ten months, a new 110 acre suburban development along Prairie du Chien Road was approved.

A meeting to oppose the Prairie du Chien enhancement was attended by 74 opponents and one proponent (the man who sold the 110 acres). When the participants were asked if they knew about the \$1.4 million enhancement project before it was approved, he was the only one to respond.

The citizens responded to this travesty by sending a survey to 600 Johnson County families. The survey gauged their support for several road enhancements, their interest in a Scenic Roads Ordinance, and their level of satisfaction with the county notification efforts. More than 80% of the respondents opposed the road enhancements, 90% supported the Scenic Roads Ordinance, and an overwhelming 94% felt that the county needed to improve its notification process for road construction projects.

As a result, the Scenic Roads Ordinance has been prepared and presented to the Board of Supervisors. The county has ignored this request, and the board has expressed its intention to wait as long as five years before implementation. The irony is that in five years, almost all of the roads that would qualify for the scenic designation will already have been widened.

Based on the Board of Supervisors' history of excluding the public from the decision making process, it is very possible that the county will never move forward on this very important ordinance. Their support will require a great deal of encouragement and pressure from the public. Please contact the County Board of Supervisors and express your support for urgent passage of the Scenic Roads Ordinance. Tell them that every year we wait will cost us millions in wasted tax payer dollars and adversely affect our environment and quality of life. Remind them that this ordinance symbolizes democracy in Johnson County, and 94% of its residents are eager to restore that right.

Alisa Meggitt is on the board of 1000 Friends of Iowa. She can be reached at (319) 354-1850.

Treasures of Johnson County

Alisa Meggitt is preparing a short video highlighting beautiful scenes of Johnson County and contrasting them with unsightly sprawling developments. She would like to invite 1000 Friends' members to send pictures of their favorite and least favorite places in Johnson County. Be sure to include your name and contact information. An accompanying explanation would be helpful, but is not necessary.

Photos can be sent to: Alisa Meggitt, 3083 Newport Road NE, Iowa City, IA 52240

Give the gift of 1000 Friends to a Friend

We all know friends, family members, or colleagues who care about preservation of our land, natural resources and historic places. Would you like to give that person the gift of responsible land use this holiday season? If you are interested in this gift idea, please see the insert between pages 6 and 7 of this edition of The Land Use Bulletin.

Guidebook to Local Organizing

One of our goals is to put together a guidebook for people working on land-use issues. This guidebook will include strategies and resources for people working on local land use problems. One source for information is individuals from around the state who have shared their knowledge, experiences and resources. If you have something to offer, please contact Mollie Appelgate at (515) 288-5364.

Do we have your **EMAIL ADDRESS?**

Each Legislative session, from January to late April, 1000 Friends of Iowa publishes a weekly Public Policy Update to inform members of progress on land use legislation. If we do not have your email address and you would like these updates, please contact us at KFOI@KFOI.ORG or call us at 515-288-5364.

Do you have an idea for a story? Do you have an event in your area pertaining to land use that you would like to publicize for free? *The Land Use Bulletin* is available for any of our members to submit articles, announcements, or photos.

QUOTE THIS: *"The Mayors and the Mortgage Bankers Association of America has released a five-point plan to encourage city reinvestment while also releasing a nationwide poll that found city and suburban residents alike support tax dollars being spent to revitalize central cities. This finding challenges the widely-held belief that cities and suburbs have little in common and are often in conflict with each other over housing, transportation and other community development issues. The poll found that 68% of city residents and 66% of suburban dwellers said rebuilding cities and relying more on public transportation is the most effective way to solve the impact of sprawl and traffic congestion."*

---from the Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse

1000 Friends of Iowa

3524 Sixth Avenue

Des Moines, Iowa 50313

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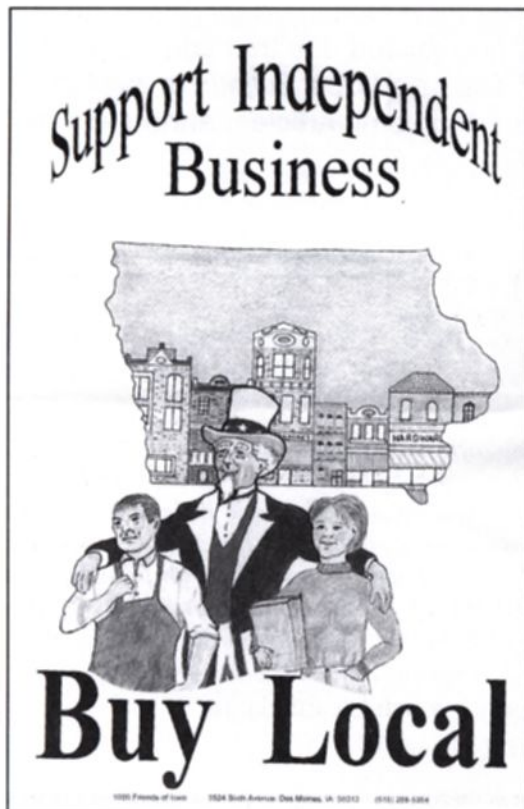
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BUY LOCAL CAMPAIGN

by Rose Winkeler

Several cities across the state kicked off the shopping season recently with our Buy Local Campaign. This campaign is designed to remind shoppers of the benefits of buying from locally-owned businesses.

Reasons to shop in neighborhood business districts are often overshadowed by the lure of cheap prices at chain stores. However, these seemingly reduced prices often end up costing us and our cities more as our neighbors are forced out of business and our downtowns and Main Streets become ghost towns. But the quality of life in our towns and cities is too important to sacrifice at the altar of cheap labor and cheaper products.

Thanks to volunteers in Des Moines, West Des Moines, Indianola, Urbandale, Jefferson, Greenfield, Decorah, Mason City and Sibley, over 300 locally-owned stores are displaying "Support Independent Business" posters designed by Autumn Griffieon. Last week, press conferences and news articles across the state helped encourage Iowans to skip the mall and skip down Main Street instead. Keep an eye out for these posters and remember to visit your local business districts during this season and throughout the year.