

2007 REPORT



*Imagine* Grinnell

A QUALITY OF LIFE FOUNDATION

## ***Imagine Grinnell***

is a grass roots organization that stimulates initiatives which:

- Improve the quality of life for our people
- Promote a healthy environment
- Complement economic development efforts

## President's Message



**Imagine Grinnell**  
**President Jim Powers**

*Growing bike trails. Promoting local foods. Supporting green initiatives.* These are just a few of the activities that Imagine Grinnell tackled this year to bring quality of life to the Grinnell area.

On behalf of the Imagine Grinnell board of directors, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for your help in making these good things happen. It truly has been a year filled with accomplishments.

One of the most important was to hire our new executive director, Melissa Strovers (*see page 4*). We are excited about the foundation's future with Melissa's leadership. I'd also like to give a nod of thanks to Rob Clower, who after a year as our executive director, stepped down but remains on the board. Additionally, I'd like to acknowledge and thank Liz Queathem, who completed her tenure as board president in July. Since taking on the volunteer role of president, I have come to appreciate how much time and energy Liz has given to the organization.

Please read further in this report for a recap of all the things Imagine Grinnell has done to improve the quality of life in our community because of your support. You'll see updates about our ongoing projects like the recreation trail, the Grinnell's parks planning process, the Bioneers Conference, and more.

Grinnell is a vibrant and interesting community. All of us on the Imagine Grinnell board feel fortunate to have such a canvas to leave a few, hopefully meaningful, marks. As Imagine Grinnell looks toward another year of "quality of life" projects, we look forward to your continued support as both a volunteer and philanthropically.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Powers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jim Powers**  
**President**

## Board of Directors

Jim Powers,  
*President*  
Denise Lamphier,  
*Vice President*  
David Ness,  
*Treasurer*  
Amy Kalkbrenner,  
*Secretary*

Jon Andelson  
Chris Bair  
Rob Clower  
Craig Cooper  
Lonn Lease  
Tom Marshall (*founding member*)  
Monique McLay Shore  
Matha Jane Pinder  
Elizabeth Queathem  
Howard Raffety  
Helen Redmond  
Paula Sears

### Executive Director

Melissa Strovers

## 2006–07 Imagine Grinnell Membership Campaign

### Corporate Donors

#### Elite Corporate Members (gifts of \$1,000 or more)

Donaldson Company, Inc.  
Grinnell College  
Grinnell Regional Medical Center

#### Prestige Corporate Members (gifts of \$500 - \$999)

Grinnell State Bank  
Vantus Bank

#### Crown Corporate Members (gifts up to \$499)

All Pets Veterinary Hospital  
American Family Insurance  
Cirks Financial Services  
Community 1st Credit Union  
Edward Jones  
Engineered Plastic Components  
F&M Bank  
Family Dentistry  
Family Medicine  
Grinnell Implement  
Grinnell Mutual  
Reinsurance Company  
Hy-Vee  
Jensen Optometrists  
KGRN Radio  
Malcom Lumber  
Manatts, Inc.  
Mayflower Homes  
Monsanto Ag Products  
Poweshiek Mutual Insurance  
Association  
Ramsey-Weeks  
Schild Law Office  
Southard Implement  
Univ. of Iowa Comm. Credit Union  
Vander Linden Construction  
Wells Fargo  
Wes Finch Auto

### Lifetime Members

Dr. Peter Boeke  
Dr. and Ms. Warren Bower  
Fred and Susan Capers  
Kenneth and Phyllis Christiansen  
Dr. J.C. and Catherine  
DeMeulenaere  
Alice and John DeRooi  
Dr. David and Ann Ferguson  
Larry and Donna German  
Jewel Kintzinger  
Tom and Alesia Lacina  
Bill Lannom  
Sharp and Linda Lannom  
Dr. H.R. and Rhea Light  
Dr. Carney and Laura Loucks  
Forrest and Joan Mitchell  
Frances Peak  
Ned and Reba Postels  
Richard Ramsey  
Alice Renaud  
Ken and Miriam Saunders  
Dion Schrack  
Dr. David and Carol Smith  
Donald Starnes  
Russell and Dorothy Stoker  
John Stone  
Vernon and Loretta Van Wyk

## Individual and Family Members

Dan and Nancy Agnew  
 Janet Alexander  
 Jon Andelson and Karin Stein  
 Glenn Baker  
 Sarah Joan Baker  
 Dr. and Mrs. Robert Baumann  
 Rachel Bly and Bob Hamilton  
 Barbara Brown and David Lopatto  
 Don and Terry Burkhead  
 Robert and Nancy Cadmus  
 Doug and Virginia Cameron  
 Doug and Lorna Caulkins  
 Jon and Jeannie Chenette  
 William Crosby  
 Dr. David and Francesca  
     Cunningham  
 Doug Cutchins and Anne  
     Geissinger  
 George and Sue Drake  
 Charles and Mari Duke  
 Marian Dunham  
 Jim Dunne and Sara Hegg-Dunne  
 Susan Ferguson  
 William and Lori Francis  
 Lamoyne Gaard  
 Everett and Verna Gerrish  
 Jim and Kim Gilbert  
 Terese and Warren Grant  
 Stanley and Gail Greenwald  
 Dennis and Tommy Haas  
 Otto and Effie Hall  
 Elizabeth G. Hansen  
 Elizabeth Hays  
 Arthur Heimann  
 Erin D. Hurley  
 Dr. Clark Jensen  
 Charles and Marcia Jepsen  
 Austin and Kim Jones  
 Chris and Malissa Juni  
 Amy Megan and John Kalkbrenner  
 Cecilia Knight and Gary Mertens  
 Susan Kriegel  
 Gerald and Dori Lalonde  
 Denise Lamphier and  
     Charlie Clements  
 Tom and Dianne Latimer  
 Russelle Jones Leggett  
 Rebecca S. Loew and  
     Jonathan Brown  
 Robert G. Mann  
 Thomas and Constance Marshall  
 Kent and Katherine McClelland  
 LeRoy and Phyllis Meredith  
 Erik and Larissa Mottl  
 Carol Nielsen  
 Dave and Kris Ness  
 Eleanor Osland  
 James and Linda Paulson  
 Dorothy and Roger Peterson  
 John and Emily Pfitsch  
 Ed and Karen Phillips  
 A.J. and Dorothy Pinder  
 Lawrence Pinder  
 Martha Jane Pinder  
 Lucille M. Potts  
 Jim Powers and Dave Thompson  
 Howard and Suzy Raffety  
 Montie and Suzanne Redenius  
 Jack and Diane Robertson  
 Lyle and Carolyn Roudabush  
 John and Madge Ruchotzke  
 Mark Schneider  
 Lee Sharpe and Leslie Lyons  
 Clio Sopher  
 Joyce Stern and Laura Sinnett  
 Susan and Ira Strauber  
 Jim Swartz and Cynthia Mosier  
 Julie Tabatabai  
 Jack and Marion Templeton  
 Mindy Uitermarkt  
 Steve Langerud and Karen  
     Veerhusen-Langerud  
 Roger and Val Vetter  
 Sharon and Greg Wallace  
 Mr. and Mrs. Bill D. Weeks  
 Robert and Kim Wemer  
 Eliza J. Willis  
 Royce Wolf  
 Lesley Wright and Donald B. Doe  
 Ms. Mary Jane Zimmerman

## **Imagine Grinnell's New Executive Director....Up Close and Personal**



**Imagine Grinnell  
Executive Director  
Melissa Strovers**

Melissa Strovers joined Imagine Grinnell in September 2007. She brings more than 12 years of experience in marketing, public relations, and project management to her role.

Strovers was born in Arkansas, but moved to San Diego, Calif., when she was a teenager, where she met her husband,

Lance. After finishing high school in California, Strovers attended Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City. There she majored in mass communications/journalism.

When she returned to Calif., Strovers worked for the San Diego Rotary Club. Then Lance decided to attend Palmer West - College of Chiropractic in San Jose, Calif. The couple relocated to San Jose. Strovers was hired as a sales and marketing manager at Deliverex.

Over the next 13 years, Strovers worked for almost a dozen different companies. Employees changed jobs rapidly as start-up companies expanded, collapsed, evolved and were sold-off.

An important lesson Strovers took away from San Jose was the importance of networking. After her first job at Deliverex,

every position she took in San Jose, was offered by someone she knew or had worked with previously.

“Networking and building relationships has always been something I enjoy,” Strovers said. “Building long-term relationships and being able to bring individuals or organizations together to fulfill a need is rewarding.”

Strovers and her family relocated to Grinnell in 2004. Prior to joining Imagine Grinnell, Strovers enjoyed being an at-home mom and a virtual consultant for several companies in California.

Strovers and her husband, Lance, and three children—Wolfgang 13, Maddy 3, and Bailey, 2—live on County Road T-38, just northwest of Grinnell. Their home is north of the bike trail.

“One of key factors in the decision to purchase our home on T-38 was the proximity of the bike trail,” Strovers said. “We love taking family walks and bike outings on the trail.”

Little did she know, three years later, she would become the executive director for Imagine Grinnell, the organization responsible for developing the bike path.

As the executive director, Strovers is responsible for working with the Imagine Grinnell board of directors, membership development, project management, locating funding sources, and day-to-day operations of the foundation.

## Imagine Grinnell Supports Library “Green” Efforts

The board of directors of Imagine Grinnell voted this year to give a \$15,000 donation to *The Next Chapter* campaign in support of having the new library incorporate “green” principles and materials into its design.

“This will benefit the community through huge energy savings throughout the entire lifespan of the building. We also hope the library can serve as a role model for other buildings being constructed as well as an educational resource for awareness of the environment,” says Liz Queathem, Imagine Grinnell past president.

Imagine Grinnell made this gift because of the E-Community incentive program the foundation worked on with Alliant Energy. During the three-year program, Imagine Grinnell worked in the community to reduce energy consumption. In 2006, Imagine Grinnell received \$271,000 from Alliant Energy for its efforts.

“We feel making this \$15,000 donation to the library is an appropriate use of the incentive money from Alliant Energy,” Queathem says.

Imagine Grinnell’s lead “green” gift—along with a private gift from Imagine Grinnell board member Helen Redmond and her husband Pete Brownell—helped the library leverage support from Vision Iowa and spurred interest in an environmentally-friendly library.

Sparked by the local support, Vision Iowa gave the library a \$750,000 grant and stipulated that they must receive certification from Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—a rating system that recognizes buildings for improving energy efficiency and reducing negative environmental impact.

Among the library’s planned green initiatives are a geothermal heating/cooling system and a clerestory daylighting window system. According to energy auditors, the library’s geothermal features will save the community \$23,000 annually. Other energy efficiencies will save an additional \$12,000 per year based on current energy costs.

The new library will be located at the corner of Park Street and 5th Avenue.



## **Imagine Grinnell Partners with Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation**

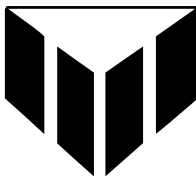


**Greater Poweshiek  
Community Foundation  
President Todd Nelson**

This fall, Imagine Grinnell and the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation developed a partnership that will provide Imagine Grinnell with administrative and asset management services. The partnership will take effect in January 2008.

“This new affiliation will help us with office support so that our executive director can concentrate on the lofty tasks of pushing forward our projects and mission,” says Jim Powers, Imagine Grinnell board president.

“Best of all, the agreement provides Imagine Grinnell with the expertise of GPCF’s financial managers. Imagine Grinnell will benefit from GPCF’s investment strategies, which will help us yield better gains on the dollars our supporters have invested in us to improve our community. We know this move will benefit Imagine Grinnell, our volunteers, our philanthropic supporters, and, in the long run, our community,” Powers adds. “GPCF has earned a reputation for helping important projects in our community and we are proud to be a partner.”



**Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation**

### **What is GPCF?**

The primary goal of GPCF, which was founded in 1989, is to assist donors in efficiently and effectively supporting nonprofit organizations that make life better for people in the greater Poweshiek County area. Other organizations that have an affiliation with GPCF are the Grinnell High School Alumni Association, the Grinnell High School Capital Campaign, the Grinnell-Newburg Educational Excellence program, Dollars for Scholars, and The Next Chapter for a new public library in Grinnell.

According to its website, GPCF likes to be involved in projects that:

- increase citizens’ commitment to meet community needs;
- eliminate duplication of services and encourage cooperations;
- develop self-reliance or eliminate dependency;
- address new and emerging needs or incorporate new approaches to meeting recognized needs;
- address themselves to prevention as well as to treatment;
- are models that have a strong possibility for replication, or have demonstrated significant success elsewhere;
- increase the managerial and financial capabilities of nonprofit organizations and public agencies;
- develop, disseminate, or follow up on seed research concerning the region and its people.

### **Why the Partnership?**

We asked the GPCF president and former Imagine Grinnell board member, Todd Nelson, to talk about why his board thought it made sense for Imagine Grinnell and GPCF to create this partnership. Here's what he said:

"The decision to create this partnership was approved unanimously by our board. Imagine Grinnell and GPCF have always had a connection. In many ways, this move has taken both our organizations full circle. In the early days of their founding, Imagine Grinnell and GPCF shared a volunteer executive director. That director, Tom Marshall, still serves on the boards of both of these organizations.

"The GPCF mission has always been to strengthen the community. Our funding priorities include education, financial aid for students, public libraries, health care, arts and culture, public affairs and community development, social services, and agriculture and natural resources. In sum, our mission is to improve quality of life. The Imagine Grinnell mission has always been to improve the quality of life in the Grinnell community. Our board believes that Imagine Grinnell has the right mission fit for what we do.

"Although GPCF and Imagine Grinnell have similar goals, we have different strengths. GPCF looks more toward helping to facilitate other organizations meeting their dreams. We are less hands on. For example, we are not going to dredge Arbor Lake to improve quality of life, but Imagine Grinnell has the people and the passion to accomplish the project. GPCF enjoys being the vehicle to provide the administrative and asset management support to make projects like this happen.

"The GPCF board thinks the partnership with Imagine Grinnell is good for several reasons. First of all, we have the ability to provide economy of scale for back office support through our relationship with the Ahrens Foundation. This is important because by consolidating the administrative work of small nonprofit organizations in our area, we gain efficiency. Donors to these organizations, including Imagine Grinnell, now know they are not supporting letter writing campaigns but instead the work, the projects. We are very lucky to have the service of the Ahrens Foundation to fill this role.

"The other great benefit for GPCF and our affiliates is that we are able to pool the dollars invested in each organization. This allows GPCF to invest in investment vehicles that yield greater dollars for all our partners. Rest assured, even though the money is pooled, it is tracked separately. Because it is pooled it helps grow everyone's investments. This relationship just makes sense."

For more information about the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation visit their website at <[www.greaterpcf.org/index.htm](http://www.greaterpcf.org/index.htm)>.

***"This new affiliation will help us with office support so that our executive director can concentrate on the lofty tasks of pushing forward our projects and mission."***

## Little GART Not Quite so Little Anymore

No longer is the Grinnell Area Recreation Trail a six-mile hard surface trail running from Rock Creek Lake State Park in Jasper County to the northeast corner of Grinnell. As of September 2007, it is now a six-and-one-quarter mile trail running past Lions Park to the Grinnell campus of Iowa Valley Community College.

If you haven't visited the brand new 350-yard addition, now is the time to ride over to Lions Park and follow the trail south as it winds along the creek. The ride (or walk, for that matter) won't take you long, but it will remind you that, piece by piece, the GART continues to take shape.

You may take special pleasure in the trip if you're one of more than 100 "Yard Sale" shoppers who generously purchased yards of trail last year when the pressure was on to get funding in place. Crucial support for the project also came from local institutional and corporate bike trail believers, including the City of Grinnell, Grinnell College, the Grinnell-Newburg School District, Iowa Valley Community College, and the Poweshiek County Alliance.

The largest single contribution for the new section came from Imagine Grinnell itself, which drew on incentive dollars raised through its E-Community partnership with Alliant Energy. Rock Creek Industries generously provided an easement through their property for the trail extension.

### **GART Goes to School**

Earlier this year, Imagine Grinnell hired Dunbar/Jones of Des Moines to conduct a formal study on greater Grinnell trail development.

This step was taken for two principal reasons, explains Rob Clower, Imagine Grinnell board member who serves on the bike trail committee.

First, it is important to ensure that development plans are the product of thorough deliberation and that they actually meet the community's needs and preferences. To this end, the study process featured two task force meetings, which drew together more than 30 community members representing a variety of interests. An effort was made to formulate the task force as a true cross section of the community, so those with potential objections to trails expansion were invited in addition to trail supporters.

The second reason for conducting the study was strategic. With good reason, potential donors and grant funders, such as the State of Iowa, typically demand evidence that a trail building proposal makes sense for a community and that the project will serve needs that truly exist. The best kind of evidence is a professional study that includes community input.

With the Dunbar/Jones study in hand, Imagine Grinnell is now able to reference direct input from the community in support of the GART for three key purposes: recreation, transportation, and the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.

"We now are well equipped to seek the substantial funding that will be necessary to see the GART continue under Highway 6, past Arbor Lake, and on to the major shopping destinations and large employers south of town," Clower says.

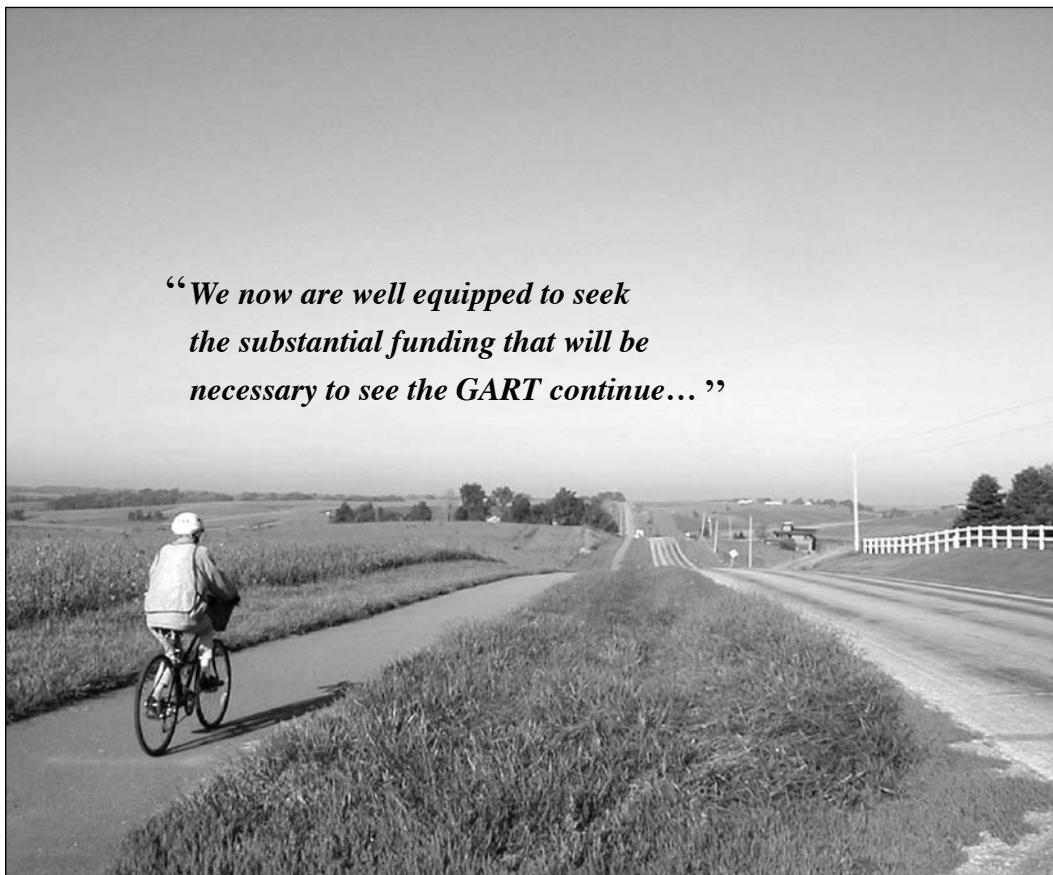
### **GART's Bright Future**

Together, the latest bike trail extension and the recently completed Dunbar/Jones study place the trail in a strong position for further development. The new southern-most portion of the trail ends at the brink of Highway 6. An underpass is the safest route to the other side. Although it is cheaper than a bridge, the cost will exceed half a million dollars.

“With the bike trail study in hand, there is no denying that the community wants more and needs more trail for the health, convenience, and safety of its citizens,” Clower says.

Contact the Imagine Grinnell office to find out more about ongoing efforts to grow the GART. And be sure to get out as often as you can for a walk or ride on this amazing trail.

*“We now are well equipped to seek the substantial funding that will be necessary to see the GART continue...”*



## **Eighteen Tons of E-waste Diverted from Landfills**

Through its support of funds and volunteers, Imagine Grinnell has helped divert more than 18 tons of e-waste from landfills in the past three years.

In July 2005, Imagine Grinnell co-sponsored the first of five community e-waste collection events. The last Grinnell e-waste event was held this May.

“At the time of the first collection, a requirement for proper disposal of e-waste did not exist, and the public was largely unaware of the toxins and environmental hazards these waste pose,” says Monique Shore, Imagine Grinnell board member who helped lead these efforts. “Much of Imagine Grinnell’s early efforts involved raising public awareness of what e-waste is and the importance of proper disposal.”

In July 2006, the South Central Iowa Solid Waste Agency implemented a program mandating proper disposal of CRTs (monitors/TVs) and began providing an ongoing drop-off point for e-waste recycling at the county landfill (eight miles east of Grinnell on Highway 6). Most small electronics can be recycled for free, but there is a fee for TVs, monitors, printers, and fax and copy machines. Since the landfill is where items collected by the Grinnell Public Services Department are taken, the city was forced to cover these fees. In July 2007 the City of Grinnell implemented a fee based pickup option that allows the public to arrange for curbside pickup of large e-waste items.

Things continue to change in our more educated world. In August 2007, Goodwill Industries announced the launch of a computer-recycling program at the Grinnell store that would provide for free disposal of all computer related equipment. Computer equipment, work-



**Just a few pallets of the electronics collected through the E-waste program.**

ing or not, can be taken to Goodwill free of charge. Equipment that can be refurbished will be securely wiped of all data and distributed by Goodwill. Dell certified recycling agencies will recycle all other items.

Given that there are now ongoing local options for proper e-waste disposal Imagine Grinnell and its co-sponsors have decided to stop holding e-waste collection events.

“Between 2005 and 2007, Imagine Grinnell helped divert more than 18 tons of material from landfills to responsible recycling through these local collections. That’s exciting,” Shore says. “Materials including posters and brochures are being created to alert the public about the options now available for e-waste disposal. Imagine Grinnell will always support e-waste recycling efforts.”

## Imagine Grinnell Energy Program Expands Mission in 2007

The Imagine Grinnell Energy Program focused on two initiatives in 2007, expanding on the foundation's initial mission of improving energy efficiency in our community.

### Grinnell Area Petroleum Replacement Initiative

The first project, the Grinnell Area Petroleum Replacement Initiative—otherwise known as GAPRI—focused on reducing petroleum product use. After a series of meetings with local stakeholders, GAPRI coordinator Rich Dana worked with students from Grinnell College to administer a questionnaire to local businesses and institutions about their use of petroleum based fuel, solvents, cleaners, plastics, and other products.

Dana also worked with procurement agents to connect them with producers of locally-produced, plant-based alternatives to those products. Dana is currently in the final reporting phase of GAPRI, collecting data and looking at the successes and roadblocks to changing to these products. His final report will be available in December. The great news from I.S.U. is that the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture's marketing program has invited Imagine Grinnell to write a grant proposal to extend GAPRI for another year.

### Bioneers Comes to Grinnell

Imagine Grinnell's second energy project was the hosting of the Tallgrass Bioneers Conference. Bioneers has been held for the past 19 years in San Rafael, Calif., and brings together the world's leading thinkers on environmental and social justice issues. This year, thanks to

Dana's and Imagine Grinnell's efforts, Grinnell was the smallest community in the United States to be chosen as a conference satellite site. The conference brought hundreds of people to Grinnell in October to discuss the broader implications of our lifestyle and the impact it has on the global environment. In addition to receiving the satellite broadcast from the national conference, Imagine Grinnell hosted a series of live workshops and events with regional experts, as well as community art, music, and cultural events. Imagine Grinnell's goal is to make this an annual community event that will draw visitors to Grinnell year after year to engage in this important dialogue.



Arches made of trash adorned conference sites. More than 450 Grinnell children participated.

## Sharp Wins Service Scholarship



Imagine what a difference you could make in the world if you volunteered 212 hours in a one-year time span. Brandon Sharp did more than imagine.

Whether it is coaching youth in several different sports, moving a family from Afghanistan to Des Moines,

helping with Mid-Iowa Community Action's annual Christmas Share Helper program, or cleaning a park, Sharp has been a role model for volunteering.

For his demonstrated service to the community, Sharp, son of Lisa and Scott Sharp of Grinnell, received Imagine Grinnell's 2007 service scholarship.

The \$500 scholarship is intended to encourage civic engagement by youth, and to recognize high school students for outstanding service to their communities and neighbors.

To be eligible for Imagine Grinnell's service scholarship, which is awarded in May each year, the applicant must be a graduating Grinnell High School senior who has contributed at least 100 hours of service to the community in the previous 12 months.

"Brandon's countless hours of volunteering to make Grinnell better makes him a perfect recipient of this scholarship," says Jim Powers, Imagine Grinnell president.

In a note to Imagine Grinnell after receiving the award, Brandon wrote: "I want to thank you for awarding me the scholarship. I consider it a real honor."

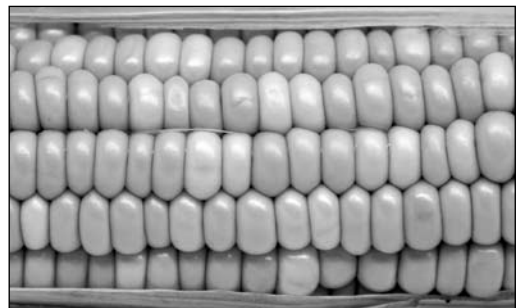
For more information about or an application for the 2008 Imagine Grinnell Service Scholarships, go to the Imagine Grinnell website at [www.imaginegrinnell.org](http://www.imaginegrinnell.org).

## Accessing Local Foods

The Grinnell Area Local Foods Alliance, with the help of Imagine Grinnell, continues to advocate for more access to and use of local food by individuals and institutions in the Grinnell area.

"Food is one of our most important quality of life issues. It is tied to health, local economic vitality, connection to the land, and a sense of community. Consuming food produced on area farms is good for all of us, and GALFA is constantly exploring ways to facilitate connections between local producers and consumers," says Jon Andelson, Imagine Grinnell board member who leads GALFA.

GALFA is currently working closely with Grinnell College's Dining Services, which this year doubled the amount of local food it served in the cafeteria. GALFA is exploring similar possibilities with Grinnell Regional Medical Center. GALFA is also investigating the possibilities of grant support to develop an on-line ordering system and a cold storage and light processing facility for use by local producers. Under the name of I-Foods, several entities in east-central Iowa, including GALFA, are collaborating on developing a regional food system to complement the emerging local food system in the Grinnell area.



## Youth Corps Spends Summer Restoring Arbor Lake

The Grinnell Youth Conservation Corps completed a second successful summer of ecological restoration work in Arbor Lake Park.

High school students Allison Richardson, Sam Coster, and Georgia Wright-Simmons were led by Grinnell College student coordinator, Ellen Zaander. For eight weeks, the GYCC spent 20 hours each week working in the park. During this time, they:

- Removed invasive shrubs and trees from along 300 yards of shoreline.
- Planted more than 1,500 plugs of native wildflowers and grasses and 200 native shrubs.
- Removed invasive plants from Hudson Prairie and the Hazel Creek buffer strips.
- Removed barbed wire fence.
- Mulched 40 trees in the picnic area.
- Mulched muddy sections of the back hiking trail.
- Completed an aquatic invertebrate survey of Hazel Creek.
- Picked up trash along the shoreline, mudflats, and Hobo Run storm water retention basin.

The GYCC also visited Krumm Preserve and the Grinnell College Conard Environmental Research Area to learn about other restoration projects underway in the Grinnell area. In addition, crew members took advantage of a rainy day to work on content for a GYCC program website, which is hosted through the Grinnell College Center for Prairie Studies. Check it out at <[www.grinnell.edu/academic/cps](http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/cps)>.

Imagine Grinnell was instrumental in acquiring funds to purchase native plant materials, mulch, and equipment through a \$2,500 grant from the Poweshiek County Alliance program. The City of Grinnell pays for the high school student wages and some equipment and supplies. The Grinnell College CPS provides wages for the college student coordinator during the spring semester prior to the summer program, funds for supplies, website support, and a staff coordinator. The Grinnell College Career Development Office supports the program through an eight-week internship stipend for the college student coordinator.

**Youth Corps members:  
Ellen Zaander,  
Allison Richardson,  
Sam Coster, and  
Georgia Wright-Simmons**



## **Poweshiek Leadership Program Marks Fourteenth Year**

The Poweshiek Leadership Program is now in its 14th year with yet another exciting group of individuals—the Class of 2008—reaping the personal, professional, and civic benefits of this nine-month continuing education program.

Since graduating its first class in May 1995, PLP has seen an ever-growing list of new and emerging leaders benefit from this program that, in turn, benefits greatly from their participation. Its alumni ranks now number more than 260 and counting...

Imagine Grinnell is a founding partner of PLP, along with Iowa State University-Poweshiek County Extension, Iowa Valley Continuing Education, and Poweshiek Iowa Development (POW I-80). Imagine Grinnell continues to share board members with the PLP advisory council and play an active role in programming.

### **Program Goals**

The goals of the program are to unite emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds and perspectives; increase participants knowledge and understanding of community issues; broaden a collective vision of a better county-wide community; and enhance each individual's ability to lead.

“PLP gave me a whole new perspective on the county,” says Lesley Wright, director of Grinnell College's Faulconer Gallery, who graduated with the Class of 2007. “I have a much stronger sense of this place I call home, and a whole new network of talent on which I can draw for future projects. I would recommend PLP to anyone who works with the public, seeks community involvement, or wants to increase their leadership skills.”

The class meets one-half to one day per month during the course of the academic year, exploring topics such as personal leadership vision, servant leadership, government functions, community resources, and youth and volunteerism.

### **Adult Learnings**

Scott Arnold of Alliant Energy, who also graduated with last year's class, says, “PLP is an outstanding opportunity to network, build relationships, and learn about the resources and opportunities available in Poweshiek County. The contacts and knowledge base I gained will serve me well in my professional career.”

Some classes meet in Grinnell, but each year there are also a number of classes that meet in Brooklyn, Malcom, or Montezuma. A “whistle-stop” bus tour of the county for the first day of class—a program component that debuted last year—has proved a hit with class members. On September 20, 2007, the class spent a day beginning with a session in Brooklyn and including informational stops in Deep River, rural Grinnell, Hartwick, Malcom, Searsboro, and at Diamond Lake near Montezuma.

Organizers feel this tour is an important way to encourage participants to think of the Poweshiek County community in a comprehensive way. In recruiting, an effort is also made to ensure the class includes members from a variety of communities in the county. This year's class actually also includes six members who live outside of the county but work here, reflecting the reality of a laborshed that crosses administrative borders.

“It is an inspiration each year to read applications from individuals interested in

developing leadership skills, expanding their networks, and gaining a better understanding of the county—all because they are interested in helping create positive change in our communities,” says Martha Pinder, Imagine Grinnell board member who also serves on the PLP board.

### **The Class of 2008**

Imagine Grinnell is proud to point out that Melissa Strovers, the foundation’s new executive director, is a member of the Class of 2008. Here is the entire list of this year’s class members, including their title and sponsoring organization (with the community they call home in parentheses):

- Alicia Blankenfeld, *owner, Total Choice Shipping (Grinnell)*
- Rachel Bly, *director of conference operations/events, Grinnell College (Grinnell)*
- Nita Brumbaugh, *manager (business analyst/software), Grinnell Mutual (Keswick)*
- Kim Bushong, *workers compensation claims manager, Grinnell Mutual (Brooklyn)*
- Kent Campbell, *project manager, Poweshiek Water Association (Toledo)*
- Renny Crawford, *4-H Coordinator, ISU Extension-Poweshiek County (Grinnell)*
- Kevin Dowling, *claims director, Grinnell Mutual (Newton)*
- Nick Gallagher, *concrete sales, Manatts (Belle Plaine)*
- Adam Grier, *safety director, Manatts (Williamsburg)*
- Shane Hart, *loan officer, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage (Grinnell)*
- Nicole Hartman, *imaging assistant, Grinnell Mutual (Deep River)*
- Doug Helm, *self-employed farmer and bed & breakfast owner sponsored by Poweshiek County Farm Bureau (Montezuma)*
- Michele Jensen, *re-orders/customer service, ASI-Modulex (Grinnell)*
- Molly Kauzlarich, *legal assistant, Poweshiek County Attorney (Brooklyn)*
- Marilyn Kennett, *assistant librarian, Stewart Library (Grinnell)*
- Martina Latimer, *manager-business development, Grinnell Mutual (Grinnell)*
- Jacque McClenathan, *senior personal lines underwriter, Grinnell Mutual (Victor)*
- Dan McCue, *assistant director/alumni relations, Grinnell College (Grinnell)*
- Vicki McKenna, *director of nursing, Mayflower Homes (Grinnell)*
- Matt Miller, *dentist, Family Dentistry (Grinnell)*
- Sonja Morrison, *director-personal lines support, Grinnell Mutual (Grinnell)*
- Wade Sheeler, *senior performance improvement specialist, Grinnell Mutual (Newton)*
- Melissa Strovers, *executive director, Imagine Grinnell (Grinnell)*
- Devin Wells, *loan officer trainee, Grinnell State Bank (Grinnell)*

*Applications for the PLP Class of 2009 will become available this summer. Contact program coordinator Deb Van Arkel at Poweshiek County Extension, 641-623-5188, to put your name or organization on the list to receive an application for next year’s class.*

## Planning for Our Parks

Grinnell's parks and trail system are key components of Imagine Grinnell's quality of life goals. After 18 months, the City's Parks Planning process, led by Tom Dunbar, of Dunbar Jones, has resulted in a comprehensive document that will direct future decisions regarding our park system. The document covers issues ranging from maintenance guidelines and a land stewardship policy, an inventory of all existing facilities and amenities, and design concepts for each of our city parks.

Between Jan. 29–Feb. 1, 2007, eight meetings were held to discuss each of our parks. These meetings gave the public an opportunity to share their vision for the parks they care about.

Based on the individual planning sessions, design concept boards for each park were presented at the city swimming pool. More than 150 Grinnell residents had fun discussing these exciting possibilities.

Imagine Grinnell board members, Amy Kalkbrenner, Martha Pinder, Jim Powers, and Liz Queathem were part of the Parks Planning Taskforce. Other taskforce members included Grinnell Park Board members, city officials, and interested citizens.

**Imagine Grinnell past president Liz Queathem discusses plans for one of Grinnell's parks.**

## Imagine Grinnell Needs You

Whether it's cleaning the city's parks in the spring or staffing a national conference, Imagine Grinnell frequently needs volunteers to help with our projects.

"We would like to create an e-mail database of volunteers to call upon when the need arises," says Melissa Strovers, Imagine Grinnell executive director. "This sort of an effort will help us more efficiently locate people who want to volunteer."

If you are interested in being on our volunteer list, send your e-mail address to Strovers at [imaginegrinnell@iowatelecom.net](mailto:imaginegrinnell@iowatelecom.net) or simply fill out the enclosed card when making your annual Imagine Grinnell contribution.



*Imagine Grinnell* is a 501(C)3 Corporation.  
Your contribution is tax deductible.



*Imagine* **Grinnell**

833 Fourth Avenue  
P.O. Box 538  
Grinnell, Iowa 50112

641-236-6311  
[imaginegrinnell@iowatelecom.net](mailto:imaginegrinnell@iowatelecom.net)  
[www.imaginegrinnell.org](http://www.imaginegrinnell.org)