



Optimal Health for All Iowans



# Swatches

## Connecting Rural Iowa

November 2014

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### IRHA Participates in Design Assign

Over the summer, IRHA was selected to participate in Design Assign, a program of the Iowa Chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. The program partnered

### President's Message

#### Slow Your Roll

Fall is undoubtedly my favorite time of the year. I love the cool, crisp air, harvest, football, tailgating, hunting, fishing; the list goes on and on. It's also a time of year when you have to buckle down and push. It's time to get the crops out of the field, time to get your buildings winterized, time for fiscal year-end audits, time to get your ducks in a row for the upcoming legislative session. Face it, it's time to stick your foot on the gas and get things finished before the snow flies and the holidays arrive. But I learned at an early age, this is also the time to slow down, double check your work, and proceed with some caution.

I remember the day like it was last month. I was in seventh grade. My dad was pushing hard to get the harvest finished. He was directing a mental health center by day, farming in the evenings and weekends, and parenting in between. He was getting work done with-a-quickness, like we all strive to do. Things were clicking, but it only took one brief slip. He was rushing to clean out the hopper of the combine, took one misstep, and the auger grabbed ahold of his foot. He lost three toes in a split second. He was rushed to the hospital and I found myself back at the combine frantically searching for digits that could be surgically reattached. When I finally reconnected with my dad at the hospital I was devastated. It was the first time I had seen my dad slow down. Suddenly my best friend and hero was sidelined and vulnerable. I still get a lump in my throat thinking about it today. We were lucky. Farm accidents of that nature often leave families with much less. Fifteen days later when my father got home from the hospital we had a family meeting and said some prayers. It was an opportunity to finally make sense of what had

area creatives with non-profit organizations of the greater Des Moines area. IRHA had the pleasure to work with Eric Wold, a designer from Dubuque, Iowa.

Through this partnership, a new logo was created for IRHA and initial steps were taken on a new branding campaign. The new logo appears in this newsletter and in the weeks ahead this new look will be incorporated into other areas of IRHA.

We thank Eric for his work and look forward to unveiling more of the new IRHA look in the weeks ahead.



happened. My dad told me that this was a lesson we all needed to learn. When you are pushing your absolute hardest, take a deep breath and slow down.

A few months later that lesson was brought to light again. I was moving round bales from the field and was rushing to get the bales moved so I could go hunting later that afternoon. I took the turn into our farmstead too quickly and suddenly the truck, hay racks, and bales were all piled up in the ditch. Serious injury averted, lesson learned again. This time it stuck forever.

That was a rough fall, but necessary. Whenever I find myself pushing the limits, in the office, on the road, or in the field, I continually force myself to slow down and proceed with more thought and caution. I hope you will all do the same!

And if you are looking for a break this fall, I hope you will consider joining us at the [Transforming Safety and Health in the Heartland Conference](#). This collaborative effort combines the Iowa Rural Health Association's Fall Meeting with the Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference, and provides an opportunity to connect with some of our nation's greatest leaders in agricultural safety and health research and clinical practices. We hope to see you all shortly.

All the best,

Jon-Michael Rosmann

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## **Transforming Safety and Health in the Heartland November 19 - 20, 2014**

The upcoming conference "Transforming Safety and Health in the Heartland" is designed to bring together partners from many perspectives to consider ways to work collaboratively for healthier rural people. The conference will be held on November 19-20, 2014, at the FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny, Iowa. A key theme will be how the Affordable Care Act affects farmers and rural communities. Current research on rural health, injuries and solutions will also be presented.

Keynote speakers include Chuck Fluharty, director of the Rural Policy Research Institute (RURPI) and Stephene Moore, Region VII director of the Department of Health and Human Services. Other plenary sessions include a case study of how partners from different perspectives came together to create change and a



## Thank you for your IRHA Membership!

Benefits of being an IRHA member:

1. Health advocacy with a rural perspective
2. Access to resources through the IRHA and NRHA websites and email distribution lists
3. Networking opportunities with professionals from diverse disciplines
4. Input opportunities for State and Federal Policy issues
5. Discounted rates for Annual Conference
6. Opportunities for leadership development

presentation about the Iowa Marketplace. Breakout sessions and a poster reception offer an opportunity to hear about the latest research and outreach efforts. A Promising Practices series will feature three different projects. National Rural Health Day will also be celebrated.

More details about the conference schedule and registration are available on the conference website at [tinyurl.com/MRASH-IRHA](http://tinyurl.com/MRASH-IRHA). Participants may register for one or both days. CEUs are available for nurses and general audiences.

## Register today!

### How Iowa Celebrates National Rural Health Day

November 20, 2014 marks the 4th year for the national observation of Rural Health Day. Last year proclamations were read in the halls of Congress and the President signed a national proclamation. National information is available at <http://celebratepowerofrural.org/>

In Iowa, supporters, advocates, health care organizations and health professionals have taken time to recognize what health care means. There have been local celebrations, community health gatherings, hospitals gave awards, good food was shared and the media was rich with articles and photos. Each year, the Iowa Rural Health Association partners with the IA Dept. of Public Health to offer resources and host Iowa's official Rural Health Day website. Visit the [www.iaruralhealth.org](http://www.iaruralhealth.org) website and then revisit to keep up with new postings and activities.

On October 21, the Governor signed the 2014 Proclamation. To further show his support, he also signed an Iowa Rural Health Map poster. The poster will be on display for others to sign at the upcoming Transforming Safety and Health in the Heartland conference. On November 20, at the conference, there will be a National Rural Health Day awards luncheon. Award recipients include the 2014 Iowa Rural Health Champion.

The IRHA Board encourages you to celebrate on November 20. Iowans are fortunate to have excellent health care professionals and one of the best rural health care systems in the nation.



Members of the Rural Health community participated in the Governor's proclamation signing event.



Governor Branstad show his support by signing the Rural Health poster.

## **Iowa Mission of Mercy Seven Years and Going Strong!**

It's hard to believe, but seven years have passed since the Iowa Dental Association's first Iowa Mission of Mercy in Waterloo. In 2008, no one knew what to expect putting on a free dental clinic of this magnitude and, as the local chair, Dr. Marty Averill, noted, "would anyone come?" Well, he had nothing to fear. Not only did they come in 2008, but they have been coming ever since to the tune of 9,600 patients!

This year Dr. Averill decided to chair the Iowa MOM a second time in Waterloo. The IDA's seventh Iowa Mission of Mercy was held September 26 & 27 at the Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center. One thousand one hundred and two patients were treated during the two-day event and almost \$770,000 was provided in free oral health care.

Much has changed since the first Iowa MOM was held in 2008. The Iowa MOM leadership has streamlined and refined the protocols and procedures of the event in order to increase the efficiency of the clinic and to provide a positive, productive environment for both the patients who attend and the volunteers who participate in the clinic.

What has not changed is the need for services like the Iowa Mission of Mercy. Barriers to receiving oral health care still exist. The greatest barriers for individuals not receiving the care they need continue to be lack of dental insurance and insufficient funds to pay for care on their own.

According to a Harris poll conducted in 2013, 48% of lower income adults haven't been to the dentist in more than a year. Further, 20% of adults earning less than \$30k haven't visited a dentist in over 5 years. Thirty six percent (36%) of lower income adults have lived with an untreated cavity for some time causing pain. Emergency rooms are finding more individuals seeking treatment for oral health care. According to the same Harris poll, 18% of lower-income people sought treatment for dental pain in an ER; however, only 6% of those who went were able to have their dental problem solved.

According to the Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America, oral diseases affect health and well-being throughout one's life. Research links periodontal disease to a greater risk of heart attack and stroke. Research conducted by New York University in 2010 revealed long-term evidence that linked gum inflammation and Alzheimer's disease, finding that gum disease could increase the risk of cognitive dysfunction. Both children and adults can experience difficulty eating and speaking due to dental disease and many suffer from diminished self-esteem from visible tooth loss. Oral health care is one of the most-often-reported unmet health care needs in the United States.

The Iowa Mission of Mercy will continue to do its part to assist the citizens of Iowa and looks forward to next year's event, which will be held September 11 & 12, 2015, at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs.

## **USDA Rural Development's Strong Commitment to Rural Healthcare**

As Iowa's population continues to age, the need for improved healthcare services aimed at older Iowans is rising, especially in rural areas of the state.

"In 2010, 15 percent of Iowans were 65 years of age or older giving the state the fifth highest percentage of seniors in the country," said Bill Menner, USDA Rural Development State Director in Iowa. "It is estimated that by 2040, as many as 20 percent of the state's residents will be 65 years old or older."

Counties in more rural parts of the state have the highest percentage of older Iowans including Calhoun (23.8 percent), Monona (23.6 percent), Ringgold (23.6 percent), Audubon (23.4 percent) Dickinson (22.4 percent) and Sac (22.3 percent).

A recent study by Woods & Pool Economics, Inc. suggests that by 2040 as many as 80 counties in Iowa may find themselves with at least 20 percent of their residents 65 years of age or older. Today, it's around just 30 counties.

"It is very important that leaders in rural communities continually look for ways to improve the healthcare services that are offered in their community," Menner added. "USDA Rural Development's financing programs can play an important role in making these types of projects a reality."

During the last six years, USDA Rural Development has supported nearly 50 rural hospitals, medical clinics, nursing homes and/or assisted living facilities to make needed facility and equipment improvements. USDA grants, loans and guaranteed loan funds to these projects topped \$285 million.

Earlier this fall, Knoxville Hospital and Clinic celebrated a groundbreaking for a \$14 million expansion and renovation project that will include new clinic and physical therapy buildings, along with renovations to 27,300 square feet of inpatient rooms and emergency and surgical departments. The project is receiving \$1.3 million in USDA Rural Development funding.

USDA Rural Development is also providing \$20 million in loans to assist with a large addition and remodeling project at Greene County Medical Center in Jefferson. That project kicked off in April 2014 and will include the demolition of a portion of the south wing to construct a 51,000-square-foot addition to the existing facility that will include a new primary care unit with private

patient rooms, a new surgery area and new space for radiology, laboratory and respiratory therapy.

"We will continue to maintain our unwavering commitment to helping improve the healthcare opportunities for rural Iowans in the year and years to come," Menner added. "We would love to be a partner with you and your community on your next equipment or facility improvement."

For more information about USDA Rural Development financing programs, please call (515) 284-4663, visit [www.rurdev.usda.gov/ia](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ia) or stop by one of the 11 USDA Rural Development offices across the state serving the 1.7 million Iowans living in rural communities and areas.

Office locations include a State Office in Des Moines, along with Area Offices in Albia, Atlantic, Humboldt, Indianola, Iowa Falls, Le Mars, Mount Pleasant, Storm Lake, Tipton and Waverly.



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