

LEADERSHIP NETWORK

WWW.DMLEADERSHIPNETWORK.ORG

President

JIM HANSEN

Russell Construction Company
331-4440

•

Executive VP Membership

RANDY KNUDTSON

Iowa Realty
778-4905

•

First Vice President

DENNIS SENSENBRENNER

Terracon Consultants
244-3184

•

Second Vice President

DAVID LETO

Palmer Group
225-7000

•

Past President

JOHN IRVING

Baker Electric, Inc.
288-6774

•

Treasurer

MARLENA BANDURSKI

The Greater Des Moines
Partnership
286-4953

•

Members-at-Large

DEBRA PATTERSON

City State Bank
981-1384

MARY ANN NIELSEN

AIB College of Business
697-5938

•

Administrative

MARGARET JAWORSKI

331-1861

Leadership Network Luncheon Meeting

Thursday, December 20, 2007

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

Embassy Club

801 Grand Avenue, 40th Floor

Menu: Assorted Buffet

Cost: \$20

RSVP: www.dmlleadershipnetwork.org

Margaret at 331-1861 by Tuesday, December 18

ROB DAVIS OF IRIS IS OUR DECEMBER SPEAKER

Our speaker in December is Rob Davis, the Executive Director of the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped, Inc. (IRIS) – a position he has held since 2002. Prior to coming to IRIS, Rob owned and operated a video production company. If you're a long-time viewer of KCCI-TV, you'll remember Rob when he worked there as a reporter, assignment editor and managing editor or you may also recognize his voice from WOI Public Radio. Rob lives in Urbandale with his wife, Pat Boddy. They have a grown daughter and a son in college.

IRIS, the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped, provides news and information to the print impaired over special radio frequencies known as subcarrier audio. The service offers a 24 hour schedule of publications, ranging from The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, The Des Moines Register and many others. The publications are read by volunteers in New York, St. Paul MN, Des Moines and other communities throughout Iowa. Special pre-tuned receivers are offered free of charge to those who qualify. IRIS has several thousand listeners in Iowa, but a more specific number is not available since the service is available to multiple listeners through care centers, hospitals etc. IRIS has a two person staff and around 300 volunteers statewide. It is funded by grants and donations.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

December, the holidays, what do I say? This is the time of year we wrestle with "How much?" How much do we spend on presents for family and friends? How much will we spend for party clothes? How much cash and coin will we have to give to the Bell Ringers? --or when we are hurried do we duck out the other door? We've all been there and will be there again next year. This also, is the time of year when many of us donate to the charities we champion. I believe that the extra effort we make to see that those in need are cared for is what brings that extra special warmth in our hearts.

This month's speaker is Rob Davis, the Executive Director of the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped, Inc. IRIS provides news and information to the print impaired over special radio frequencies known as subcarrier audio. Special pre-tuned receivers are offered free of charge to those who qualify. IRIS has a two person staff and around 300 volunteers statewide. It is funded by grants and donations.

There is one more item I would like to share with you. You may have received this take of "The Night Before Christmas" by e-mail as it seems to circulate every year. The following poem was written by Corporal James M. Schmidt and published in Leatherneck magazine in December, 1991. Its title "Merry Christmas, My Friend" is just as fitting today as it was 16 years ago. To all of you, Merry Christmas my friends.

Sincerely,
Jim Hansen

MERRY CHRISTMAS, MY FRIEND

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
In a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney, with presents to give
and to see just who in this home did live.

As I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand.
On the wall hung pictures of a far distant land.

With medals and badges, awards of all kind,
a sobering thought soon came to my mind.
For this house was different, unlike any I'd seen.
This was the home of a U.S. Marine.

I'd heard stories about them, I had to see more,
so I walked down the hall and pushed open the door.
and there he lay sleeping, silent, alone,
Curled up on the floor in his one-bedroom home.

He seemed so gentle, his face so serene,
Not how I pictured a U.S. Marine.
Was this the hero, of whom I'd just read?
Curled up in his poncho, a floor for his bed?

His head was clean-shaven, his weathered face tan.
I soon understood, this was more than a man.
For I realized the families that I saw that night,
owed their lives to these men, who were willing to fight.

Soon around the Nation, the children would play,
And grown-ups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom, each month and all year,
because of Marines like this one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone
on a cold Christmas Eve, in a land far from home.
Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye.
I dropped to my knees and I started to cry.

He must have awoken, for I heard a rough voice,
"Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more.
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."

With that he rolled over, drifted off into sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.

I watched him for hours, so silent and still.
I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill.
So I took off my jacket, the one made of red,
and covered this Marine from his toes to his head.
Then I put on his T-shirt of scarlet and gold,
with an eagle, globe and anchor emblazoned so bold.
And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride,
and for one shining moment, I was Marine Corps deep inside.

I didn't want to leave him so quiet in the night,
this guardian of honor so willing to fight.
But half asleep he rolled over, and in a voice clean and pure,
said "Carry on, Santa, it's Christmas Day, all secure."
One look at my watch and I knew he was right,
Merry Christmas my friend, Semper Fi and goodnight.

Copyright circa 1991 by James M. Schmidt (as printed in the December 1991 issue of the USMC magazine, Leatherneck)

BRING PROMOTIONAL ITEMS TO SHARE

Each of you are invited to bring some promotional materials from your respective businesses to go out in gift bags for the upcoming December meeting. Plan to bring 20 to share. A notice will go out if more/less than that amount is needed. Thank you!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Mark your calendar now for all of our programs through the year and plan to be there.

- **December 20:** Robert Davis, Executive Director of Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for Blind and Print Handicapped (IRIS)
- **January 17:** Pat Boddy, Director, Polk County Conservation
- **February 21:** Carmela Brown, Legislative Lobbyist
- **March 20:** David Stille, M.D., Doctors Now
- **April 17:** David Miles, Countryside Renewal Energy
- **May 15:** TBA

GROWING OUR MEMBERSHIP

If you know anyone who might like to join, encourage them to attend one of our meetings to experience the benefits for themselves. They may also contact **Executive VP of Membership**, Randy Knudtson of Iowa Realty 778-4905 to learn more about membership.

SPOTLIGHT MEMBER

- December 2007 - Beth Goedken, Advantage Printing & Promotions
- January 2008 – To be Announced...
- February 2008 - Deb Stearns, Essman Companies

* * *