



Thank You Washington County Riverboat Foundation!
The WCRF awarded 52 grants totaling \$1,365,787 in its Fall Grant Cycle. In December, we attended a lovely evening at the Riverside Casino and Golf Resort Events Center and were thrilled to be one of the recipient organizations!

Photo: WCRF Board Member Michele Blum and Maryfrances.

The Des Moines Register & The Gannett Foundation -

The Des Moines Register remains the flagship of our program day. Did you know they deliver 2 copies of the paper to IRIS each day at no cost? In January, our friends at The Register demonstrated that commitment to IRIS once again through a Gannett Foundation grant. Our thanks to The Register and the Gannett Foundation.



IRIS on Capitol Hill

We attended 3 events at the Iowa Statehouse in March – Volunteer Awareness Day, Voices of IRIS Day and the IDB Legislative Breakfast.

Photo: Rep. Lundby, Rob Davis, Rep. Oldson, Maryfrances, Mary Ann Nielsen, Dennis Crabtree, Rep. Anderson, Julie Gold, Nancy Crowfoot, Jerry Wickersham, Deb Caldbeck, Kathy Foster-Middleton, Patty Daniels, Rep. Forbes, Sally Vander Linden, Rep. Vander Linden.



Photo 1: Sen. Chris Brase & Maryfrances. Photo 2: Board Chair Mary Ann Nielsen & Rep. John Forbes. Photo 3: Directors Jim Obradovich & Dennis Crabtree. Photo 4: Listener Deb Caldbeck & Rep. Dean Fisher.

Mason City Studio Moves -

KCMR studios moved their entire operation to a new location in Mason City. Moving a radio station can be mighty complicated and it did halt readings of the Globe Gazette for a short time. Congratulations to Station Manager Bill Schickel on your great new space. Our thanks to everyone who helped IRIS get back on the air – and thanks to our Mason City area listeners for your understanding and patience during the move.

Do You Use Email?

If you have an email address, please let us know. You can help us keep printing costs down by joining our mailing list. You'll get our electronic newsletter, The Front Page, right in your inbox – and keep up to date with IRIS news and events. This newsletter is also available on our website. Call our office at 243-6833 with your email address.

New Des Moines Listeners -

In March, IRIS presented information about our services to residents who live at East View Manor, Oak Park Plaza, South View Manor, Highland Park Plaza and Royal View Manor. What a wonderful opportunity to visit with some of our current listeners!

Through those visits, we enrolled 7 new IRIS listeners – and set them up with all IRIS services and equipment at no cost to them! Welcome to IRIS!



Prairie Meadows Kicks Off our Automation Upgrade!

IRIS received a \$5,000 grant from the Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino toward the cost of upgrading the automation equipment at our Des Moines studios. This funding is 20% of the amount needed. A Great Start!

Back row: Loretta Sieman, Dr. Andy McGuire. Front row: Jerry Wickersham, Maryfrances, See Rodari, Dennis Crabtree.

IRIS in Sioux City -

We're so excited to announce our new partnership with the Sioux City Lions! Last month at the KWI studios, they presented IRIS with \$3,500 to purchase and install new equipment there. This will enable us to record our Sioux City Journal readings to make them available on the internet and as podcasts. Thank you Sioux City Lions!

Photo: Maryfrances, Lions Tim Jacobs and Paula Damon.



New Facility in Fort Dodge -

In February, Friendship Haven moved to a stunning new building. Our long history in Fort Dodge has always included the Janvrin family. Jim served on our board and Dorothy listened to IRIS for years. Contributions to IRIS in Dorothy's memory purchased a custom plaque that marks our beautiful new studios there.

Photo: Dorothy and Jim's daughter Karrey Lindeberg.

Take IRIS With You!

You can listen to IRIS on your computer, smartphone, iPhone or tablet. The Listen Now page iowaradioreading.org offers a live stream and archived podcasts of your favorite sections of the Des Moines Register.

IRIS is also available on these FREE apps - search for Iowa Radio Reading Service.



iTunes Radio



tunein Radio



iBlink Radio

Audio Description

Our Audio Description program continues to grow! In recent months, we've provided this service at the Nutcracker and Cinderella ballets by Ballet Des Moines. We described One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, White Christmas, Les Miserables and Porgy and Bess.

Soon, we will offer description for Tallgrass Theater productions as well. Our thanks to the DM Performing Arts Civic Center, DM Community Playhouse and Ballet Des Moines for helping IRIS deliver equal access to the arts!

Board of Directors Update -

The IRIS Board of Directors said goodbye to two of our long-term members. Patrick McNulty has been involved since – well, forever. He has served IRIS as a reader, attorney, director and volunteer for years and years. Mollie Cooney stepped off the IRIS Board to hone her skills as a new Grandma! Our thanks to Patrick and Mollie!

Norma Boge and Jim Obradovich joined the Board this year. We'll provide more information about Jim and Norma in our next newsletter. Welcome Jim and Norma!

The Board received a capacity-building grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. Thanks to the grant, we are engaged in a strategic planning and board development process. Capacity-building is critical for nonprofits like ours and we are working together to build a strong and healthy future for IRIS. Our thanks to the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines for making this possible.

IRIS Delivers Equal ACCESS to Information



lowaradioreading.org

515.243.6833

1.877.404.4747

Board of Directors:
Mary Ann Nielsen, Chair
Julie Gold, Vice-Chair
See Rodari, Treasurer
Catherine Witte, Secretary
Gordon Allen
Norma Boge

Becky Cox
Dennis Crabtree
Rob Davis
Dr. Jim Feld
Susan Kimelman
Jim Obradovich
Gina Rooney

Ron Rosenblatt
Bonnie Whitson
Jerry Wickersham
Staff:
Jim Boyd
Maryfrances Evans
Brenna Ryan

YOUR 24-hour Radio Reading Service!

Iowa Radio Reading Information Service For the Blind and Print Handicapped, Inc.



IRIS Newsletter 1st Quarter 2014 – Volume 22, Issue 1

1989 - 2014

IRIS Marks our 25th Anniversary!

In 1973, volunteers read the Des Moines Register aloud for the first time. The service was a part of the Iowa Department for the Blind and the signal was limited to about 100 listeners in the Des Moines area. In 1986, budget issues threatened to silence the service and the volunteer readers swung into action!

They faced plenty of challenges from funding to logistics, yet they conquered each one until the Iowa Radio Reading Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped was born. In late August of 1989, the first Voices of IRIS were on the air!

This year, we celebrate that first independent broadcast in 1989. We've grown to serve our 24/7 signal to over 3,000 listeners statewide. We've grown to employ two paid staff and seven reading locations. We've grown to provide internet streaming, podcasts and mobile device access. We've grown to provide Audio Description for blind patrons at theater performances and community events.

Through it all, we've held fast to the two most important visions of our founders. First, all IRIS services and equipment are still provided at no cost to our listeners. Second, we are an organization of volunteers. From our Board of Directors to the voices you hear each day, the contributions of over 500 volunteers remain the power and soul of IRIS. It simply does not happen without them.

We ask two things of YOU:

Share Your Story!

We're compiling a History of IRIS. Take a minute to write or call to tell us what IRIS means to you. Whether you are a listener, volunteer or family member, we want to know a bit more about you and the ways in which IRIS fits into your lives.

Tell your friends about IRIS! Our greatest obstacle is awareness about our services. Letting the people in your life know about IRIS will help us be there for new listeners and find folks who might like to volunteer.

If you use a cable or satellite TV service, tell your provider you want them to provide IRIS on their basic channel lineup. We're working hard to get this done on our end and your comments to your providers will help us demonstrate a need.

Celebrate With Us!

We are scheduling a number of celebrations across the state – culminating with a gala in September. Transportation can be arranged for you – we'd love to see you!

Thursday, August 21 – 4 to 6pm – IRIS Studios: Des Moines Ice Cream Social!

Our annual celebration of our amazing volunteers!

Thursday, September 4th: Silver Anniversary Gala!

Plans are underway to celebrate IRIS in style! More details to come.