

# The American Road

Spring 2018



## It's the Year of the Farm

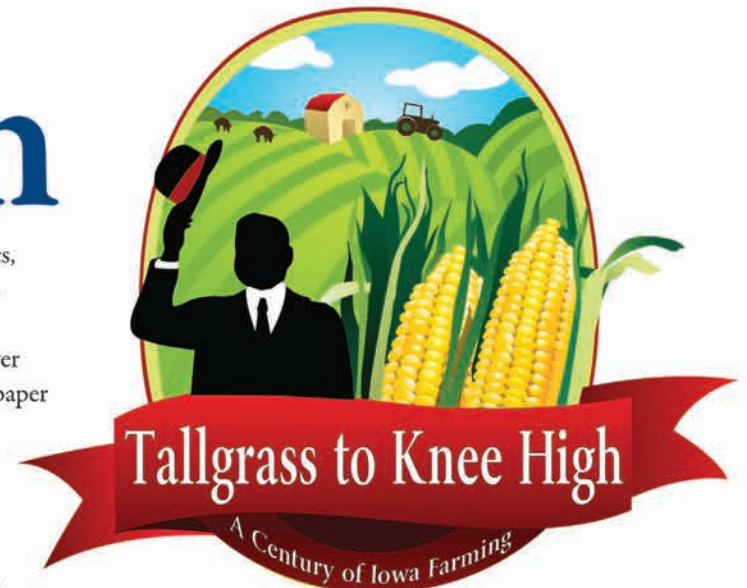
Hopefully you've had an opportunity to see the winter exhibit, *The Legacy Collection: Farm Life in Iowa*, which just closed on March 18. It featured 30 photographs taken by A.M. 'Pete' Wettach from 1925 to 1960, and plowed the way for the next exhibit, *Tallgrass to Knee High: A Century of Iowa Farming*, opening April 14. Members of the Hoover Presidential Foundation will get to see it first at the Foundation's Exhibit Preview Reception, Friday, April 13. Advance registration is required.

*Tallgrass to Knee High*, presented by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, showcases historical highlights of farming in Iowa and the Midwest from 1910 to our near future. The exhibition is divided into sections of 20 years

(scores). Each score is broken down into seven topics, including crops, conservation, livestock, machinery, buildings, people, and farm life. Each topic will be supported by exhibit text that summarizes events over the 20 year span as well as supporting photos, newspaper articles, advertisements, and personal writings.

The topics are repeated throughout each score and give historical highlights that collectively tell the history of a century of farming. Within each score, unique objects from the period will be displayed. The exhibit sponsor, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, is celebrating 100 years of service in Iowa, and will

— Continued on page 2



Presented by:   
**IOWA FARM BUREAU**  
PEOPLE. PROGRESS. PRIDE.

## Bright Star Performances Sell Out Every Show

Back for the third time in as many years, Bright Star Touring Theatre performed a play about the history of the Underground Railroad for area third, fourth, and fifth graders. The productions ran March 19 through 22 with three shows daily – with the Figge Auditorium filled to capacity each time.

“We initially booked six performances with Bright Star,” said Pete Swisher, superintendent of the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

“The Foundation’s marketing mailer went out on a Friday, and by noon Tuesday, we filled every seat and had a waiting list of over 1,000 students!” said Ann Fenner, who scheduled interested school groups for the Hoover Presidential Library-Museum.

With such a great response, the Foundation agreed to fund additional performances, if Bright Star was willing and able. Luckily, their schedule allowed for an additional day and the addition of one extra show per day, doubling to 12 performances overall, each one packed to the aisles. There was no charge for the schools



Players perform *Heroes of the Underground Railroad*, courtesy Bright Star Touring Theatre.

to attend. The performances are 100% donor-funded, drawing from support given to the Library-Museum, National Historic Site, and the Foundation.

The requests kept coming even after the extra performances were added. “We still have 21 schools on a waiting list, representing 1,350 students,” Ann said. “That’s enough for seven more sold out performances!”

— Continued on page 4

## Striking Balance in Stormwater Solutions


It can be difficult at times to visualize what flooding looks like in West Branch or at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, but ask anyone who lives here and they can tell you it does happen. Two creeks meander through the town, with one of those working its way through the park. On any given day, they look to be only a few inches deep, and may even reach points where observing any forward momentum of the water is nearly impossible. And then comes the rain . . .

The tributary which winds through the park is informally referred to as Hoover Creek. Technically it’s an unnamed tributary of the Wapsinonoc Creek. Some flooding has occurred over the years, although most long-time residents will tell you the creek they see today is not like the one they recall from their childhood. It has deepened as a result of the sporadic, fast flowing waters.

In 1995, the National Park Service prepared a Cultural Landscape Report, a management plan instructing staff how to treat the landscape of the park in keeping with its original design intents. This report briefly introduces the

— Continued on page 4

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## President's Message

David Dierks

In January of this year, it was my honor and privilege to accept the position of President, Board of Trustees at the Hoover Presidential Foundation. I first joined the board in May of 2010 at the invitation of a good friend and board member, Charlie Becker. As a history buff, I found the Hoover story fascinating and have greatly enjoyed learning something new about the only Iowa-born U.S. President on every visit.

By serving on the board, I enjoy participating in the planning and preparation the board puts into numerous projects throughout the year. At our last board meeting, we voted to adopt a long-range strategic plan that will likely lead us to our most ambitious goal in over 25 years – a multi-million dollar renovation of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum.

While a lofty, worthwhile goal, it's still years away from fruition. Before we can tackle the work of renovation, we need to ensure we have a strong foundation. The double meaning there is intended. The first phases of the strategic plan include ideas for improving the focus and effectiveness of the Hoover Presidential Foundation and Board of Trustees. We're looking at researching the needs of the Hoover campus, ways to broaden our marketing and increase philanthropic grant income with renewed vigor, and a dozen other factors that lay the groundwork for great things to come.

And no matter which line item we look at in the plan, they all circle back to one common thread. You. Our members, our visitors, our donors. The Foundation's mission is to "... promote and support the Herbert

Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, National Historic Site, and other programs that enhance the understanding of Herbert Hoover as President and humanitarian." We believe Hoover's message is important and worthy for all to see and hear, not just for those in Iowa, but nationwide – even world-wide, as visitors from overseas come to pay tribute to the man who fed them in times of crisis.

I am so proud to play a part in this effort. I often hear first time visitors at the museum exclaim, "I didn't know Hoover did that!" And it's disheartening, because so many people have only heard of the Depression Era President, and they're missing the story of the genius mining engineer, expert organizer, and great humanitarian.

I enjoy retelling the story every chance I get and hope you will join me in supporting our efforts and by sharing Hoover's story with those around you as well.

*Note: David Dierks is semi-retired from the position of Vice President of the University of Iowa Foundation, with over 40 years of service to that organization. Dave volunteers for numerous causes, sits on many boards, and was in the Army national Guard for 28 years, where he was Johnson County Soldier of the Year in 1988. He resides in Iowa City with his wife, Sally, and has three children. ★*

## Year of the Farm

Continued from page 1 —

display the company's digital timeline and memorabilia throughout the exhibit to help tell the story of farming in Iowa.

The voice of farm women will also be carried throughout the people and farm life sections of the exhibit. The 'voice' will be shared through the journals of Clara Steen Skott, Alma Erickson Swanson, Evelyn Birkby's radio program, Down A Country Lane, and the blog, Corn Beans & Kids, by Val Plagge.

In the center of the exhibit there will be an interactive children's activity area. It will have farm toys, a reading station, games, a life sized milking cow, and two digital game stations. Near the end of the exhibit there will be a farmer's market stand offering local farmer's market information and recipes to take home! The recipes will be provided by Iowa Girl Eats, Becky's Mindful Kitchen, and Corn Beans & Kids.

Rounding out the experience will be a video highlighting family farming in Iowa and the future of farming. The exhibit will be open to the public April 14 through October 28. There will be many special programs to

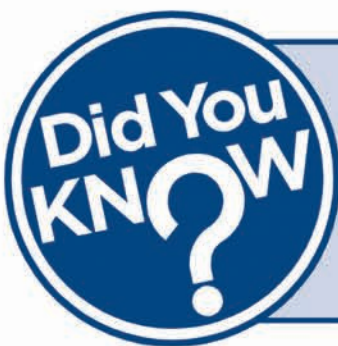


*Evelyn Birkby interviews guests on her KMA radio program, Down a Country Lane, in 1951 in Shenandoah, Iowa. Courtesy of University of Iowa Women's Archives/ Evelyn Birkby Collection*

accompany this exhibit, including canning classes, barn quilt classes, and a farm to table dinner. Keep an eye on our online calendar at [HooverPresidentialFoundation.org](http://HooverPresidentialFoundation.org) for dates and sign up information. ★

Members of Iowa Farm Bureau are invited to view the exhibit free of charge April 14 through Oct. 29.

*Just show your membership card!*



On December 27, 1918 the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation was created during a meeting in Marshalltown. 72 county Farm Bureaus were present. Henry A. Wallace (editor of Wallace's Farmer who went on to become U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Vice President of the United States) said "We regard this movement as one of the most sensible efforts toward an organization of farmers that has yet been made. Those gentlemen who had an active part in launching Farm Bureau clearly have no other desire than to build a farm organization through which the farm sentiment in Iowa can be expressed in an authoritative, level-headed way, and through which the farmers of the state may act collectively to promote their business, educational, and social interests."



# Herbert Hoover: The Man Nobody Knows

Glen Jeansonne is the author of more than 14 books, including *Herbert Hoover: A Life*, and, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, Fighting Quaker*. Jeansonne is a Professor Emeritus at the Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and an award winning researcher versed in 20th century American political history.

By Glen Jeansonne

When the economy sank into the Great Recession in 2008, memories of the Great Depression were resurrected and the name “Herbert Hoover” was dusted off for a new round of scolding. George H. Nash has described Hoover as a political orphan, “too progressive for the conservatives and too conservative for the liberals.”<sup>1</sup> Virtually every Democratic presidential candidate since Franklin D. Roosevelt has equated Hoover with hard times. When people think “Depression” they think “Hoover.” They might as well be listed as synonyms in Roget’s Thesaurus. Presidential polls of historians as late as 2008 ranked him among the worst Presidents and the stereotype cemented in the mind of the general public resembles a cross between Ebenezer Scrooge and the Grinch who stole Christmas.<sup>2</sup> His historical reputation is ensnared in exaggerations, distortions, factual errors, and oversimplifications. He is as much identified with the Great Depression as Isaac Newton is with the Law of Gravity.

Before his presidency, Hoover was one of the most admired Americans in the world, an enormously successful mining engineer, humanitarian and philanthropist, gifted administrator, and a rags-to-riches story. Born in West Branch, Iowa, a Quaker village of about 400 on the cusp of the frontier, he was the first President born west of the Mississippi River. Orphaned at nine, raised by relatives in Iowa and Oregon, he graduated from the first class of Stanford University. At Stanford, he met Lou Henry, one of the first women in America to earn a degree in geological engineering, with whom he enjoyed a companionate marriage. His rise was rapid. His mining assignments took him to the dusty Australian outback and to the far reaches of China, where he and his new bride survived the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.

Hoover entered public service as a humanitarian who fed Belgium and German-occupied northern France, clothed in no more authority than that of a plain American citizen, his impeccable honesty, and his own wits. When America entered the war, he returned to his homeland to serve as Woodrow Wilson’s Food Administrator,



Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover arrives in Greenville, Mississippi to survey the extent of the damage caused by the flood.

coining the slogan, “Food will win the war,” which, in part, it did. Hoover subsequently became possibly the greatest Secretary of Commerce in history, nurturing infant industries such as radio and aviation and becoming the first American face transmitted on television in 1927. Hoover helped rationalize businesses through transmutation of commerce into an engine that helped drive the prosperity of the 1920s. Yet he warned that the economic locomotive could be derailed by reckless speculation in American stocks and foreign bonds, only to be ignored.<sup>3</sup>

In 1927, President Calvin Coolidge tapped Hoover to lead the federal effort to rescue and rehabilitate the Mississippi Valley from the Great Flood, an unprecedented federal activity in a unique natural disaster. Hoover’s unbroken record of success, unselfish temperament, remarkable intelligence, prodigious diligence, and impeccable public and private character led voters to overlook his inexperience in politics in 1928 and overwhelmingly elect him President. In the wake of the Harding Scandals, the last thing Americans wanted was another machine politician.

The Quaker embarked on the Presidency with an agenda of reform before the stock market crash of October 1929. But the nation slid into the most intractable depression in its history. As President, Hoover became the most activist Chief Executive during hard times up to that point in American history, the first to pit the government against the economic cycle. Many of his ideas became integral to the New Deal. It is plausible to argue that hard times occurred in spite of, not because of Hoover. The best idea man in his own administration, he wrote his own speeches because he considered ghostwritten speeches intellectually dishonest. He was the last President to do so. His love of children was expressed privately through his founding of the American Child Health Association and small kindnesses to individual children. There were minimal strikes and lockouts during Hoover’s tenure.

Lacking a Congress in which he commanded a working majority in both houses, he nonetheless wrung out a more comprehensive, integrated domestic program than any of his twentieth-century predecessors, including Theodore Roosevelt, whose forte was oratory and symbolism, except perhaps for Woodrow Wilson’s first term. He devoted diligent attention to agriculture, encouraging cooperative marketing, crop diversification, and retirement of marginal lands. Prior to Hoover’s Presidency there had been a vacuum of reform since the Great War. He stepped into the vacuum, although he did not invent the vacuum cleaner, as many believed. One of his programs included the Hoover Dam on the Colorado River. Among Hoover’s other achievements was the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to loan money to failing banks, businesses, and railroads.<sup>4</sup>

Hoover had planned to make world peace his greatest priority before the depression and his achievements were consequential. These included the Good Neighbor Policy with Latin America, often attributed to FDR and face-to-face summit diplomacy with foreign leaders. In the London Naval Treaty of 1930, Hoover expanded the 1921 limitations on battleships to smaller ships among the major naval powers. The Stimson Doctrine set the

— Continued on page 7



## Executive Director's Message

Jerry Fleagle, IOM, CAE

### How Special Exhibits Happen

April 14 will mark the opening of the special exhibit, *Tall Grass to Knee High, A Century of Iowa Farming*, presented by Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. I'm sure you will find the exhibit interesting, fun and interactive. The Library-Museum has planned a lot of programs to tie in with the exhibit as it runs through October 28. This will be the first exhibit with a presenting title sponsor for the Library-Museum and Foundation, but likely not the last. So, how did this all happen?

The Library-Museum staff, under the direction of director Thomas Schwartz, now plans special exhibits (and they do three a year) several years out. It takes a lot of planning, research, contacts and just plain hard work to line up artifacts, get the historical story, and plan an attractive exhibit. The *Tallgrass to Knee High* exhibit was originally penciled in for the summer of 2019. So, why this year?

As part of building developmental relationships and partnerships with individuals, companies and organizations, the Hoover Presidential Foundation reaches out to many different groups. In 2015, HPF trustees Margaret Hoover, Ken Fawcett and I paid a visit to Iowa Farm Bureau Federation leadership, including president Craig Hill, executive director Dennis Presnall, and director of community resources, Barb Lykins. In the course of conversation, they mentioned that they were starting to plan Iowa Farm Bureau Federation's centennial for 2018. Knowing that the Library-Museum was planning on a farm exhibit in 2019, it was discussed with Library director Tom Schwartz to see if the Library would be willing to move up the farm exhibit one year, and see if we could partner with the Iowa Farm Bureau. Tom agreed- resulting in several trips to West Des Moines to work with Iowa Farm Bureau on the idea, and follow-up on planning and logistics.

The costs for specialized exhibits like this one are expensive. A presenting sponsor like Iowa Farm Bureau allows us to bring in unique items not otherwise available. Shipping artifacts is very costly! Curators often require specialized humidity controlled moving vans, specialty packaging, and added security when loading items in and out. And when an exhibit ties in with the sponsor as well as this one does with Farm Bureau's centennial celebration, it's a win-win for everyone!

Ultimately, all agreed it was a good idea, and Iowa Farm Bureau's support makes them a perfect fit as our presenting sponsor, and their presence will help us build a new audience for the Hoover Presidential Library-Museum. During the exhibit, from April 14 to October 28, all Iowa Farm Bureau members will receive free admission to the Library-Museum when they present their Farm Bureau membership card for entry. With tens of thousands of members that possibly could visit this summer, it also gives us a chance to share the Herbert Hoover story with many who may not be familiar with it.

We hope you enjoy *Tallgrass to Knee High*, as well as all of the other special programming this summer at the Presidential Library-Museum and Hoover National Historic Site. Better yet, bring family or friends who have not had a chance to visit us in West Branch. I will wager you will hear this from their lips as they leave (because we hear it all the time on the Hoover campus): "I never knew that about Herbert Hoover."

Isn't it time they did?! ★

### Stormwater Solutions

Continued from page 1 —

concern for flooding and poses a solution involving a storm water detention basin.

The National Park Service revisited the issue in 2006 in an Environmental Impact Statement focused on local flooding. This document also recommended the use of a detention basin to alleviate insurgent water flows from threatening the park and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum.

More recently, the National Park Service is preparing its plan for a comprehensive defense to these waters which rise and recede almost as quickly. First and foremost is an understanding that solutions to watersheds are a collaborative effort by everyone within the watershed. The National Park Service is fortunate to have strong partners within the community and the county that have embraced this by working together to fully realize the potential of any one act. In the case of the park, we are encouraged by efforts of the City of West Branch to join watershed management workgroups as well as focus on concerns associated with downstream drainage.

In the coming months, a detailed engineered plan for the park will be complete which involves the construction of a storm water detention basin, stabilization of the creek banks throughout the park, repair of a culturally significant retaining wall, and the replacement of a bridge along Downey Street. The work involved at the park level also addresses many

other concerns involving natural resources, cultural resource management, soundscape management, and facility use strategies.

Our efforts in stormwater management will help to provide protection to the buildings of the National Historic Site. Currently, waters rise out of the Hoover Creek with enough intensity that they eventually flood the park's maintenance facility, the Friends Meeting House, reach precariously close to the Hoover Birthplace Cottage, and finally edge towards the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum.

This project aims to reduce the risk associated to all of these locations by funneling water that would otherwise pour out of the banks into an excavated basin, holding it there until the rain event subsides, thereby allowing the water to drain.

The very nature of the work does have some impact to the natural environment of the park, namely the reconstructed prairie. The basin will be planned for construction in the prairie where following its completion, the area will need to be reconstructed once again as prairie, requiring little maintenance outside of our normal efforts throughout the entire 81 acre prairie.

The National Park Service is a steadfast custodian of the Hoover legacy here in West Branch, and through the implementation of this project we are able to establish our role as a committed partner within the community as the improvements made within the park will have positive impacts outside of the park as well. ★

### Bright Star Sells Out

Continued from page 1 —

In *Heroes of the Underground Railroad*, students join Harriet Tubman, Levi Coffin, Henry "Box" Brown, John Parker, and more in an empowering look at the figures behind America's Underground Railroad. From the secret signs along the route to the abolitionist movement, this play leaves few stones unturned.

This engaging production has routinely been called the "best assembly we've ever had" by educators across America. According to *Bright Star*, *Heroes of the Underground Railroad* sells out every year. The touring group presented 10 shows here last spring about voting and the Electoral College, filling the audience nearly every show.

The lessons learned are an appropriate fit for the Hoover Presidential Foundation, Presidential Library and National Historic Site goals of educating students about Herbert Hoover. The tie-in can best be represented in this quote from Herbert Hoover: "I come of Quaker stock. My ancestors were persecuted for their beliefs. Here they sought and found religious freedom. By blood and conviction I stand for religious tolerance both in act and in spirit." While Hoover is talking about religious convictions in this quote, a connection may also be drawn to the topic of slavery. Hoover stood for the individual freedoms and basic rights of all people from all walks of life.

Performances are sponsored by the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, and the Hoover Presidential Foundation. ★

# Herbert Hoover Uncommon Public Service Award Winners Named

State Representative Dawn Pettengill and State Senator Pam Jochum were recognized on March 20 at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines by the Hoover Presidential Foundation for 'Uncommon Public Service' to the people of Iowa. The Foundation established the award to be presented annually to one member of the Iowa House and the Iowa Senate who exemplifies Herbert Hoover's humanitarian efforts and commitment with uncommon service. The nominees are judged solely on their public service and humanitarian projects.

## State Representative Dawn Pettengill

Representative Bobby Kaufmann presented the award to Rep. Pettengill before members of the House as the session opened. "Being 'uncommon' is a quality of life and of service that we see often in our great state," said Rep. Kaufmann. "We find uncommon people in our schools, churches, courts and hospitals... we even find them in our state government."

Rep. Kaufmann quoted from some of Rep. Pettengill's nominations, "Dawn Pettengill has remained devoutly committed to the bedrock principles of the Hoover legacy: excellence in community leadership, meaningful policy action and integrity," one person wrote. Another said, "... we want to honor her for her exemplary



Rep. Dawn Pettengill

*"She has a servant heart and is an inspiration to many."*

contributions to the common good through public service. She has a servant heart and is an inspiration to many."

Of the four nominations placed on behalf of Dawn, this one perhaps says it best. "She is selfless with her time and fearless in her pursuit of justice and honesty for Iowans. I can think of no one more qualified for this award."

Rep. Pettengill serves House District 75 in Mt. Auburn. She is the chair of the Administrative Rules Review committee and serves on the Commerce, Government Oversight, State Government, and Ways and Means committees.

## State Senator Pam Jochum

State Senator (and Hoover Presidential Foundation board member) David Johnson followed with the presentation of the second award in the Senate chamber. "It's my honor to announce Pam Jochum as the 2018 Hoover Uncommon Public Service Award recipient in the Senate," Johnson said.

Elected to the Iowa House in 1992 and then the Iowa Senate in 2008, Sen. Jochum is respected for her ability to build coalitions that get things done for Dubuque and Iowa. She was nominated by two former Uncommon Public Service Award recipients, Senators Rob Hogg and Amanda Ragan.

They wrote, "We nominate Sen. Jochum... because of her inspirational legislative career, her passion for people and her community, and her commitment to dignity for all people." The nomination also quoted Teri Goodmann, assistant city manager for the city of Dubuque who said, "Pam is tenacious. She doesn't give up on people or her passion for the community."

Among her many accomplishments, Senator Jochum has played a leading role in expanding affordable health insurance coverage to thousands of working Iowans and has stood up for citizens with disabilities to protect their health services when the Governor privatized Iowa's Medicaid system. Her support for and commitment to education has been unwavering. She has worked to expand early childhood education and ensure affordable higher education, whether at a state university, a private college or a community college.

Sen. Jochum is from District 50 in Dubuque. She is the ranking member on the Ways and Means Committee and on the Administrative Rules Review Committee. She also serves on the Ethics, Human Resources, State Government and Rules & Administration committees.

Both legislators will be honored at the Foundation's annual Celebration Banquet in the fall. ★

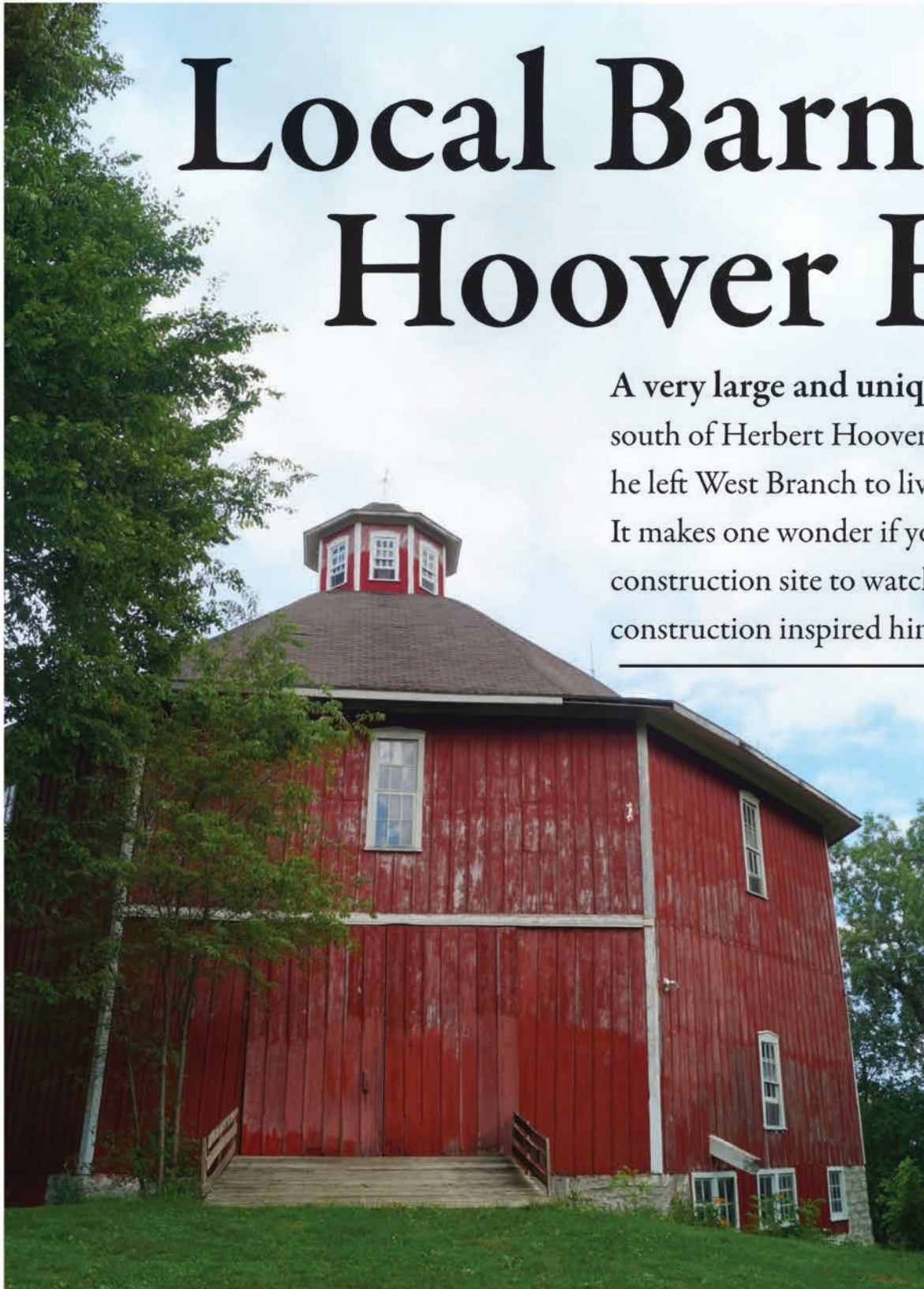


Sen. Pam Jochum

*"She doesn't give up on people or her passion for the community."*

# Local Barn Shares Hoover History

A very large and unique barn was raised four miles south of Herbert Hoover's birthplace just about a year before he left West Branch to live with his Aunt and Uncle in Oregon. It makes one wonder if young Bertie wandered down to the construction site to watch or if the grand scale and innovative construction inspired him to become an engineer.



The barn, known as the Secrest 1883 Octagonal Barn, is named for the local farmer who commissioned it, Joshua Hunt Secrest. A local master-builder, George Frank Longerbeam, led the construction. Although he had no formal training, it's suspected he apprenticed with his grandfather.

The barn measures 80 feet in diameter and features a sectional bell-shaped roof that is supported by hand-laminated beams. A matching cupola has the same roof shape of the barn. The bell shape roof and laminated beams were very uncommon for the period. Longerbeam's great grandson suspects the builder traveled to nearby Muscatine to buy his lumber from the Hershey Lumber Company. Hershey had used the laminated beam method in a previous project and it's believed Longerbeam adapted the technique to his round barn. According to the Pacific Post and Beam website, the Secrest barn was likely built by constructing an arch on the ground and raising it with pulleys and braces, then attaching the other six ribs one at a time.

A 2008 story about the barn published in the West Branch Times reports, "Octagonal barns use just as much wood to build as rectangular barns, but they are more complicated to build and, thus, more expensive. Yet, for the same wood, the farmer gets more space and volume and a barn much more sturdy in the face of strong winds, which is part of the reason the Secrest barn may have lasted so long."

The barn was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and restoration continues under a grant awarded to the current owners. The site is available for rent for receptions, meetings and other gatherings by appointment. ★

*Top: The Secrest 1883 Octagonal Barn's unique design put it in a class by itself.*

*Bottom left: Membership in the Iowa Farm Bureau was a mark of distinction.*

*Bottom right: The unique shape and design helped this barn survive over a century of harsh Iowa weather.*



# Hoover: The Man Nobody Knows

*Continued from page 7 —*

precedent of refusing to recognize territory seized by force when Japan invaded Manchuria. The President masterminded and helped implement a moratorium on all international obligations, including war debts and reparations, in 1931.

Although he led a fascinating life, the Depression dimmed Hoover's halo and the drumbeat of the 1932 election blaming him for being there when it happened reverberates down to the twenty-first century. Americans have a tendency to blame Presidents for every negative event that occurred during their administration and to credit them for everything positive, even if they did nothing to cause the events. As late as 2008, GOP candidate John McCain said that Hoover was the last President to raise taxes during hard times, forgetting that Franklin D. Roosevelt did so twice and George H. W. Bush raised taxes after promising not to.

Hoover was not gregarious publicly and his friendships were life-long. He disliked attention, including both criticism and praise. The President did not like crowds, delivering speeches or fundraising; he was inner-directed. These traits are common to Quakers such as Hoover, but rare in politicians. He did not buy votes with patronage. He lacked some of the ruthlessness needed to compete in modern American politics. As a politician, he did not seek to win at all costs. Anyone elected in 1928 would have been blamed for the catastrophe that became the Great Depression and probably defeated in 1932. Hoover was a strong, activist President, yet he was not Franklin D. Roosevelt writ small. He believed in personal responsibility, thrift,

self-sufficiency, balanced budgets during ordinary times (though not in extenuating times), decentralization, and separation of powers. Government aid should be available, but as a last resort rather than a first resort. In many respects, Hoover's philosophy was more personal than political. He thought out of the box and borrowed from classical liberalism, practical idealism, moderate conservatism, and the Progressive movement. Hoover was no lover of 'big'-ness, whether big government, big business, big fortunes, or a big military establishment. He believed in the Quaker axiom of equality of opportunity.

The President believed in aggressive government initiatives when the situation demanded it. Yet the bureaucracy created to solve temporary problems should be temporary, not the closest thing on earth to eternal life. If there was a need, he wanted problems to be solved in the simplest, most humane manner possible. He lived by the Quaker creed that all men are brothers. He did not believe either the rich or the poor were inherently predatory and resisted demonizing them. The GOP President felt it was possible to be both kind and gentle as well as tough and smart.

The Quaker perceived some of the dangers of the welfare state and entitlements long before Ronald Reagan made it fashionable. Hoover mitigated the Depression but did not end it. His administration was not a total failure but an incomplete success. By that standard, the New Deal too, was an incomplete success.

The case for Hoover's place in world history lies not simply in what he did but in who he was. If character counts, which it does, Hoover will be among the meek

<sup>1</sup> George H. Nash, "Herbert Hoover: Political Orphan," in Timothy Walch, ed., *Uncommon Americans: Lives and Legacies of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), 16.

<sup>2</sup> For Hoover's abysmal standing in the CNN Poll of 2008, see *West Branch Times*, March 5, 2009. *The Times*, his home town newspaper, devoted nearly its entire front page to the poll.

<sup>3</sup> Gary Dean Best, "The Hoover-for-President Boom of 1920," *Mid-America*, 35, No. 4 (October, 1971), 227-232; Joan Hoff Wilson, *Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), 78-80, 885-86, 103-105, 110-114; David Burner, *Herbert Hoover: A Public Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 166-167.

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover, Vol. 2, The Cabinet and the Presidency, 1929-1933*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1951), 223; Ray Lyman Wilbur, *The Memoirs of Ray Lyman Wilbur*, eds. Edgar Eugene Robinson and Paul Carroll Edwards (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960), 442-448; James Stuart Olson, *Hoover and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, 1931-1933* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1977), 3-32, 50.

who inherit the earth. He was not a great President, but he was a great man. More importantly, he was a good man. He never cheated his Maker. In fact, he never cheated anyone. ★



## Kites Over Hoover Park

Join us Saturday, April 21 south of I-80 exit 254 for the annual kite day featuring unique and custom kites of all kinds!

Bring your own kite and join in the fun! Or, buy one there.

No entry fee - food and kite vendors are on-site. Free parking!

**Great fun for the entire family!**

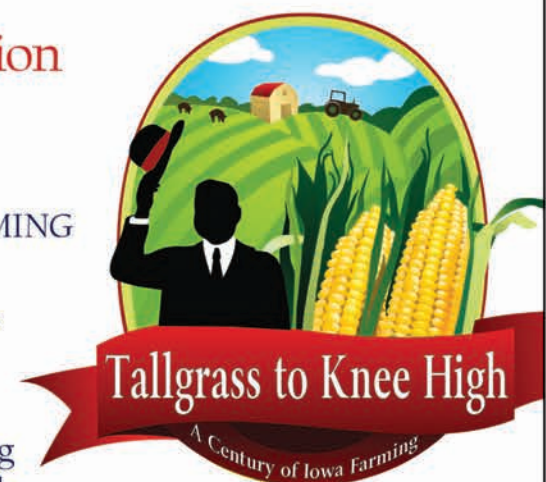
## VIP Exhibit Preview Reception

Friday, April 13 5 to 7 p.m.

JOIN US ON AN EXPLORATION SPANNING 100 YEARS OF IOWA FARMING

Hoover Presidential Foundation members are invited to see the newest temporary exhibit BEFORE it opens to the public!

Explore the historical highlights of farming in Iowa and the Midwest since 1910 through fun, interactive exhibits the whole family will enjoy! Guests may attend for \$10 or may use a member guest pass!



Presented by:



RSVP by April 10 at [HooverPresidentialFoundation.org](http://HooverPresidentialFoundation.org)

# Trustee Profile: Robert Swain



**Spouse:** Mary Ann

**Children:** Son, Robert E. Swain, daughters, Ann Larkum and Frances Sterling

**Hometown:** Tulsa, OK

In this installment of Trustee Profiles, we introduce you to Robert (Bob) Swain of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Bob has one of the most fascinating Hoover heritage/family connection stories we've heard! Bob comes from a long line of Robert Swains.

Bob's grandfather begins the story of the Swain's connection to the Hoover family, as he was a member of the fourth Stanford class and a friend of Herbert's at school. As time passed, his grandfather built a home across from Bert and Lou on the Stanford Campus. Bob's father would become playmates with Bert's son Allan, cementing a friendship between the two families that has endured generations.

Bob was born in Palo Alto, California and lived there until the family moved to Connecticut. As it turns out, Allan Hoover had also moved to Connecticut and maintained his friendship with the Swain family. Bob recalls his first interaction with the now former President Hoover as a result of a visit Mr. Hoover made to see his son. "It was in the late 1940's when Mr. Hoover came for a Christmas visit with Allan," Bob recalls. "They invited us to attend a Christmas morning brunch with their family. I recall him being very inclusive and sociable. He told jokes well and was fun to be with."

In 1961 Bob was invited to spend a couple of weeks at the Bohemian Grove, a 2,700 acre campground in Monte Rio, California. Its all-male membership includes prominent business leaders, government officials,

including many former U.S. presidents, media executives and people of power. After 40 years of membership, the men earn 'Old Guard' status and the rights and privileges associated with that. Herbert Hoover was inducted into the Old Guard on March 19, 1953.

"It was an amazing experience and quite an unusual place," Bob said. "My father and grandfather were members. That's the only way I could get in!"

The Swain family also participated in several Hoover organizations. Bob's grandfather was an original member of the Hoover Institution at Stanford, while his father had also served on that board and as a member of the Hoover Foundation and the Hoover Birthplace Society, what is now the Hoover Presidential Foundation.

"In 1977, Allan Hoover invited me to join all three of those boards," Bob said.

The connections don't end with the Swain family. Bob's wife, Mary Ann, has family connections to Hoover of her own. Her grandfather, William N. Haskell, was a 1901 graduate of West Point, and as a General, ran Russian food relief efforts under Hoover.

"We were invited to 31A (Hoover's apartment in the Waldorf Astoria), where Mr. Hoover gave us an engagement gift," Bob said of the meeting.

The Swains have always held the Hoover's in high regard. "Hoover's contributions to us, to Iowa and to the world are overwhelming," Bob said of the Great Humanitarian. "The Hoover Library-Museum is very personable and very good, and tells an excellent story."

From all of us here at the Hoover campus, thank you for helping us tell that story, Bob. ★

## Thanks to you...

Each year between October and December, like many non-profit organizations, we conduct an 'Annual Giving' drive. We sent cards, letters and emails to members and friends of the Foundation and were flattered by your generosity once again! To all of you, we offer a hearty

## Thank you!

Your gifts really make an impact and allow us to continue to tell the story of 'The Great Humanitarian' - Herbert Hoover. So many visitors leave the Hoover Campus exclaiming, 'I never knew that about Hoover!' Changing that perception is behind every program and event.

### We are so grateful for your support!

The Annual Fund of the Hoover Presidential Foundation provides financial support for special events and exhibits, programming and promotions we do here at the Hoover campus. That makes your unrestricted gifts very important.

We greatly appreciate the trust you have put in us, and we will work hard to maximize your support and fulfill our mission. Please accept our gratitude for your commitment!

*Perry Fleagle*

*Mundi McCarty*

*Delene W. McCormack*

*Bob Swain*

*Brad Reiners*

*Joan Maske*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Hoover's Hometown Days**  
**AUG. 3&4**

Registration for the Hoover-Ball National Championships is now open at [Hoover-Ball.org](http://Hoover-Ball.org)

**Visit [HooverDays.org](http://HooverDays.org) for details!**

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Just click the DONATE button at the top of the screen to learn how to make a gift in support of the Hoover mission!





## Director of Development's Message

*Mundi McCarty, Director of Development*

# Making a Difference

## *Creating Your Hoover Campus Legacy*

Planned giving can maximize your support for the Hoover Presidential Library-Museum or the Hoover National Historic Site while helping you achieve your financial and philanthropic objectives.

Six little words tend to accompany so many of the gifts the Hoover Campus receives; "I wish I could do more." The fact is that our members, donors and friends can 'do more,' if gifts are carefully planned. Combining financial planning, estate planning and tax planning techniques, planned giving enables donors to make gifts of surprising significance, often with dramatic tax and financial rewards. Careful planning is vital when considering the basic questions involved in making an important gift:

- Why should I give?
- How should I give?
- When should I give?
- Are there special purposes my gift should accomplish?

In the process of planned giving, it's important to begin by identifying your charitable goals and desires. Once we understand how you envision making an impact on the Hoover campus and future generations of visitors and

admirers, as well as the many students and other groups we serve, we can then work with you, your advisors, and areas of the Hoover campus or program you'd like to support in putting together a gift plan. Ideally we will be able to develop a plan that benefits you, your family and the Hoover campus.

Planned gifts can be outright (such as cash gifts or gifts of appreciated securities) or deferred (gifts to be received at a later date), or a combination of the two.

### Outright

- Outright gifts of cash consist of any instant transfer of funds from you to the Hoover Presidential Foundation.
- Gifts of appreciated securities or stock are easily made when you or your broker transfers shares electronically to the Hoover Presidential Foundation. Please call us at (319) 643-5327 to obtain information to initiate a stock gift. Gifts of appreciated stock shares which you have held for more than 12 months qualify for a charitable income tax deduction equal to the current fair market value of the transferred assets and can make a gift of appreciated securities the most cost-effective gift option available.

### Deferred

- Charitable gifts established in wills and living trusts are the most common form of establishing future gifts for the Hoover Presidential Foundation. Gifts that take place after your death may enable you to make a larger contribution than you would have been able to make during your lifetime.
- Designating the Hoover Presidential Foundation as a beneficiary of an IRA or retirement plan allows you the ability to retain control throughout your lifetime over the designation of these assets. In many cases, these assets will have significant value upon your death.
- While life insurance provides family protection and peace of mind, it can also support the Hoover campus after your lifetime. You can name the Hoover Presidential Foundation as a beneficiary and maintain lifetime ownership rights in a policy (the right to borrow against the policy or cash it in, for example).
- Bank account proceeds and brokerage account assets can often be passed at death to an individual or organization without making or changing a will. Many states allow P.O.D. (pay on death) accounts that let you designate a beneficiary for almost any type of bank account such as savings, checking, CD, credit union savings and more.

### How May We Help You?

We are ready and able to assist you and your advisors in developing answers to your charitable giving questions. For more ideas about making a difference through gift planning, visit [www.HooverPresidentialFoundation.org](http://www.HooverPresidentialFoundation.org) or call us at 319-643-5327.

The information contained in this publication is a general introduction to various planned giving techniques and is not intended as a comprehensive guide to tax and financial consequences. You should always consult with your own professional advisors before making specific plans. ★

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1925-33 Lou Henry Hoover with Girl Scouts, ca. 1925.

# Lou Henry Hoover and the Girl Scouts



By Thomas F. Schwartz

March 29 was Lou Henry Hoover's birthday. Lou spent many years of her life involved with the Girl Scout movement. Here is an excerpt from a tribute written in late 1945 by Dare Stark McMullin, a friend and former secretary of Mrs. Hoover:

"Mrs. Hoover first became associated with the Girl Scout movement in 1917. Her interest in it arose from her own and her husband's concern for the well-being of the American child. He was at that time Food Commissioner, and both he and his wife realized so keenly how the sad lack of proper food, housing, and recreational facilities had warped the lives of the war-abnormal little Europeans.

"But Lou Henry Hoover was a Girl Scout in spirit all of her life. She herself once said, 'I was a Scout years ago, before the movement ever started, when my father took me hunting, fishing and hiking in the mountains. Then I was sorry that more girls could not have what I had. When I learned of the movement I thought, here is what I always wanted other girls to have.'

"From 1917 to the very end of her life, Girl Scouting was one of her great enthusiasms and she devoted herself to it heart and soul. During those years she served in many and varied official capacities – deputy commissioner in Washington, council member in Palo Alto, and in the national organization, vice-president, member-at-large, and chairman of the board of directors, president, honorary president and honorary vice-president. She was also a leader of her own Girl Scout troop in Washington for ten years...

"The influence of Lou Henry Hoover in Girl Scouting is difficult to evaluate. She was but one of many able women devoting themselves to the movement during its critical formative years. But her enthusiasm, indefatigable labor and prestige, certainly played an important role in developing it from a small group of about 15,000 in 1917, with troops in only a few cities, to a well established, nationwide organization at the end of 1945, with a membership of more than 840,000." ★

# The Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930

By Spencer Howard

In any discussion of President Hoover's economic policies, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff often takes center stage. What's typically omitted, however, is the context in which the bill emerged.

From the earliest days of the republic, a protective tariff was one of the bedrock principles of U.S. economic policy. In the late 19th and early 20th century, tariff policy became one of the defining political issues; generally, the Republican Party favored high tariffs to protect domestic manufacturing and agriculture from low-cost foreign competition, while the Democratic Party favored low tariffs to promote trade and boost exports. As the Republican Party largely dominated at the national level following the Civil War, high tariffs were the norm.

When Theodore Roosevelt's "Bull Moose" campaign in 1912 split the Republican Party, Democrats took control of Congress and the White House. The Underwood Tariff of 1913 rolled tariff rates back to levels not seen since the 1850s, and imposed an income tax to make up for the lost revenue. After World War I, Republicans returned to power and in 1922 passed the Fordney-McCumber Tariff, which restored high rates and pushed some to record levels.

In 1928, the major issue of the campaign, by far, was Prohibition, but the tariff was important too. The Republican platform promised to retain the existing high industrial tariffs and to boost tariffs for agricultural commodities. Agricultural prices had been depressed since the end of the War, and farmers clamored for relief. Most American farmers faced little competition from imports, but thought they should have the same level of protection as industry. (In fact, some farm groups also wanted to see reductions in industrial tariffs, to reduce the price of manufactured goods and thereby increase farmers' purchasing power.) During the 1920s Congress had repeatedly passed bills to subsidize dumping American farm surpluses overseas, which President Coolidge vetoed. Herbert Hoover, as the Republican nominee for President, pledged to support

tariffs for agriculture, and also proposed an innovative plan for a Federal Farm Board that would help farmers organize co-ops to stabilize prices.

Immediately after his inauguration, Hoover called a special session of Congress. Within weeks they passed a bill creating Hoover's Farm Board, to great fanfare. Then they turned to the tariff. Weeks turned into months as the bill bogged down in the Senate; the stock

Today, there continues to be considerable disagreement concerning the causes of the Great Depression, and the relative roles of those causes. A number of historians and economists, for example, have downplayed the traditional interpretation of the disastrous effect of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, pointing out that the existing Fordney-McCumber Tariff rates were already dangerously high and that the Smoot-Hawley bill was really just a continuation of business as usual under

Republican administrations. Foreign trade, both imports and exports, was only a small part of the total U.S. economy. The Smoot-Hawley Tariff was clearly harmful to trade and diplomacy, but it is uncertain how damaging it was relative to other economic forces.

In his memoirs, written in the 1950s, Hoover argued that "later statements implying that the passage of the Smoot-Hawley bill was the cause of the depression seem somewhat overdrawn, as it was not passed until nine months after the crash. Moreover it was not, as later statements suggested, the beginning of a world movement to increase tariffs. In fact, the American increase took place only after nearly thirty other countries had imposed higher tariffs." He also noted, "But I may say here that raising the tariff from its sleep

was a political liability despite the virtues of its reform." (The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Cabinet and the Presidency 1920-1933, p. 291, 299.)

When the Democrats returned to power in 1933, President Roosevelt's policy was to lower tariffs on a country-by-country basis, which had little effect on foreign trade. After World War II, the United States reversed course completely. In a series of agreements over many years, the U.S. signed onto the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which reduced tariffs across the board with many nations and created the World Trade Organization to regulate international trade. Economists now believe, almost without exception, that free trade and low tariffs promote economic growth. ★



market crash in October 1929 had little effect on the debate. The Smoot-Hawley tariff bill finally passed in June 1930; it raised rates on over 20,000 items, but as a whole, pleased no one. Over 1000 economists signed an open letter to President Hoover, begging him to veto the bill.

President Hoover was not happy with the Smoot-Hawley bill, especially the increased tariffs on many manufactured goods. In private, he described it as "vicious, extortionate and obnoxious," but because it included increased tariffs on agricultural products, he felt compelled to sign it. Furthermore, Hoover had successfully engineered a provision in the bill that allowed the Tariff Commission to make modest adjustments to tariffs without Congressional approval, which he believed would allow him to fix some of the most egregious industrial tariffs.

# Hoover-Ball Decal License Plate Now Available

A new Iowa law, HF 617, took effect on January 1, 2017. The act provides for vehicle license plates to display a decal designed and issued by a nonprofit organization in support of that organization. The Hoover Presidential Foundation was approved last November as the eighth nonprofit to take advantage of the law, and is pleased to offer a Hoover-Ball National Championship decal to Iowa sports fans.

Proceeds from the decal sales will support Hoover Presidential Foundation programs, such as Youth Hoover-Ball camp and tournaments. "The sport of Hoover-Ball provides an excellent way for us to introduce Herbert Hoover to the public," said Jerry Fleagle, executive director of the Foundation. "Hoover and members of his staff and cabinet played every morning at the White House to keep in shape. It's a side of Hoover not many have seen."

Previously, custom license plates required 500 pre-sold reservations before they would be produced by the state. The new law reduced that number to 250, and included the decal plate option which does not have a minimum requirement. Small non-profits may apply for the decal

program and once approved, print, sell and distribute the decals at their own expense. The decals are applied to a special 'decal plate' which can be purchased with random letters and numbers from the county treasurer's office for \$5.

Motorists may opt for a custom message decal plate with up to five characters for a fee of \$25. Decals may be changed at will by the plate owner, but only state approved decals may be used. The Foundation is offering the decals for \$20 on the web at Hoover-Ball.org. The purchaser must then trade in their current license plates at their county treasurer's office in exchange for a decal plate. The exchange can be made any day of the year during regular business hours and motorists do not have to wait until the plates expire. The office will simply exchange the plates, print new registration papers, and charge a \$5 fee. Once exchanged, the decals are placed on the new plates and reattached to the vehicle.



"It's a perfect opportunity for us," said Brad Reiners, communications manager for the Foundation. It would take a long time to round up 250 pre-sale orders for a custom plate, but this program lets regular Hoover-Ball athletes and supporters show their Hoover pride immediately. "We're excited to be the first destination location to qualify for the decal program," Reiners added. "We hope people will spot the decal and Google it, then join us in West Branch to see what it's all about!"

The Hoover-Ball National Championships are held annually in West Branch as part of Hoover's Hometown Days, held the first Friday and Saturday in August. 2017 marked the 30th year for the event. ★

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Friday, April 13 • 5 to 7 p.m.**

**Foundation Members' Exhibit Preview Reception**  
Be among the first to see *Tallgrass to Knee High: A Century of Iowa Farming*, presented by Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, before it opens to the public!

**Saturday, April 14 • 9 a.m.**

*Tallgrass to Knee High: A Century of Iowa Farming*, presented by Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, opens to the public.

**Saturday, April 21 • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Kites over Hoover Park** Bring your own or buy one there and enjoy this free aerial spectacular, located just south of I-80's West Branch exit 254, behind the car dealership.

**Monday, May 28 • 2 p.m.**

**Eastern Iowa Brass Band** Join us on the grounds in front of the Hoover Presidential Library for an afternoon of outstanding music.

**Friday, June 1 • 7 p.m.**

**Music on the Village Green** Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, in partnership with the City of West Branch and Main Street West Branch, invites visitors to an expanded series of special musical events this summer.



The concerts are free, every Friday in June at 7:00 p.m. at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch, Iowa. Don't forget a lawn chair or blanket!

**Friday & Saturday, June 1 & 2**

**Summer Camp, Downtown West Branch** Visit downtown West Branch for a fun filled weekend with food, music, outdoor movie night and more! Check the West Branch Community Development Group Facebook page for complete details.

**Saturday, June 2 10 a.m.**

**Prairie Walk** Each Saturday in June and July, a park ranger leads visitors through the 81-acre tallgrass prairie at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. The walks begin at the tallgrass prairie observation deck by the gravesite parking lot. The walk is less than a mile and lasts about 60 minutes. Bring water, dress for the weather, and wear comfortable walking shoes. Hats, sunscreen, sunglasses, and insect repellent are also recommended.



**Hoover Presidential Foundation**

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[www.HooverPresidentialFoundation.org](http://www.HooverPresidentialFoundation.org)

[info@HooverPF.org](mailto:info@HooverPF.org)

**Herbert Hoover Presidential  
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Open daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information call 319-643-5301

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For more information call 319-643-2541

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