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**Youth Leaders**

- Aerika West
- Dan Egolf
- Deana West
- Evan West
- Jeff Jacobsma
- Jon Egolf
- Jon Robbins

*National Model for Youth-Led Rural Revitalization*

**W**hen we first began the project to revitalize San Pierre, we knew we had to come up with something unique and creative in order to win more grants. After all, we would be competing with every other rural community in the United States for money. First we thought if we could get the youth involved, that would be cool. Then we thought if we could create a national model for “youth-led rural revitalization” we might just have something. Not knowing exactly how we would make it happen, CROPS began writing proposals vaguely describing our plan to create a “model program that could be replicated to revitalize Rural America.” One by one, grants started coming in from the Starke County Community Foundation, Kankakee Valley REMC, San Pierre Athletics, Indianapolis Colts, Indiana Youth Institute, NIPSCO, Ball Brothers Foundation, Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and United States Department

of Human Services. To date a total of \$246,233 has been awarded in grants for planning, capacity building, and community revitalization projects.

The real work in San Pierre began in the summer of 2007 when we were able to recruit 8 young athletes from the International Boxing Club of Toledo, Ohio and Coach Harry Cummins to team up with San Pierre youth on various service learning projects, including transforming the home of the San Pierre Lions Club as shown below.



Little did we know at the time when these young men and women were down on their knees pulling weeds from the tennis courts and full of green paint from head to toe, that we were in the process of creating our

“national model program.” Now we have it: CROPS’ model works similarly to Habitat for Humanity. But instead of adult volunteers helping economically disadvantaged families build homes, we recruit inner city youth volunteers to work with local youth leaders to rebuild their hometown. And we’ve already made national news with an article featured in Planetizen, a website with 26,000 daily readers, which can be seen on CROPS website at [www.ruralgrants.org](http://www.ruralgrants.org). This summer, IBC plans a return to San Pierre during the weeks of June 28—July 5 and July 19—July 27. It’s an opportunity for both groups of youth to foster new friendships, learn new things, and make a big difference in their world. This year we hope to help cover IBC expenses with tax deductible donations to the International Boxing Club. Volunteers to work and prepare lunch can contact Tom Torsell or Kay Chaffins.



CROPS' Youth Director

### Angelique Milo Trains Youth in Film Production

In October, CROPS received a grant from the Ball Brothers Foundation to produce a video documentary of how to implement a youth-led rural development project so that it could be replicated in other communities in Indiana. As a result of the grant, Angelique Milo stepped down from her Board of Directors' position with CROPS to assume the role of Youth Director where she has been training youth leaders in a variety of new leadership

roles. Through her mentorship and art direction, youth are learning commercial painting, landscape design, photography, film production, audio recording, and book publishing. Two additional grants from the Indiana Youth Institute and US Department of Health and Human Services - Administration for Children and Families allowed CROPS to buy computers and programs so that youth could gain cross-platform knowledge by using Apple Macintosh com-

puter programs, operating systems, and other computer software. With iMac's integrated iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, iWeb, iTunes, GarageBand, and a built-in iSight camera included, students can create a photo book, make a movie, build a blog, make a podcast, compose a song, conduct online video interviews, etc. The digital equipment, editing software, and media training will be used to its full extent when creating the San Pierre Revitalization video documentary.



### Rural Health Network Planning Grant

It's taken two years, two tries and too many hours of grant writing, but CROPS finally landed a rural health network planning grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services - Health Resources & Services Administration. The grant of \$84,695 to develop the Rural Health Network will work to improve the quality of essential

health care services. The funds will specifically help address issues common in rural areas, including low health insurance rates and access to quality medical care that includes the latest medical technology and expertise. Senator Evan Bayh said in a press release, "This grant will help strengthen the medical care, technology and expertise that is available for Hoosiers in San Pi-

erre and the surrounding area." The initial partners in the Network are CROPS, Railroad Township Trustee, Holm Medical Clinic, Starke County Memorial Hospital, HealthLink, Indiana University-South Bend School of Nursing and the Health Professions, and the Indiana State Department of Health. More partners will be added as the planning grant unfolds.

### Comprehensive Master Plan for San Pierre

It's not her nature to take no for an answer and when someone says "NO" to San Pierre she asks "WHY?" After attending a training course to become a Certified Grants Administrator, Beverly Santicola learned about Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) that can amount to \$500,000. When asking if we

could apply, she was told San Pierre was not eligible. When she asked WHY, they said the census data says San Pierre is not poor enough. Not believing that to be true she asked CROPS to pay for an income study—which resulted in San Pierre's eligibility to apply for a CDBG planning grant. With the help of the Kankakee Iroquois Regional Planning Commission

and Starke County Commissioners the CDBG grant from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs was received and Robert Dorgan of the Institute for Small Town Studies (ISTS) was selected to develop a Master Plan involving surveys, Town Meetings, research & planning. See the first draft of the plan at [www.ists.org](http://www.ists.org), watch for updates.



CROPS Executive Director

## Grant Awards—Keep Them Coming

Several grant awards were received in 2007 for the San Pierre Revitalization Project including one for \$2,500 from the Kankakee Valley REMC for the basketball/tennis courts; \$300 from NIPSCO for landscaping at the Lions Club; \$3,100 from the Starke County Community Foundation for ceiling tiles at the Lions Club; \$48,600 from OCRA for a comprehensive plan; \$22,500 from Ball Brothers Foundation to produce a video documentary; \$23,527 and

\$48,415 respectively from the Indiana Youth Institute and US Department of Health and Human Services for building the capacity of CROPS; and \$84,695 from HRSA to develop a rural health network plan. Three grants from 2006 will be used to resurface the basketball/ tennis court area when enough funding is obtained to complete the job. These are from the Indianapolis Colts in the amount of \$1,000; Starke County Community Foundation in the amount of \$2,500; and San Pierre Athletics in the

amount of \$3,896. The total cost of the project is approximately \$28,000 so an additional \$20,000 must be raised. While a grant proposal for this project is pending with USDA, individual donor gifts of \$10,000 or more will receive naming rights. CROPS also plans to submit a grant to INDOT in 2008 for trails, landscaping, sidewalks, streetlights, and a skate plaza. Planners are: Jon & Dan Egolf, Zack & Adam Genis, John Fisher, Evan West, Nathan Slawnikowski, and Mathew Milo & Nathan Richie.



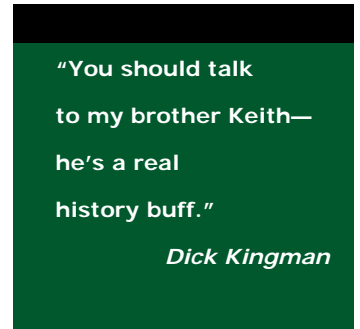
*Amanda Leek Presents Grant from Kankakee Valley REMC*

## Kingman Recruits Kingman for History Project

Dick Kingman volunteered to help CROPS in 2006 by serving on the San Pierre Revitalization Committee representing the San Pierre Alumni Association. Then when he learned of the Oral History Project being coordinated by Sarah Tannehill, he said “you should talk to my brother,

Keith—he is a real history buff.” Before long we had Keith on board volunteering to help conduct video and oral histories. Now we have Sarah Tannehill in California and Keith Kingman in Texas collecting stories from people who once lived in San Pierre as well as some who live there now. Keith’s most recent interviews were in Texas with

Kenneth Alberding and Dona Reinhart. More interviews are scheduled around the San Pierre Alumni Banquet. Video stories, audio recordings and photographs will be available on CROPS’ website as the project evolves. Any one who has photos to share or stories to tell, please contact Keith or Sarah: kkingman@aol.com and sarita2@earthlink.net.



**“You should talk to my brother Keith—he’s a real history buff.”**

*Dick Kingman*

## Colts Landscape Project Completed in Fall

Making the Indianapolis Colts and residents of San Pierre proud was the primary goal for CROPS’ Youth Leaders this fall. Fueled by a \$300 grant authored by San Pierre’s very own Kacie Schumacher and community donations that equaled that

amount or more, nine local youth volunteers from San Pierre and North Judson spent several hours planting bulbs, perennials, and shrubs around the San Pierre Welcome Signs on US 421 and SR 10. Angelique Milo worked with Kacie earlier in the year to teach her how to research plants, determine growing heights and widths, and create a natural de-

sign that would seem as if it were meant to be the grand entrance to an environmentally friendly and wonderful place. Starke County youth volunteers that helped with the project were: Jennifer Floyd, Jeff Jacobsma, Aerika, Deana & Evan West, Sara Scutchfield, Heather Schatte, Gavin & Kacie Schumacher, and Nathalee Milo.



**Thank you Indianapolis Colts!**



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**COMPREHENSIVE MASTERPLAN 2008**

Institute for Small Town Studies—[www.ists.org](http://www.ists.org)

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

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**San Pierre Revitalization Project Donors—Thank You!**

The following individuals, foundations, organizations, and government agencies helped CROPS raise more than \$250,000 in grants, donations and pledges over the past 3 years. Please advise CROPS of any unintentional omissions on this list. Certified Public Accountants from The Bair Group in Ft. Wayne, Indiana assisted CROPS in preparing its 2007 federal tax return. Financial reports are posted at [www.ruralgrants.org](http://www.ruralgrants.org).

Alberding, Wayne & Marilyn  
Amm, Bernita  
Arndt, Jay & Barb  
Art Circle Institute  
Bailey, Connie & Hank  
Ball Brothers Foundation  
Bard, Elvira  
Bickel, Randy & Buggs  
Bluhm, Patricia  
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Campbell, LeRoy & Helen  
Capouch, Don & Shirley  
Cervenka, John & Sophie  
Cervenka, Isabelle & William  
Chesak, Mary & David  
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Eckert, Pete  
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Good, Mary Margaret  
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Guffrea, Mildred  
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Hankey, Ruth  
Healy, Rich & Gayle  
Hickner, Doris  
Holtz, Richard  
Howard, Thomas & Ann  
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Indiana Youth Institute  
Indianapolis Colts  
Jelinek, Judy & Hank  
Jones, Germaine  
Jones, Monys  
Kalinke, Betty  
Kankakee Valley REMC  
Kennedy, Jean  
Kingman, Richard  
Kneisler, Catherine  
Komarek, Ron & Judy  
Kuchenburg, Cindy & Gary  
Lashley, Delores  
Litschgi, Barbara  
Livett, Janet  
Machamer, Deb & Pat

McCarty, Lillian  
McCullah, Marilyn  
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Memorial, Bob Eligneburg  
Memorial, Leo Boisvert  
Memorial, Mary & Don Good  
Memorial, Thomas Spenner  
Milo, Mark & Joy  
Milo, Max & Angelique  
Milo, Mike  
Milo, Mike & Dolly  
Moser, Edna  
NIPSCO  
Oliver, Jim & Rita  
Paulsen, Ardella  
Paulsen, Skip  
Pixey, Larry & Margie  
Potempa, Chet & Peg  
Prchlik Jean  
Rausch, Barb & Steve  
Rinehart, Dona  
Robbins, Dawn  
Sakal, Larry  
San Pierre Athletics  
Santicola, April & Butch  
Santicola, Beverly & Marc

Scamerhorn, Steve  
Scholz, Lorene  
Scholz, Raymond  
Schrombeck, Jeffrey & Marla  
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Theis, Clifford & Liz  
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Williams, Louise  
Wobith, Jeannette G.  
Zimmerman, Bruce & Karen