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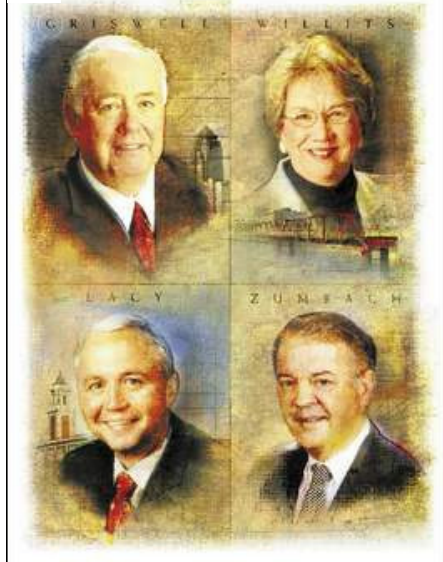
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Clockwise from top left: Barry Griswell, Martha Willits, Steven Zumbach and Steve Lacy.

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Business, civic leaders in Des Moines

Dennis Albaugh, 57 owner of Albaugh Inc. international supplier of

New type of leader drives the city

The one-man-show style of past movers and shakers gives way to a generation of leaders who collaborate to achieve big impact.

By DAVID ELBERT
REGISTER BUSINESS EDITOR

October 15, 2006

Leadership in Des Moines is at a juncture.

The death early this year of longtime community leader and philanthropist David Kruidenier at age 84 has focused attention on the future, with a recognition that the top-down style of leadership practiced by his generation rarely works today.

When Kruidenier and fellow businessman John Ruan, now 92 and in poor health, set out to rebuild a crumbling downtown Des Moines in the 1970s, they met with an exclusive group of local business owners who decided, project by project, what would be done.

Their leadership was either paternalistic or dictatorial, depending on your point of view, but it worked because it filled a void and because both men commanded a type of following that is no longer in style, said management expert Thomas Chacko.

Ruan and Kruidenier used their personal wealth and power to drive projects like the Civic Center, the downtown Marriott Hotel and the skywalk system. Ruan's power flowed from the trucking and banking fortune that he built starting with a single dump truck in 1932. Kruidenier was the third generation of a family that owned newspapers, including The Des Moines Register, television stations and Look magazine.

Leadership today is different, said Chacko, who heads the management and marketing departments at Iowa State University's college of business. It requires more cooperation and collaboration than in the past, he said.

None of Des Moines' top business leaders today - including Barry Griswell of Principal Financial Group Inc., Steve Lacy at Meredith Corp., Steve Zumbach of the Belin law firm and Martha Willits of the Greater Des Moines Partnership - expect to wield the power of a Ruan or Kruidenier.

All are the products of corporate bureaucracies,

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and international supplier of agricultural chemicals, and developer of Ankeny's Prairie Trail subdivision. W. Kim Austen, 51, president of Allied Insurance.

Terry Branstad, 59, president of Des Moines University and former Iowa governor.

Steve Chapman, 55, chief executive of ITA Group in West Des Moines.

Shannon Cofield, 42, president of United Way of Central Iowa.

Jim Cownie, 62, businessman and philanthropist, scheduled to be chairman of the Greater Des Moines Partnership in 2007.

Jerry Crawford, 56, lawyer and Democratic activist.

Johnny Danos, 66, president of the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation.

J. Michael Earley, 61, chief executive of Bankers Trust Co.

John Forsyth, 59, chief executive officer of Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa.

Jon Garnaas, 56, president of Ladco Development Inc.

Michael Gartner, 67, owner of the Iowa Cubs and president of the Iowa Board of Regents.

Ellen Gaucher, 65, group vice president for operations of Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa.

Tom Godlasky, 50, chief executive of AmerUs Group.

Barry Griswell, 57, chairman and chief executive of Principal Financial Group.

Doug Gross, 51, lawyer at Brown Winick Graves Gross Baskerville & Schoenebaum.

Jack Hatch, 56, state senator and developer.

Cara Heiden, 50, division president of Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

Lynn Horak, 60, president of Wells Fargo Bank Iowa.

Jim Hubbell, 58, chairman of Hubbell Realty Co.

Eric Idehen, 41, vice president of community development for Wells Fargo Bank.

Libby Jacobs, 49, community relations director for Principal Financial Group and co-chairwoman of Downtown Community Alliance.

Robert Josten, 64, lawyer at Dorsey & Whitney.

Ric Jurgens, 57, chief executive of Hy-Vee Inc.

Gary Kirke, 63, entrepreneur and developer.

Bill Knapp, 80, chairman of Knapp Properties.

Mike Knapp, 56, president of Iowa Realty.

Kyle Krause, 43, chief executive of Krause Gentle Corp.

Kathryn Kunert, 40, vice president of community relations and economic development for MidAmerican Energy Co.

Steve Lacy, 52, chief executive of

which have had to deal with demographic and cultural shifts that did not exist 20 or 30 years ago, Chacko said.

Local ownership of many businesses disappeared in the 1980s and '90s. Several of Des Moines' largest businesses were sold to national and international companies, including The Des Moines Register, Equitable of Iowa Insurance, seed corn manufacturer Pioneer Hi-Bred, Younkers department stores, Allied Insurance, MidAmerican Energy, four major banks, and Iowa Realty, the state's largest real estate brokerage.

Principal and Meredith, which still have their corporate headquarters in Des Moines, faced new pressures from national and international constituencies. As new acquisitions were made, managers learned to merge diverse business and social cultures.

Youth also has added a layer of expectations that didn't exist in the past, Chacko said. "Younger people have a broader sense of what they ought to be doing," he said.

Young executives don't wait to grow into their responsibilities the way corporate managers did in the past. Many are given full plates at an early age and expected to perform at a high level. They expect to be players, Chacko said.

All of the above have made the new generation of leaders more collaborative and more open to diverse views.

Most also have a broad range of interests, including family, that limit their time.

A new structure was built to accommodate their needs.

Where there used to be several independent groups working on economic development, now there is one umbrella organization, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, that oversees and coordinates the various groups.

The committees and subcommittees of the Partnership amount to a leadership bureaucracy, which has met with wide approval.

It has helped national companies such as Wells Fargo, General Growth Properties and Nationwide Insurance expand and drive job creation, and it has encouraged a new generation of entrepreneurial developers to take up the challenge to bring housing and retail back to the downtown area.

"Leadership is more company driven than it was in the past, when it was more individual driven," said Lynn Horak of Wells Fargo Bank Iowa.

"It's different than it was 25 years ago," he said. "And frankly, I think it's better."

Instead of pursuing goals one at a time, like Ruan and Kruidenier did, multiple projects are pursued simultaneously today.

The Vision Iowa program clustered several projects under shared financing, including the Iowa Events

Meredith Corp., Iowa's largest media company.

Mary O'Keefe, 50, senior vice president of Principal Financial Group.
 Mark Oman, 51, head of Wells Fargo's mortgage and consumer finance operations and chairman of the Greater Des Moines Partnership.
 Dean Oestreich, 54, president of Pioneer Hi-Bred International.
 John Pappajohn, 78, venture capitalist, Equity Dynamics.
 Max Phillips, 49, president of Qwest operations in Iowa.

Marvin Pomerantz, 76, owner of Mid-America Group, a West Des Moines-based real estate company.
 Ken Quinn, 64, president of the World Food Prize Foundation.

Suku Radia, 55, chief financial officer of Meredith Corp.
 Jody Reynolds, 65, and Stanley Reynolds, 65, owners Reynolds of Reynolds Inc. and longtime supporters of Variety-The Children's Charity.
 Paul Rottenberg, 50, president of Orchestrate Management & Associates.

John Ruan III, 63, chief executive of the Ruan companies and chairman of the World Food Prize Foundation.

John Shors, 69, attorney with Davis Brown Koehn Shors Roberts.

Mary Stier, 49, publisher of The Des Moines Register.

Thomas E. Stanberry, 52, chairman and chief executive of West Bancorp.

Ted Townsend, 58, founder and sponsor of the Great Ape Trust of Iowa and primary backer of the Earthpark indoor rain forest project.
 Rose Vasquez, 52, diversity consultant at Principal Financial Group and member of the Iowa Board of Regents.

Dave Vellinga, 56, president of Mercy Medical Center.

Sam Wallace, 63, president of Iowa Health Systems.

Teresa Wahlert, 57, president of Mid-America Group and member of the Iowa Board of Regents.

Martha Willits, 59, chief executive of the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

Steven Zumbach, 56, senior partner in the law firm of Belin Lamson McCormick Zumbach Flynn.

Leaders under age 40

Paul D. Bishop, 39, executive director of the Greater Iowa Chapter of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Christopher Burch, 36, executive director of Endurance Sports Marketing Inc. and race director of the Des Moines Marathon.

Max Cardenas, 27, principal of Diverse Innovative Solutions Inc.

Michelle Casper, 35, legal counsel for American Republic Insurance Co.

Jake Christensen, 35, vice president business development of Nelson

under snared financing, including the Iowa Events Center, a new Science Center of Iowa, the Pappajohn Education Center and a new downtown library. Gateway Park, the East Village, the downtown loop bypass and the Meredith Trail connecting Gray's Lake with downtown were all under way at the same time.

In the queue today are more projects: the Principal Riverwalk, bringing back downtown housing and retail, creating new-style suburban communities that mimic old-time city centers, a new focus on mass transit, and efforts to create permanent funding for arts and culture.

"No longer is leadership standing on a pedestal and telling people: 'Listen up, I know what's good for you,'" said ISU's Chacko.

"It's like when you have various musicians all playing their own solos simultaneously. It doesn't sound good, which is why you bring in a conductor to lead them," he said.

Only now the conductor is constantly changing, as the Des Moines area moves from one project to another, he said.

Development.

Megan Claypool, 34, legal counsel for AmerUs Life Insurance Group.

Tarek Fahmy, 22, sales specialist for Wells Fargo Financial. A 2006 graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, he was hired as part of the Greater Des Moines Partnership's Four-Hire contest last spring.

Desiree Fletcher-Hayes, 32, public relations coordinator for Pioneer Hi-Bred International.

Monica Friedman, 37, human resources director for Allied Insurance.

Brenna Gannon, 22, communications consultant for Principal Financial Group. A 2006 graduate of Drake University, she was hired as part of the Greater Des Moines Partnership's Four-Hire contest last spring.

Joseph Garcia, 36, managing director Marsh & McLennan Cos.

Brando Guerrero, 24, community outreach specialist for Allied Insurance.

Jordan Hansell, 35, lawyer at Nyemaster Goode West Hansell & O'Brien.

Jenna Hogan, 25, a search consultant for Palmer Group.

Joey Hinke, 30, account executive for Holmes Murphy & Associates.

Amy Jennings, 30, co-founder and president of Greater Des Moines Young Professionals Connection and health improvement coordinator at Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa.

Isaiah McGee, 27, Waukee City Council member and Johnston school teacher.

Thomas Moreland, 27, founder and chief executive of Iowa Hospice.

Eric Parrish, 35, attorney for Parrish Kruidenier Moss Dunn Boles Gribble & Cook.

Benjamin Renzo, 34, founder and president of LWBJ Wealth Resources.

Nannette Rodriguez, 32, founder and president of Vivamedia.

Behnaz Soulati, 36, lawyer with David Brown Koehn Shors & Roberts.

Michael Sadler, 39, Iowa director of government relations for Qwest Communications.

Whom have we missed?

Who are some of the emerging leaders we should be aware of? Let us know at DesMoinesRegister.com/bizbuzz.

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RODNEY WHITE/THE REGISTER

Lynn Horak, chairman and chief executive of Wells Fargo Bank Iowa, stands in front of Wells Fargo Arena, part of the Iowa Events Center, which was one of several projects clustered under shared financing through the Vision Iowa program. "Leadership is more company-driven than it was in the past," Horak said.

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