

# Rural Legacy

A quarterly newsletter of Women, Land & Legacy  
Vol. 4 Issue 4 | August 2016

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Commissioner Office
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**Women, Land & Legacy's vision** is to help agricultural women come together to converse, listen, & become empowered to act on their landscape & in their community.

### WLL State Team

Carol Richardson Smith,  
*Consultant*  
Clare Lindahl, *CDI*  
Laura Crowell, *NRCS*  
Sarah Paulos, *Interfaith Power & Light*  
Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen *NRCS*  
Wendi Denham, *FSA*  
Wren Almitra, *WLL Coordinator*

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We invite newsletter suggestions & contributions from participants & readers. Send submissions to [stateteam@womenlandandlegacy.org](mailto:stateteam@womenlandandlegacy.org)

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## Women, Land & Legacy in 2016

By Wren Almitra

In the [May edition](#) of *Rural Legacy* I wrote about how to get involved with Women, Land & Legacy in your area. If you have participated in a WLL event this year, we thank you! From over 20 events state-wide WLL has seen over 600 participants in over 25 counties in 2016 alone. These events were brought to you by one of our 18 local teams who volunteer their time to bring you educational and networking opportunities, assisting you with making more informed decisions for your land.

Check out [pg. 5](#) for some highlights from a few recent learning sessions and [pgs. 6-7](#) for upcoming events throughout the state.

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## Meet the Women, Land & Legacy State Team

The State Team of Women, Land & Legacy has been the backbone of the program since it kicked-off in 2004. Team members represent a range of USDA agencies as well as non-agency groups. Meet our two newest members on [pg. 4](#).



From left to right: Susan Kozak, IDALS; Wren Almitra, WFAN; Laura Crowell, NRCS; Clare Lindahl, CDI; Wendi Denham, FSA; Tanya Meyer -Dideriksen, NRCS; Sara Paulos, Iowa IPL; Carol Smith, Consultant

## Become a Soil and Water Conservation Commissioner and Help Improve Soil and Water Quality in Your County

By Wren Almitra

*This article includes excerpts from a September 2015 article published by Practical Farmers of Iowa.*

Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey recently put out a call for Iowan's to consider running to serve as Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, with over 200 offices on the ballot this November. Commissioners are elected volunteer positions who guide soil and water conservation programs in their respective counties and have the opportunity to influence state and national conservation programs. They do this by providing Iowans with education, technical assistance and funding to put conservation on agricultural and urban land.



Districts work with many different area partners to accomplish this work, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation, and the Department of Natural Resources, among others.

There are 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts and 500 commissioners in Iowa. Every county has a Soil and Water Conservation District, and all Iowans, urban as well as rural, are served by them. Commission boards are comprised of 5 commissioners, who are elected for a four-year term on a non-partisan ballot during the general election. Assistant commissioners can be appointed by the board at any time to assist in the work of the commissioners.

**To find out if there is an open seat in your county, call your local Soil and Water Conservation District office. For information on how to run for a commissioner seat in your county, go to <http://cdiowa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Infographic-CDI-Commissioners.pdf>.**

**Note: nomination paperwork must be submitted by 5 p.m. August 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**To learn more about Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Iowa go to [www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org).**



Washington Co. Commissioner Kate Giannini receives the Ken Wagner award from Johnson Co. Commissioner Alex Schmidt.

### Conservation Districts Need Women to Serve

As we all know, women hold numerous vital roles in agriculture and conservation in Iowa including serving as SWCD Commissioners. Kate Giannini, Commissioner in Washington Co., has this to say about serving in her District: "I ran for Soil Commissioner in Washington County not only because I wanted to be more involved with local decisions but state level decisions, too. I was also encouraged because our state needs more women Soil Commissioners, it's a great way to network, develop partnerships, stay involved with current issues, and make a difference!"

## Women, Food & Agriculture Network's Annual Conference November 4-5, Lied Lodge & Conference Center, Nebraska City



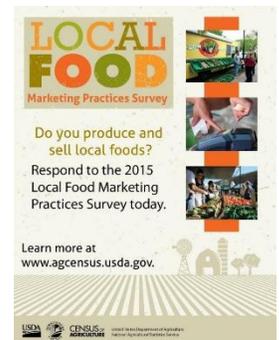
*Women and Permaculture: Making a Living in Harmony with the Land* is the theme of the 2016 WFAN annual conference, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 4-5, at Lied Lodge & Conference Center, Nebraska City, NE. Join 200 colleagues from all across the US to network, learn and enjoy the best locally grown foods Midwest women farmers have to offer! Our keynote speaker is Karryn Olson-Ramanujan, who began studying permaculture in 1997 and is a lead permaculture teacher and founding board member for the Finger Lakes (NY) Permaculture Institute. She also teaches sustainability-related courses at Ithaca

College and is dedicated to supporting women and other historically marginalized populations in their vital roles as leaders. Field tours will visit women-owned farms near Lincoln, urban ag projects in Omaha, and the Arbor Day farm and Kimmel Orchard in Nebraska City. Friday afternoon intensives will focus on Permaculture and Eco-Feminism. Nine Saturday workshops will cover production, marketing, conservation, and advocacy topics. Taste local wines and ciders, enjoy delicious food, and lots of networking! Visit [www.wfan.org/2016-wfan-annual-conference/](http://www.wfan.org/2016-wfan-annual-conference/) or contact Leigh Adcock at [conference@wfan.org](mailto:conference@wfan.org) for more info. Limited exhibitor spaces available.



## USDA Reports Coming Soon

**Local Foods** is a new survey conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Data is being collected now for publication December 20, 2016. Nationwide, 44,272 operations will be asked to participate in this important survey. In Iowa, 1,299 operations were mailed surveys beginning in April. Follow-up is underway by phone or personal interview. The information provided by this survey should be very interesting; data is on value added products only and will be a basis to track future growth in the industry.



**Monthly Crop Production** reports that provide monthly yield and production forecasts for corn and soybeans will be provided from August through November. The Objective Yield surveys that provide the data for these forecasts are underway. You may notice bicycle flags in some soybean fields and flagging ribbon tied to fences. That may be a sign that staff from the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) have permission to collect field data there. Plant population counts and size measurements of corn ears and soybean pods are made from July through harvest to determine the yield based on current conditions.

**Cash Rents** is another survey just completed this month. State level results for cropland and pastureland rent per acre will be published August 5, 2016 with county data published September 9, 2016. Below is the NASS website where data is published from NASS's national surveys with results for each state: [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/index.php).

Would you like to work part-time collecting data for NASDA? Call NASS's Upper Midwest Regional office at 515-284-4340 for more information.

## New State Team Member Profiles

### Clare Lindahl



As Executive Director for Conservation Districts of Iowa, Clare supports and represents the 500 elected Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners in the state. Prior to her current position, Lindahl worked with landowners and operators at the Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District in Davenport to improve water quality in Duck Creek and other local streams that flowed into the Mississippi River.

Clare grew up along the banks of the Mississippi River in the Illinois side of the Quad Cities. In college, local hero Chad Pregracke inspired and influenced her decision to work in water quality. Pregracke has been cleaning up the nation's rivers, particularly the Mississippi, for almost 20 years. Lindahl graduated from Iowa State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Landscape Architecture in 2007 and received her Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Environmental Geographic Systems from Western Illinois University in 2009. After college, Clare became the Natural Resources Program Manager with River Action, a not for profit organization dedicated to fostering the environmental, economic and cultural vitality of the Mississippi River and its riverfront in the Quad Cities. On why she joined the State Team, Clare stated, "I became involved with Woman Land and Legacy because it combines the two causes closest to my heart, conservation and empowering women to become leaders." Clare Lindahl

*You can read more on [pg. 2](#) about getting involved with Conservation Districts of Iowa by serving as a SWCD Commissioner.*

### Sarah Paulos

Sarah has served as the Program and Outreach Coordinator for Iowa Interfaith Power & Light since 2007. The mission of Iowa Interfaith Power & Light (IPL) is to inspire and equip people of faith to become leaders in finding solutions to climate change. She is the creator of the Cool Congregations program, which she brought to over 400 congregations in 7 years in Iowa and 15 other states. It is now a program of the national Interfaith Power and Light organization. Among other programs she developed for Iowa IPL is Food, Faith, Climate: Connecting the Dots, providing education on how our food practices contribute to climate change and exploring how our faith traditions call us to respond with practical solutions.



Sarah helped design and deliver Cool Neighbors, a neighborhood energy reduction challenge between historic neighborhood associations, based out of the Center for Energy and Environmental Education at the University of Northern Iowa. Sarah also serves as the Faith Caucus Coordinator for REAMP, a network of climate, energy, and environmental organizations throughout the Midwest. She believes that climate change is a moral issue, disproportionately impacting those who are most vulnerable in our world. She gets her motivation and inspiration from her three daughters.

On getting involved with WLL, she said she joined the State Team "because of increasing awareness of how Iowa farmers are being affected by climate change and how they could be a major player in helping to reduce carbon emissions. Women farmers in particular are more conservation minded and could have an important role to play in Iowa's climate solutions. I hope to learn more about what women farmers are concerned about and to serve as a resource". Sarah can be reached at [programs@iowaipl.org](mailto:programs@iowaipl.org).

# Updates and News from Around the State

## Bee Keeping and Monarchs in Cerro Gordo Co.



On May 12<sup>th</sup> Cerro Gordo WLL held a meeting at the Lime Creek Nature Center, attended by 37 people. Todd Von Ehwegen, Conservation Education Manager at Lime Creek Nature Center, gave an educational presentation titled “Monarch Mania,” and Randal Elsbernd, local beekeeper, gave a presentation on beekeeping. Both presentations were interesting and informative and enjoyed by all attending. A light supper was served by the Cerro Gordo WLL Planning Committee.

## Madison Co. WLL Kicks-off with Two Listening Session

On June 21<sup>st</sup> the newly formed Madison Co. Women, Land & Legacy team hosted two Listening Sessions for women landowners and farmers in Madison Co. Participants were given the opportunity to share what the local strengths and needs are for women in the county and to generate ideas on how agencies and organizations can better assist them. Stay tuned for upcoming Learning Sessions in Madison Co., which will highlight topics noted by Listening Session participants as priorities for women in the county.



## Tama Co. Holds 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Learning Sessions



On June 2<sup>nd</sup> 37 participants enjoyed a tour of Red Earth Gardens, part of the Meskwaki Nation's Food Sovereignty Initiative. The Gardens markets TSA (Trially Supported Agriculture) shares to tribal members and surrounding communities and provide fresh produce to local restaurants, farmers markets and farm stands. Attendees learned about food's role in Meskwaki culture and how current efforts are reintroducing tribal members to their traditional fare, REG's plans for future expansion including additional high tunnel structures and permaculture plantings, and its transition to organic production.

And on July 26<sup>th</sup> 20 people enjoyed a beautiful Iowa evening and attended Tama County WLL's 28<sup>th</sup> event, Farmhand 201, at the Van Wall Equipment's new Midway location in Toledo. Participants chose to attend two of three concurrent sessions—Grain Handling Safety, Cover Crops, and Farm Engineering: Using Your Head Instead of Your Back.



Tama County WLL has served 242 individuals since it kicked-off in February 2007. Stay tuned to a future edition of *Rural Legacy* for a special story on Tama Co., celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> year and 30<sup>th</sup> event!

# Upcoming WLL Events

## 2016 Women, Land & Legacy Statewide Learning Sessions

More details may be found at our on-line calendar, at  
[www.womenlandandlegacy.org](http://www.womenlandandlegacy.org).

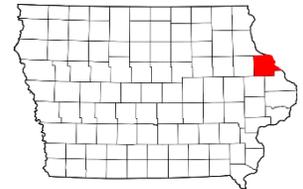
### **BV/Pocahontas Counties to Hold Legacy Planning Event August 25<sup>th</sup>, Storm Lake**

Buena Vista/Pocahontas WLL will hold a session on "legacy planning" with attorney Edean Murray, 6:30 p.m. at the BV Extension office, 824 Flindt Dr. #101, Storm Lake. RSVP to Colleen Schwanz at 712-732-3096 x3 or [colleen.schwanz@ia.nacdnet.net](mailto:colleen.schwanz@ia.nacdnet.net).



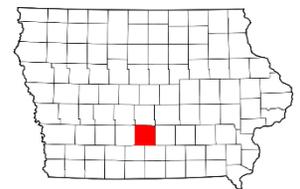
### **Dubuque Co. Will Join WLL with Two Listening Sessions September 1<sup>st</sup>, Peosta**

All women in Dubuque Co. involved in agriculture are invited to share your experiences in farming and your dreams for your land. Join us as we discuss what is necessary to meet your needs. This initial conversation will allow us to plan future activities to meet the informational and educational needs of agricultural women in the county. There are two options for attending, 1:00-3:00 p.m. OR 6:30-8:30 p.m. Doors will open a half hour before each session for check-in at the Peosta Community Centre, 7896 Burds Road, Peosta, IA. Sponsored by FSA, NRCS, Dubuque SWCD & ISU Extension. Reservations required by 8/26 to 563-876-3418 #3 or email [colleen.siefken@ia.nacdnet.net](mailto:colleen.siefken@ia.nacdnet.net) (indicate desired session).



### **Warren Co. Will Host Panel with Women in Ag. Resources September 7<sup>th</sup>, Indianola**

Join the Warren Co. WLL Team for a tailgate themed Warren County Women, Land and Legacy meeting. September 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at the Annett Nature Center in Indianola. The meeting will consist of a panel discussion with women in ag. resources from USDA, including NRCS and FSA, as well as ISU Extension. Dress to show your team pride by wearing your favorite tailgate attire and bring your favorite tailgate appetizer to share.

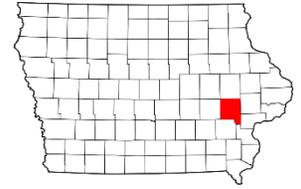


#### Directions:

The Annett Nature Center is located five miles south of Indianola. Travel 4 miles south on Hwy 65/69 and look for the Annett Nature Center signs. From there, turn west on G-58 to Lake Ahquabi, and then turn north on 118th Ave. The ANC is on the east side of the road.

## **Johnson Co. to Co-sponsor event on Farm Legacy Planning September 13<sup>th</sup>, Oxford**

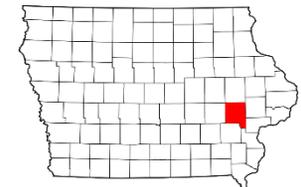
Women landowners in Johnson and surrounding counties are invited to attend a free meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., about transitioning your land to the next generation of farmers. The overall goal of this meeting is to help you learn about legacy planning options and preserving your conservation values on the farm.



In order for us to have the right amount of food, please RSVP by 4 p.m. Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. You may register on line at [www.jcswcd.org](http://www.jcswcd.org) or call 319-337-2322 x3. We will meet at the Education Center at F.W. Kent Park, 2048 U.S. 6, Oxford, IA. This meeting, sponsored by Women, Food and Agriculture Network, the Johnson Co. Women, Land & Legacy team, and your local Natural Resources Conservation Service offices, follows the very successful learning circle format designed by the Women, Food & Ag. Network called Women Caring for the Land.

## **Johnson Co. to Highlight Farms in 2nd Annual Farm Crawl September 24<sup>th</sup>, various locations**

Save the date for the 2nd annual Johnson Co. WLL Farm Crawl! Various farms in SW Johnson Co. will be highlighted on the tour. For more details, stay tuned to the WLL events page or the Johnson Co. team's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacyjohnson/](http://www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacyjohnson/).



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## **Women, Land & Legacy is on Facebook!**

Have you checked out and "liked" any of the four Women, Land and Legacy Facebook pages yet? If not, we highly recommend it! Below are the links to Tama, Iowa, Johnson, and Warren county pages, as well as the state WLL page.



Tama Co. [www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacytamacounty/](http://www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacytamacounty/)

Iowa Co. [www.facebook.com/IowaCountyWomenLandandLegacy/](http://www.facebook.com/IowaCountyWomenLandandLegacy/)

Johnson Co. [www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacyjohnson/](http://www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacyjohnson/)

Warren Co. [www.facebook.com/warrencountywomenlandandlegacy/](http://www.facebook.com/warrencountywomenlandandlegacy/)

State [www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacy/](http://www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacy/)

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