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Inside This Issue

<i>Founder &amp; History</i>	2
<i>Committees Formed</i>	2
<i>CROPS Expands Board</i>	2
<i>Executive Director</i>	3
<i>Torsell &amp; Kingman</i>	3
<i>Volunteerism</i>	3
<i>SCCF Grant</i>	4
<i>ISTS Selected</i>	4
<i>Sidewalks, Streetlights</i>	4
<i>Two Colts Grants</i>	5
<i>Pay it Forward</i>	5
<i>Oral History Project</i>	5
<i>Project Donors</i>	6

Board of Directors

- Jon Egolf
- Tom Howard
- Angelique Milo
- Jon Robbins
- Autumn Schumacher
- Dixie Sefchek
- Tom Torsell
- Marcy Wagner

*Planting Seeds*

**H**ow does one go about finding \$3 million for the revitalization of a small rural town in Indiana? You plant a lot of seeds and hope a few take root. Fertilize the soil with patience, perseverance, and passion, and before long a few seedlings emerge. With her many years of fundraising experience and a fervent commitment to bring new vitality to San Pierre, Beverly Santicola, Executive Director of CROPS, wants to *begin* with San Pierre, developing a national model for rural community redevelopment. Engaging local youth in the process through CROPS' Youth Leadership Committee, she succeeded in securing five small grants, which then leveraged an additional \$20,000 from individual donors. The most exciting part of this project is working with 16 teenagers from San Pierre, teaching them to write grant applications and letters of support, getting them to participate in brainstorming sessions, as well as

plan and implement service learning projects. This year, Kacie and Autumn Schumacher, members of the Youth Leadership Committee, applied for and received \$1,300 in grants from the Indianapolis Colts football team and Grange Insurance for a landscaping project and athletic courts. In addition, eight of the Youth Leaders designed and created a unique Goal Chart with the help of local artists Angelique and Max Milo. In this project, youth learned how professional artists sketch ideas and then create them with the help of com-

puter software, as well as how to enlarge the design and print on a 4' x 8' sign. The goal chart they created (shown above) integrates a Sand Hill Crane and Skate Board theme because over 30,000 visitors pass through San Pierre each year to see the cranes—and many of the youth want a skate park in San Pierre. Other projects completed this year include the enclosure of the park pavilion, two new welcome signs, park upgrades, and town clean-up. While the grants have been small so far they have demonstrated CROPS' ability to lead a successful project. Now, with an established track record of credibility, CROPS has a better chance to win larger grants for the revitalization project in coming years. We hope to



harvest a bumper crop in 2007. Youth Leadership Committee members who worked on the Goal Chart were Jon and Dan Egolf, Melissa Paulsen, Jeff Jacobsma, Jon Robbins, Autumn Schumacher, and Deana West. Charles and Alice Paulsen installed the sign. The \$2.5 million is only shown for how we hope the chart will look by 2008.



Del Paulsen  
1925—2007

### *Founder and History of CROPS*

**T**he inspiration for CROPS came from Ardella Paulsen, North Bend Township Trustee. At age 80, and going into her eighteenth year of service as township trustee, Ardella concluded that more could be done if small groups of people were mobilized, trained and empowered to make a difference in rural America. CROPS was organized as a nonprofit, 501(c) 3 organization in 2004. Created exclusively for charitable

and educational purposes, CROPS provides resource development assistance to rural nonprofit organizations, churches, schools, and government agencies so they can expand and enhance services to underserved people in their communities. To accomplish its purpose, CROPS 1) facilitates community collaboration, 2) provides training and educational workshops to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations, 3) lends technical support to nonprofit organizations,

4) writes grant proposals, and 5) assumes fiduciary and management responsibilities for community projects that align with its mission. The San Pierre Revitalization Project is the first major project for CROPS, and Del Paulsen was instrumental in getting it started. Although she passed away on January 13th, her vision and legacy continues, and can be supported through tax deductible contributions to CROPS. Memorial gifts for others are welcomed as well.

... Railroad Township Trustee, Katherine Chaffins, volunteered to help lead the project.

### *San Pierre Revitalization Committee Formed*

**I**n November, CROPS began the process of restructuring the organization to improve communications with the residents of San Pierre. Shortly following the election, Railroad Township Trustee, Katherine Chaffins, volunteered to help lead the project. At a strategic planning meeting held on January 20th a formal organizational restructuring took place

with the assistance of two outside consultants provided by the Indiana Youth Institute through a capacity building grant. Two new committees were added to assist CROPS in project leadership: the San Pierre Revitalization Project Committee (SPRC) and the San Pierre Revitalization Strategic Planning Committee (SPRSPC). Members of SPRC are Tom

Torsell (Chair), Katherine Chaffins, Dick Kingman, and Dan Egolf. Members of the SPRSPC will include CROPS Board of Directors, the Youth Leadership Committee, SPRC, and additional members representing the fire department, churches, Holy Cross and other community groups.

### *CROPS Expands its Board of Directors*

**A**s the result of a capacity building grant from the Indiana Youth Institute (IYI) and recommendations made by IYI consultants on November 27th, CROPS began the process of expanding its Board of Directors to include individuals with expertise in areas where it had gaps, such as youth

representation, business management experience, and San Pierre residency. Individuals who were invited and accepted to serve on the Board of Directors were Autumn Schumacher, Jon Robbins, and Jon Egolf (youth), Marcy Eckhoff-Wagner (business management), and Tom Torsell (San Pierre resident). Founding Board Members of CROPS include

Tom Howard (youth coach), Dixie Sefchek (teacher), and Angelique Milo (professional artist). Marcy Eckhoff-Wagner will assume financial management responsibilities for CROPS. Wagner attended a financial/technology management training session in Indianapolis in November which was funded also by IYI.



## *CROPS Executive Director*

**B**everly Santicola, Executive Director of CROPS, is a national training consultant with expertise in grant writing, nonprofit leadership, project management, and community development. Since 2001 she has trained more than 1,500 nonprofit organizations throughout the United States, generated in excess of \$8 million in grant awards, and has earned a reputation for being one of the nation's best trainers in the field of grant writing and fund development

strategies. As Executive Director of a nonprofit organization between 1989 and 2001, Santicola led numerous projects that won state and national awards for excellence, including the AFL-CIO National Labor—Management Award, Work in America—Search for Excellence Award, Best Practices Award from U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, and Governor's Award for Team Excellence. Beverly is a Certified Federal Grants Administrator, as well as a federal grants reviewer.

She has over 25 years of experience in working with the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services, as well as experience with the National Centers for Disease Control and Office of Minority Health. Beverly is a member of the American Association of Grant Professionals, Greater Houston Grant Writers Network, and Texas Nonprofits. For the past two years, Santicola has donated cash and professional services to the San Pierre Project valued at more than \$50,000.



*Beverly Santicola, Executive Director of CROPS*

## *Torsell and Kingman to Serve as Project Leaders*

**I**n December, 2006 CROPS recruited Tom Torsell, a current resident of San Pierre, and Dick Kingman, a former resident of San Pierre, to serve as leaders of the San Pierre Revitalization Project Committee. Torsell will also serve on the Board of Directors for CROPS to help improve communications between the

local residents of San Pierre and project committees. Dick Kingman volunteered to serve as the Youth Director to work with the youth on service learning projects. In his first meeting with the Youth Leadership Committee on Sunday January 28th, Kingman taught youth the process involved in planning, designing, and procuring contractors and materials

to construct the full basketball court, skate plaza, and tennis courts. While the youth have approximately \$7,500 in grants dedicated to these projects, the total costs are expected to be far more. Youth Leadership Committee members will need help in leveraging other funds from supplier discounts, donations, grants, and fundraising activities.

**Dick Kingman will serve as Youth Director to work with the youth on service learning projects.**

## *Volunteerism by Young and "Young at Heart"*

**Y**outh Leadership members that volunteered time in 2006 were Dan and Jon Egolf, Drew and Melissa Paulsen, Kenny Schatte, Alex and Zack Zerbee, Jeff Jacobsma, Ben and Nathan Slawnikowski, Jon Robbins, Autumn and Kacie Schumacher, Evan and Deana West. The youth participated in

meetings, planned activities, prioritized projects, wrote letters of support, made public presentations, and created a goal chart. The "young at heart" volunteers who assisted with the pavilion enclosure, funded by REMC were Russ Dulin, Ed & Albert Eckert, Richard Holtz, Dennis Peck, Tom Yost, Bob and David Paulsen. Many volunteers assisted

with the town clean-up day including the Independent Bikers Foundation from Knox who painted the fencing. Volunteer time often counts as "matching funds" for grants so it is important that CROPS be advised of all volunteer hours. If you have volunteered time over the past year please let us know so we can count and recognize your efforts.



*Youth Volunteers—  
Deana, Jon, Autumn, Jeff*



“Welcome to” San Pierre Signs

### Starke County Community Foundation Grant

In 2006 CROPS received a grant from the Starke County Community Foundation (SCCF) in the amount of \$2,200 to purchase two “Welcome To San Pierre” signs. As part of the grant agreement CROPS was required to use other donations in the amount of nearly \$2,500 to cover the entire cost of the 4’ x 8’ signs. The signs were in-

stalled in the summer, and local volunteers like Pastor Richard Holtz and Tommy Anast have helped with the mowing and landscaping around the signs. In December, CROPS applied for and received another grant in the amount of \$2,500 from SCCF to construct a full basketball court and repair the tennis courts in the park. These projects will be entirely directed by the Youth

Leadership Committee with the help of Dick Kingman and other members of the San Pierre Project Committee. Volunteers who donated time on the San Pierre Welcome sign project were Mary Daly, Peggy Daly, Jerry Hill, Sherry Paulsen, Angelique Milo, Max Milo, and Ardella Paulsen. Jerry Hill and Sherry Paulsen were responsible for getting INDOT’s approval.

Once the planning grant is awarded, a series of town meetings will be scheduled to get resident input.

### ISTS Selected to Help Residents With Revitalization Plan

Recently, the Starke County Commissioners appointed Tom Torsell, Mark MacKillop, Kent Danford, Sherry Paulsen, Autumn Schumacher, and Beverly Santicola to assist in the selection of project consultants for a \$50,000 planning grant to be submitted in 2007. The \$50,000 planning grant will be developed by the Kankakee-Iroquois Regional

Planning Commission (KIRPC) on behalf of CROPS and the Starke County Commissioners. Three consulting firms submitted proposals for the job and were rated on factors such as experience, past performance, familiarity with small town revitalization, ability to assess local needs, and overall approach. The Institute for Small Town Studies ranked highest among all three groups due to its vast experience and

past performance in working with other small towns like San Pierre. More information about the Institute for Small Town Studies can be found on their website at [www.ists.org](http://www.ists.org) which includes preliminary sketches of the future San Pierre developed and donated last summer. Once the planning grant is awarded, a series of town meetings will be scheduled to get resident input.

### Sidewalks, Streetlights, ... and a Skate Plaza

Last year, CROPS applied for a grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) in the amount of \$647,000 for sidewalks, streetlights, bike paths, walking trails, landscaping, and a skate plaza, but unfortunately the project was not selected for funding. For this pro-

ject we generated more than \$20,000 in required matching funds from individuals who deeply care about San Pierre, plus \$300,000 in in-kind contributions from Railroad Township and the San Pierre Lions Club. In a letter from INDOT received in July, CROPS was encouraged to reapply in 2007. With more matching

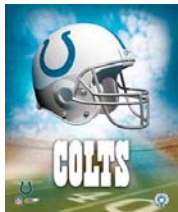
funds in hand, as well as some visible evidence of progress and local support, our chances of getting funded in 2007 will be much improved. CROPS’ 2007 proposal to INDOT will be developed in collaboration with the San Pierre Revitalization Project Committee, Strategic Planning Committee and the residents of San Pierre.



Youth Leaders—  
Dan, Nathan, & Jon

### Two Indianapolis Colts Grants to Kacie, Autumn & CROPS

**I**n support of the community initiative to revitalize San Pierre, Kacie and Autumn Schumacher recently applied for and received two of the 2006 Colts Student All Star Grants and Junior Quarterback Grants. The grants in the amount of \$1300 will be used by the Youth Leadership Committee to landscape around the new “Welcome to San Pierre” signs, construct a full basketball court, and repair the tennis courts. This fall, as a part of a league-wide initiative by the NFL to



encourage fans to “Join The Team” and give back to their communities, the Colts introduced the 2006 Colts Student All Star and Jr. Community Quarterback Grant Programs. Through these programs, the Colts, Grange Insurance and NFL Charities (NFLC) are providing funds for student-initiated community programs or projects. “Community service is a vital part of the Indianapolis Colts organization,” said Nicole Duncan, Colts Director of Community Relations. “Every year our players, coaches, and staff donate their time and resources to communities

throughout Indiana. We want to encourage students to carry on this tradition by providing them with resources to implement a service project in their area.” “Grange Insurance is excited to team with the Indianapolis Colts...”, said Grange President and CEO Phil Urban. “As an organization, we encourage our associates to get involved with their communities in various ways, including volunteering on the boards of nonprofit service organizations. Through these programs young people can learn early in life that it's important to be involved and that individuals can make a difference.”



### Pay It Forward: Good Stewardship

**B**eginning with \$100 a few years back, Dawn Robbins and Margie Gehrke’s good stewardship helped grow the San Pierre Athletics fund to nearly \$4,000. In November, Robbins and Gehrke closed the bank account—as

there are no longer any athletic teams in San Pierre. The amount of money left in the account was donated entirely to CROPS for the San Pierre project. CROPS plans to “pay it forward” and keep the good stewardship going by using the money as matching funds toward the basketball and

tennis court projects. While the donation will increase the project value by 200%, the biggest increase will come through learning opportunities as the youth plan, design, and manage the construction of the projects.



### Tannehill Launches San Pierre Oral History Project

**S**he lives in San Francisco, is a full-time student in the last semester of a B.A. program at Mills College in Oakland, freelances for a living, and still makes time to volunteer for the San Pierre Revitalization Project. Sarah Tannehill, daugh-

ter of Mary and John, vividly remembers the people, places, and unique characteristics of San Pierre as it was during her childhood there in the 1950s and early '60s. When she recounts a story from those days, the reader feels transported back through time. In July 2006, Sarah volunteered

her help to CROPS in gathering the oral histories of San Pierre residents, past and present. She is also involved in documentation of the revitalization project. Presently, Jeanette Wobith, Ed Kesl, Del Paulsen, and Dick Kingman have contributed their stories to tape. In 2007, Sarah will train the youth in San Pierre to conduct the interviews and write the stories that will culminate in a book. If you would like to tell your stories in a 90-minute interview format, please e-mail or call CROPS to get on the schedule for 2007.



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San Pierre, Indiana  
Eliza Street looking West from US 421



**Join Others Who Care About the  
Future of San Pierre**

**Donate Today By Sending a Check or Pledge to  
CROPS' San Pierre Revitalization Project**

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State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You to San Pierre Revitalization Project Donors**

The following individuals and foundations helped CROPS raise more than \$25,000 in 2006. Detailed accounting reports will be available in the first quarter of 2007. All donors will automatically receive a copy. Others may request copies by contacting CROPS.

Arndt, Jay & Barb  
Bard, Elvira  
Boisvert Memorial  
Bluhm, Patricia  
Campbell, LeRoy & Helen  
Cervenka, John & Sophie  
Cole, Julie  
Daly, Mary  
Daly, Peggy  
Eckert, Pete  
Eckert, Anne & Ken  
Eckert, Erna  
Eligneburg Memorial  
Germann, Dan & Irma  
Gilmore, Chase  
Goetz, Bud  
Guffrea, Mildred  
Gundlach, Helen  
Hankey, Ruth

Healy, Rich & Gayle  
Hickner, Doris  
Holtz, Richard  
Howard, Tom & Ann  
Jelinek, Judy & Hank  
Jones, Germaine  
Jones, Monys  
Kalinke, Betty  
Kennedy, Jean  
Kingman, Richard  
Litschgi, Barbara  
Livett, Janet  
McCullah, Marilyn  
Milo, Max & Angel  
Moser, Edna  
Oliver, Jim & Rita  
Paulsen, Ardella  
Pixey, Larry & Margie  
REMC

Rinehart, Dona  
Robbins, Dawn  
San Pierre Athletics  
Santicola, Bev & Marc  
Scamerhorn, Steve  
Scholz, Raymond  
Scholz, Lorene  
Schrombeck, Jeff & Marla  
Smisek, Elaine & Laddie  
Sonju, Virginia  
SCCF  
Stellwagen, Gale  
Sullivan, Tom & Virginia  
Switt, David  
Tannehill, Mary Helen  
Theis, Clifford  
Vanecek, Edna  
Wobith, Jeannette G.  
Zimmerman, Bruce & Karen