

2011 Annual Report



503 W. 7th Street, Ste 1 Atlantic, Iowa 50022

P:(712) 243-3180

F: (712) 243-1688

Commissioners Activities



Curt Behrends & Tracy Marshall

Tracy Marshall of the rural Lewis area has been appointed to fill the remaining term on the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District Board due to a resignation. Tracy was sworn in on April 18th and will hold this office till the next general election. Tracy has been serving as an Assistant Commissioner since November of 2010 with the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District Board. Alan Zellmer of the Atlantic area has been appointed to the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District Board to serve as an Assistant Commissioner. Alan was appointed on April 20, 2011 for a period of one year, January through December. Assistant Commissioners aid the district governing body of the Cass SWCD. The Cass Soil and Water Conservation Districts holds their regular meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month.

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Alan Zellmer & Curt Behrends

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Cass SWCD Recognized at CDI Annual Conference

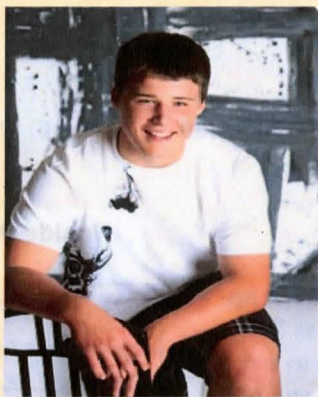


In 2005 the State Revolving Fund began offering low interest loans for non point source water quality projects through two programs – the Local Water Protection Program and the Livestock Water Quality Facilities Program. Since that time, SWCD offices have been instrumental to the success of these programs. As of June 27, over \$61 million has been loaned through these programs – which has enabled more conservation to be put on the ground, at less cost to the landowner and in a shorter amount of time. Most districts have used the program and all should be commended for their promotion and use of the loan programs. Based on the dollars loans, five districts are being recognized for the Low Interest Loan program and three districts for the Livestock Water Quality Facilities Program SRF Loans: Union, Page, **Cass**, Taylor, Keokuk. This program can be used in conjunction with the cost share programs for the landowners share of the work. Contact our office at (712)243-3180 or go to the Iowa Finance Authority website at www.ifaprograms.com for more information.

Alan Peterson, Tracy Marshall, Curt Behrends,
Jana Coughlin, David York

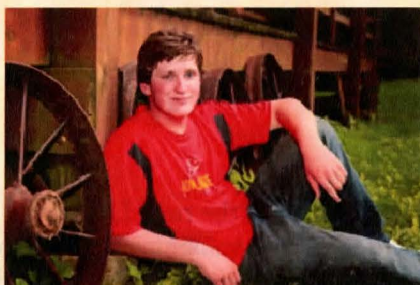


2011 Scholarship Winners

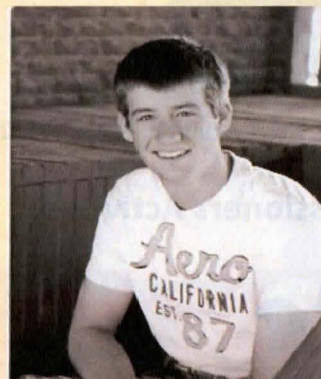


Alex Freund

Griswold Community Schools

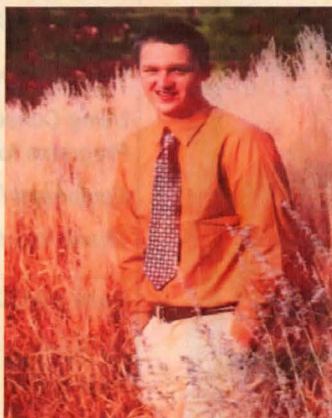


Casey Marshall



Josh Bierbaum

Atlantic Community Schools



Ethan Nachtman

CAM Community Schools

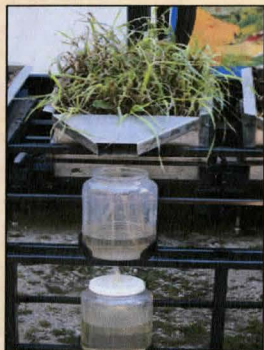


Taylor Dorsey



Ethan Miller

Conservation Station at Cass County Fair



The Cass SWCD hosted the Conservation Station from the Iowa Learning Farm at the Cass County Fair. The Conservation Station is a mobile learning center that will educate audiences of all ages on different conservation aspects. The back of the Conservation Station houses a rainfall simulator demonstrating the effects of rainfall on undisturbed soils with a variety of soil covers and impervious and porous surfaces. The

front part of the Conservation Station is a learning center with interchangeable learning modules covering topics such as soil quality, ground water and drainage, residue, prairies and wetlands. For more information you may go to:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf/conservationstation>.



Cass Soil & Water Conservation District

Curt Behrends Greg Zellmer Ray Wilson Fred Kay Tracy Marshall Alan Peterson Alan Zellmer



Cass County Fair Coloring Contest

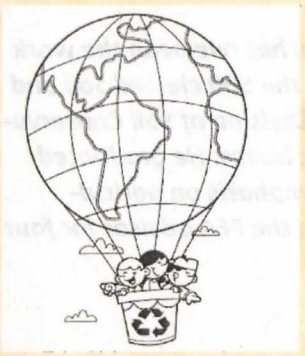
The Cass SWCD sponsored a coloring contest at the Cass County Fair for ages Pre K thru fifth grade students. All participants were awarded participation awards, and first, second, third places are also recognized. Thanks to all the kids who participated in the coloring contest.



Pre-K Thru 1st Grade



Hogan Hook



2nd Thru 3rd Grade



Roni Hook



Bryan York



Edria Brummer

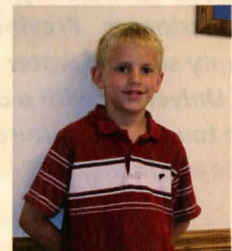
4th Thru 5th Grade



Faith Beebe



Kayla Marshall



Evan Brummer

Cass County Soil & Water Conservation Financial Report FY 11 July 1, 2010 thru June 30, 2011

Revolving Funds

Balance 7/1/10	\$31,338.03
Total Deposits	\$18,202.43
Total Expenditures	<u>\$19,239.49</u>
Balance 6/30/2011	\$30,300.97

Drill Fund

Balance 7/1/10	\$10,664.87
Total Deposits	\$7,622.60
Total Expenditures	<u>\$6,012.23</u>
Balance 6/30/2011	\$12,275.24

BONDING 2

Balance 7/1/10	61,747.29
Supplemental	110,014.58
Total Obligated	68,355.34
Total Expended	<u>103,406.52</u>
Balance 6/30/2011	0.00

REAP P

Balance 7/1/10	\$9,827.53
Supplemental	\$41,430.09
Total Obligated	\$25,545.90
Total Expended	<u>\$25,711.72</u>
Balance 6/30/11	\$0.00

Reap F/NG

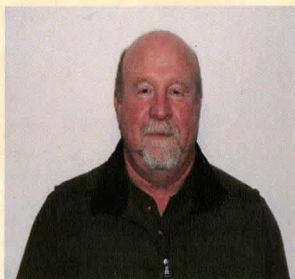
Balance 7/1/10	\$3,276.90
Total Deposits	\$1,979.85
Total Obligated	\$2,369.25
Total Expended	<u>\$2,529.52</u>
Balance 6/30/11	\$357.98



News from Division of Soil Conservation

NORTHEY ANNOUNCES HIRING OF JIM GILLESPIE AS NEW DIRECTOR OF DIVISION OF SOIL CONSERVATION

Will oversee Department's work on soil erosion, water quality and abandoned mine reclamation



DES MOINES – Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey today announced that Jim Gillespie has been hired as the new Director of the Division of Soil Conservation within the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Chuck Gipp, the previous Director, left earlier this year to become Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The Division of Soil Conservation is responsible for administering state programs and providing leadership to farmers, landowners, communities and others to promote the protection and management of soil, water and mineral resources. The Division also assists Soil and Water Conservation Districts and private landowners to meet their agricultural and environmental protection needs.

"Jim has extensive experience with both the people and the programs that make-up the Division of Soil Conservation and I know he will provide strong leadership as the Division continues its work to protect our air, soil and water," Northey said. "We had a number of strong candidates for the position and I know Jim will do a great job." "I look forward to working with farmers, landowners, partners, and soil and water conservation districts to continue to build on the 'culture of conservation' that is so strong in our state," Gillespie said. "There are great opportunities ahead for Iowa agriculture due to the growing world population and the need to produce more food, so the Division's work to support efforts to protect our soil and water remains tremendously important. It is vital that these resources remain protected and productive for future generations."

Gillespie has served Field Services Bureau Chief for the Department since 1989. In this position he has overseen the work of 136 employees for the Division in 100 offices around the state and worked in partnership with the 500 elected Soil and Water Conservation Commissioners. Previously Gillespie served as a Field Representative in the Division of Soil Conservation and worked with county soil and water conservation districts on local resource management issues. He graduated from Northwest Missouri University with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with an emphasis on agriculture. After graduation he taught agriculture classes at Earlham Community School and served as the FFA advisor for four years before joining the Department.

Seamless Customer Service, A Recipe for Success

Brandon Dittman, Western Iowa Field Representative

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation

The 2011/2012 construction season was very successful for the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and generally very successful for all the 100 SWCD's in our great State of Iowa. Last year's harvest was early and fall was long and mild. This combination was ideal for farmland improvements such as tiling, terrace, pond, sediment basin, and waterway construction. For many past years it seems the time between winter's end and planting season or between harvest and winter's onset was abnormally short due to our ever changing Iowa weather! We need a few "perfect" falls such as these to catch up with some projects that have "been on the books."

Nice weather and long construction seasons provide us with half of our necessary ingredients. The efficiency of the employees working for you at the Cass SWCD office provided the remaining elements for our recipe for success. Many folks may not realize there are 3 separate employers at the office. There are employees of the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA- NRCS), the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC), and the SWCD in the Cass SWCD office and many of the other SWCD offices around Iowa. NRCS, IDALS, and the SWCD employees all work together to promote, incentivize, and implement conservation practices. The role of each employee in the office is unique in some ways but can overlap in others; these various positions fit together to create the seamless network of conservation assistance that is unique to Iowa. There are Federal and SWCD employees working to implement State Cost Share Programs and State and SWCD employees working on Federal Conservation Programs. This flexibility allows Districts to allocate resources where they're needed and when they're needed the most; the partnership between agencies maximizes a District's efficiency. Thank you all for your desire to implement conservation practices to improve your farm's long term sustainability and profitability. With our period of excessively wet weather in past years, new erosion issues are a constant. SWCD's all over the state are working hard trying to meet their customers' goals. I'm proud of the partnership at the Cass SWCD and the customer service it provides, I hope you are as well.



CASS COUNTY NRCS SOILS NEWS

Cass County Soil Survey Update

The Cass County Soil Survey Report is now available for free distribution. An open-public distribution meeting will be held on February 8, 6-8:00 pm, at the Cass County Extension Office.

The Soil Survey Report is available in three forms: hard-copy soil survey books, DVDs, and internet.

The new soil survey books will be published in limited quantities with larger maps and data tables contained in a 3-ring binder.

The DVDs will include the complete report and an interactive GIS program called SoilView. This GIS program (developed by ESRI in conjunction with NRCS) allows users to find soils information for specific areas and generate interpretive maps.

The Soil Survey Report can also be found on the internet through:

NRCS Soils website-
<http://www.soils.usda.gov>

Web Soil Survey-
<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>

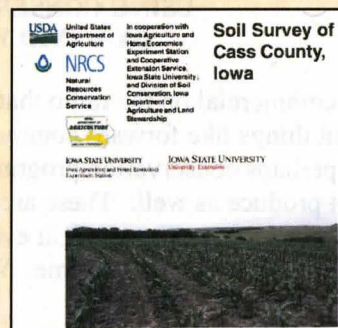
The Soil Survey Report contains information valuable to farmers, land owners, developers, engineers and a variety of individuals involved in land use in Cass County Iowa.



Atlantic Iowa NRCS Soil Scientists (left to right): John Ham-
 merly, Dan Pulido, Valerie Jaehrling

Distribution Meeting
 February 8, 2012
 Cass County Extension Office

Professional Meeting 9:00 AM to 12:00PM
 Public Meeting 6:00 PM to 8:00PM



SoilView DVD
 Available at our office

Valerie Jaehrling



Valerie Jaehrling began working for the USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Services in Atlantic, Iowa as a Soil Scientist on February 14, 2011. She grew up outside of Oakland, Iowa, and went to Iowa State University, where she completed her Master's degree in Sustainable Agriculture before working for the NRCS.

Terrace Maintenance

An important part of farm maintenance is properly maintaining your terrace system. A system that is poorly maintained can cause more soil erosion than no terraces at all. Broken terraces can funnel runoff causing large gullies. With adequate maintenance, the life span of a terrace system can be extended. Periodically perform tile, terrace and intake inspections, particularly after a significant rainfall. Repair any damage as soon as possible. Remove excess sediment from around inlets and terrace channels as needed. Repair or replace damaged inlets immediately. Repair any caused by rodents or farm machinery. Maintain vegetation by reseeding when necessary. Brush and trees should be cut and sprayed with approved herbicides. Developing and maintaining an effective operation and maintenance program will ensure that your terrace system is an asset to your farm for years to come. If you have questions about developing an effective maintenance program, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office.



USING CONSERVATION PROGRAMS TO MANAGE RISK BY DAVID YORK, DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Lately, I've heard a commercial on the radio that talks about managing risk for farming operations. I suppose this company is likely talking about things like forward contracting grain and other tools to help the financial "bottom line". This has gotten me to think that perhaps conservation programs could be used as tools to manage risk. We all know even the best farms have areas that don't produce as well. These areas might be hillsides where the soils are not the best to floodplains that flood and cause issues growing crops. There might even be cases where a field that has been in pasture for many years was brought into crop production for the first time. Whatever the situation, we have a conservation program that could help.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a good program that allows us to take small areas out of corn and soybean production and seed those down to a mixture of grasses and legumes. We can even take those wet areas with the right soil types and restore the wetlands that used to be there. The restoration can be as little or as much as the landowner wishes to do. These areas will require some sort of mid contract activity to be performed once or twice during the contract period. Specific activities include burning, spraying, interseeding, and disking. Combinations of these activities are also available. Speaking of restoring wetlands, the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a program that provides a more long term solution to some of these wet areas. This program is a little different than the CRP program in that we are required to completely restore the functions and values of the wetland area. This program offers thirty year and permanent easements. Easements values are determined by an appraisal of the agricultural value of the land. Once an easement is purchased, the landowner continues to own the property.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is the Federal Government's cost share program. Through this program, we are able to provide cost share assistance to help improve pastures, or improve row crop land. For pasture land, we help producers install practices such as watering systems, fencing and interseeding. These practices help producers utilize their forage more efficiently and also lessen the damage the animals can do to the land. In row crop land, installing practices such as terraces and waterways can help prevent damage caused by rain and snow melt. Also available to row crop producers is an incentive to install conservation practices during the summer. The Iowa Financial Incentive Program (IFIP or State Cost Share) and the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program are the State Government's cost share programs. These programs are very similar to the EQIP program but really are tailored to smaller projects. REAP also has a forestry and native grass component to it as well. These programs help landowners and producers manage risk in their farming operations just as other tools do. I believe they should be considered just as other tools are considered during the year. If you want to discuss your options, don't be afraid to stop by our office and visit with us. We would be more than happy to visit with you. You can also find more information at the Cass Soil & Water Conservation District's website. The address is www.cassswcd.org

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District Rental Equipment 10 foot Great Plains No-till drill

Our drill rents for \$10/acre with a fifty dollar deposit at time of application, which is applied towards your bill.

Applications can be found on cassswcd.org website or you may make application at our office located at 503 W. 7th St., Ste 1 Atlantic, Iowa.

THANK YOU

The Cass SWCD would like to thank everyone who contributed to the publication of the Annual Report

Steve Nelson Construction
Chris Heuton Earthmoving
3M Tiling
Darrell Kirchhoff
Eshelman Trenching
Ras Paul Construction
Empire Construction
Custom Seed Service
Cullen Tree Service

Richter Contracting Inc.
Vais Tiling
Nelson Land Improvement
Stamp Construction
Gus Construction
Hansen Earth Moving
Wickman Chemical
Lund Seed
Property Connections

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District

Curt Behrends Greg Zellmer Ray Wilson Fred Kay Tracy Marshall Alan Peterson Alan Zellmer



The Cass Soil and Water Conservation District monthly meeting is held on the fourth Thursday of each month.

Atlantic Field Office Staff



Jana Coughlin, Scott Breach, David York,
Steve Fluckey, Randall Larsen



Jeff Sporrer
Resource Conservationist
Cass & Audubon office

Tree sales are held each year at the Cass SWCD. Anyone interested in purchasing trees and shrubs from the SWCD need to order by March 1st of each year. Landowners can apply for assistance through IDALS-DSC for REAP funds to help with installing new windbreaks. For more information stop in the SWCD office. See order forms on the Cass SWCD website at cassswcd.org.

Tree Order Form

Item #	Description	Qty.	Price	Subtotal
--------	-------------	------	-------	----------

Order total: _____

Tax: _____
Shipping: _____

Shipping: _____
Total: _____Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____Remit Payment to: **Cass SWCD**
503 W. 7th Street

Atlantic, Iowa 50022

☐ Check # _____ Receipt # _____

☐ Cash Receipt # _____

Orders must be placed by March 1, 2012

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To ensure availability:

To ensure availability.

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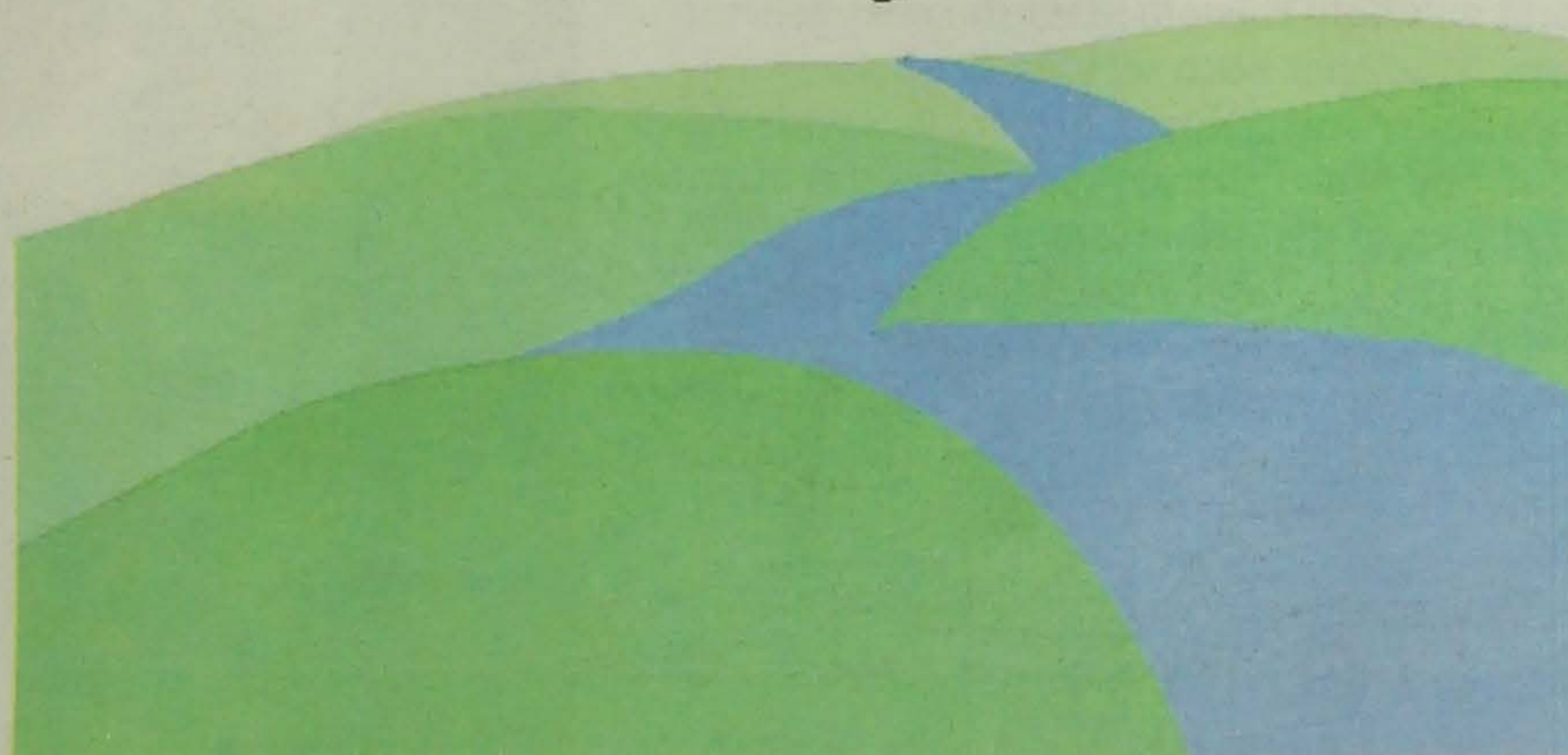
OTHER SPECIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE. Please inquire at our office

*"The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
is an equal opportunity employer and provider."*

Cassswcd.org

2011 Annual Report

Cass County SWCD



The Function of the Conservation District: To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.

Cass County Soil and Water Conservation Financial Report FY 11

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New Soil Division Director	page 7
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Managing Risk	page 10



Valerie Jaehrling began working for the USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Services in Atlantic, Iowa as a Soil Scientist on Feb. 14, 2011.

See story on page 3

SWCD Commissioners

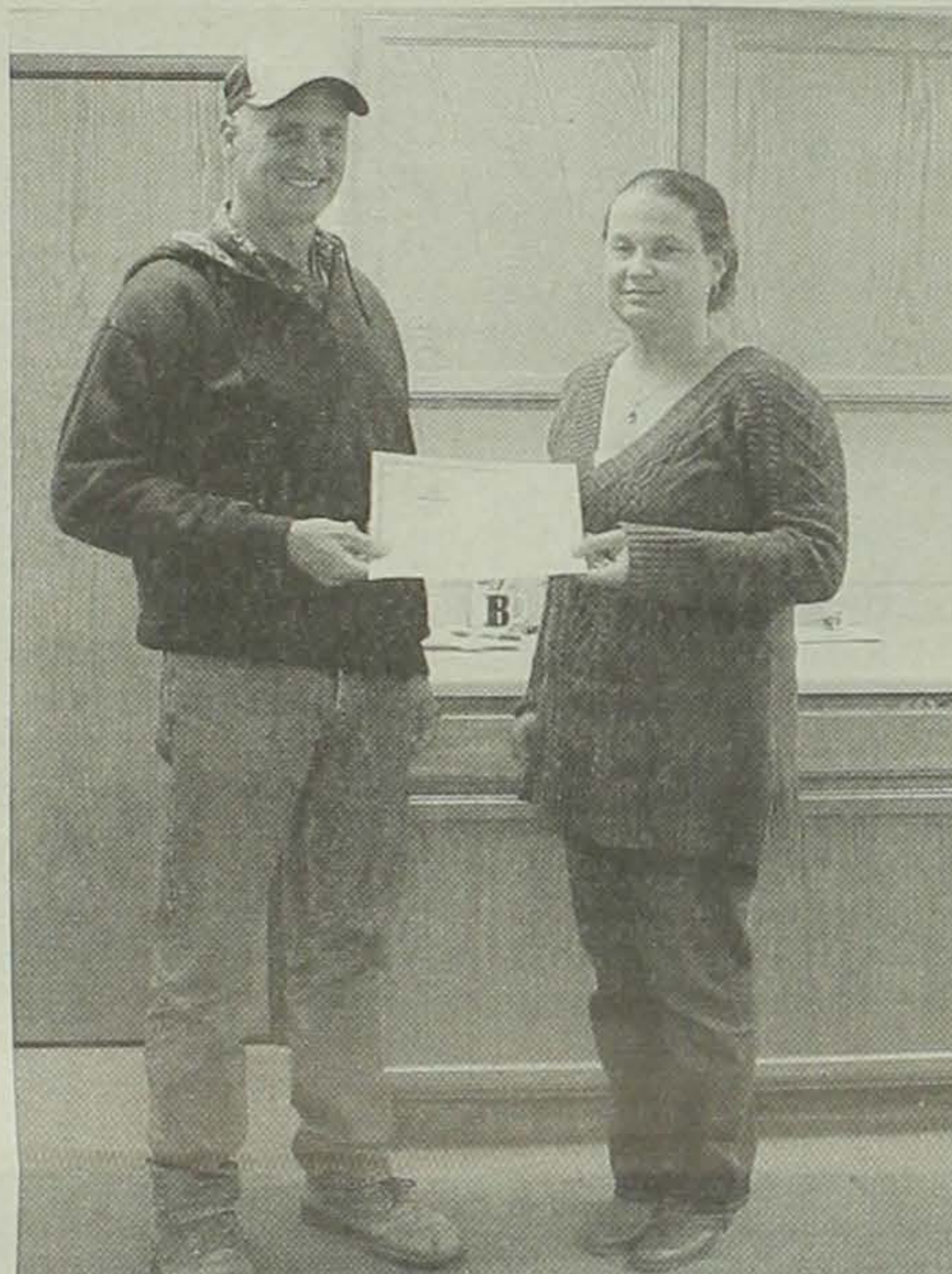


Alan Zellmer, Ray Wilson, Alan Peterson, Greg Zellmer, Curt Behrends, Tracy Marshall and Fred Kay.

Photo contributed

Published by the Atlantic News Telegraph

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Pictured at left, Curt Behrends and Tracy Marshall
Pictured at right, Alan Zellmer and Curt Behrends



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Cass SWCD Recognized at CDI Annual Conference



Pictured above, Alan Peterson, Tracy Marshall, Curt Behrends, Jana Coughlin and David York.

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Brian 243-2457 home
249-0314 cell

Chase 249-2025 cell
Travis 249-7115 cell

Conservation Station at Cass County Fair

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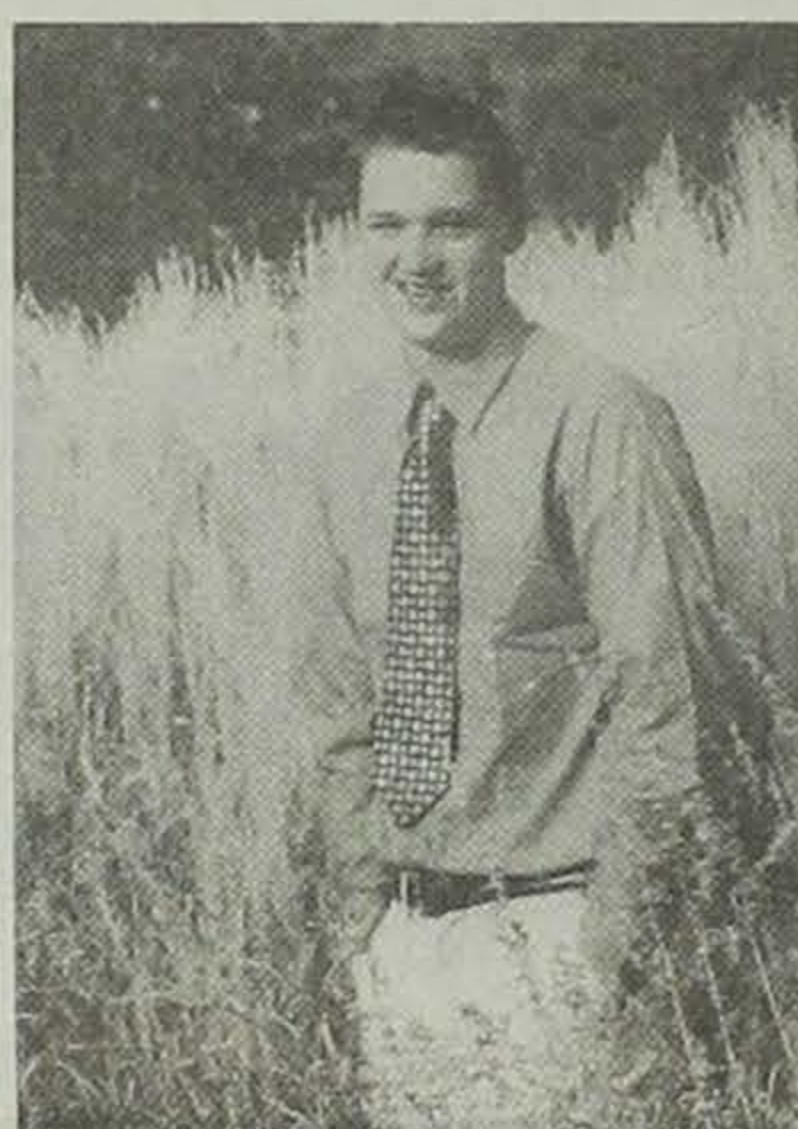
The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

2011 Scholarship Winners

Atlantic Community School

Nachtman awarded CASS SWCD Scholarship

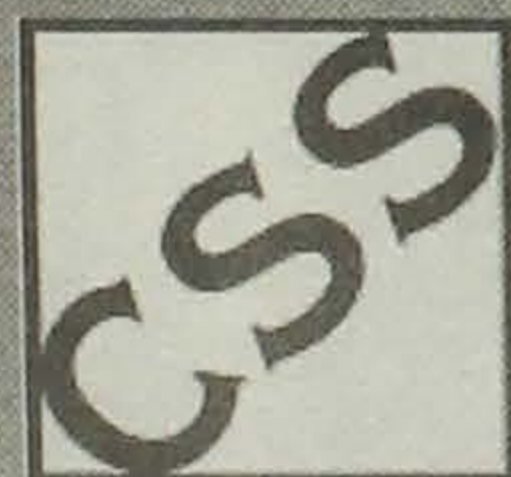
Ethan Nachtman was awarded the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship at Atlantic Community School class night on May 4. This \$300 scholarship is awarded to graduating seniors in Cass county who continue their education in Agriculture or Natural Resources related field of study. He is the son of Kipp and Katherine Nachtman of Atlantic. Graduating seniors in Cass County can apply for this scholarship through their guidance counselors or download applications off the Cass SWCD website at, cassswcd.org.



CAM Community School



Ethan Miller and Taylor Dorsey was awarded the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship at CAM Community School class night on May 11. This \$300 scholarship is awarded to graduating seniors in Cass County who continue their education in Agriculture or Natural Resources related field of study. Ethan is the son of Gary and Shelly Miller of Atlantic and Taylor is the daughter of Dan and Marcy Jo Dorsey of Anita. Graduating seniors in Cass County can apply for this scholarship through their guidance counselors or download applications off the Cass SWCD website at cassswcd.org.



CUSTOM SEED SERVICES

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66 Main Street, Panama, IA 51562

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Fax: 712-489-2530

Email: customseed@iowatelecom.com

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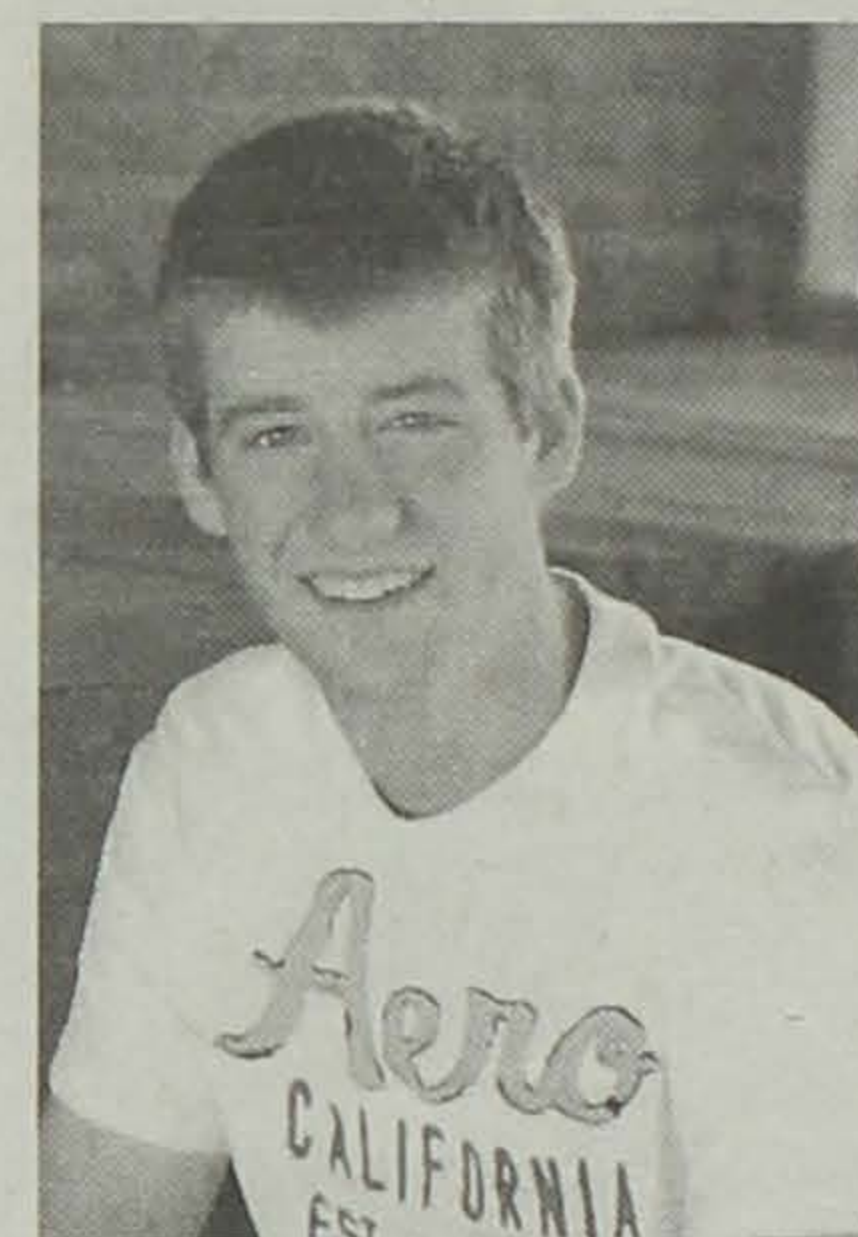
Griswold Community School



Left Alex Freund, above Casey Marshall, right, Josh Bierbaum

Griswold graduates receive SWCD Scholarships

Josh Bierbaum, Alex Freund and Casey Marshall were awarded the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship at Griswold Community School class night on May 17. This \$300 scholarship is awarded to graduating seniors in Cass county who continue their education in Agriculture or Natural Resources related field of study. Josh is the son of Brent and Marsha Bierbaum of Griswold, Alex is the son of Tony and Rhea Freund of Lewis and Casey is the son of Mike and Tracy Marshall of Lewis. Graduating seniors in Cass County can apply for this scholarship through their guidance counselors or download applications off the Cass SWCD website at cassswcd.org.



Field Seeds For Sale

CRP Mixes

Alfalfa • All Types of Grasses • Lawn Seed • Clovers • Pasture Mixes
• Horse Pasture • Wildlife Cover Mixes • Etc. • Can Mix & Blend
4-Star Seeds • Triple A Seeds • Walker Lawn Mowers

Lund Seeds

Arlyn Lund, 54833 750th Street, Anita, Iowa 50020
Home 712-762-4496 • Cell 712-249-0727

Eshelman
Trenching

Jerry Eshelman, Owner
Office 641-343-7083
Home 641-343-7929
Cell 641-221-0396

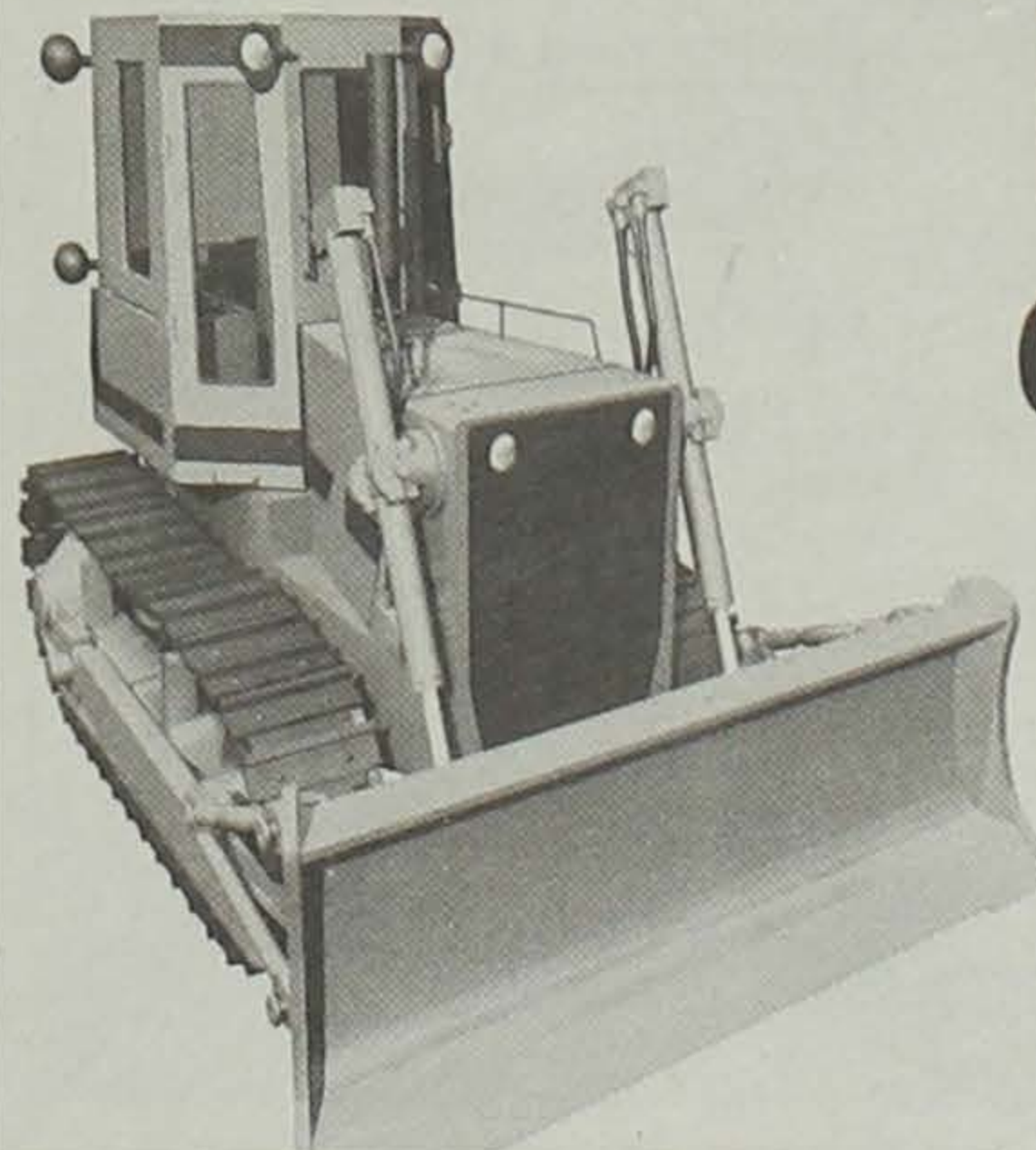
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Cass County Fair Coloring Contest

The Cass SWCD sponsored a coloring contest at the Cass County Fair for ages Pre K thru fifth grade students. All participants were awarded participation awards, and first, second, third places are also recognized. Thanks to all the kids who participated in the coloring contest.

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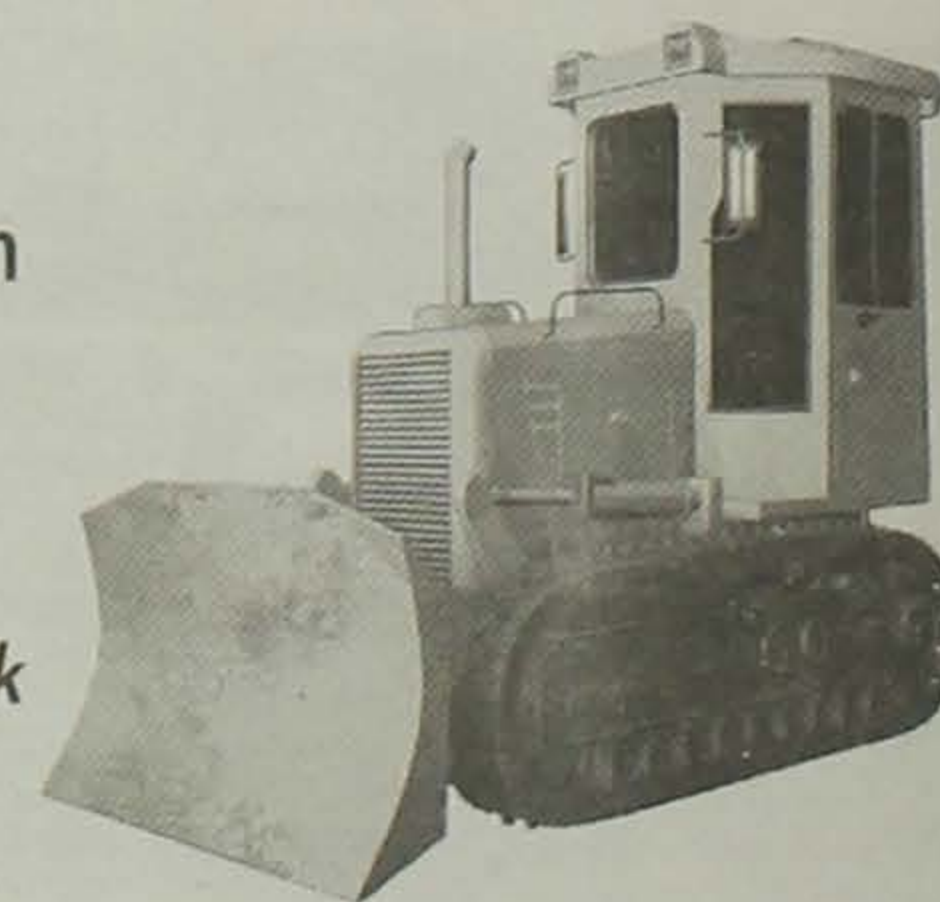


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Northey announces hiring of Jim Gillespie as new director of Division of Soil Conservation

Will oversee Department's work on soil erosion, water quality and abandoned mine reclamation

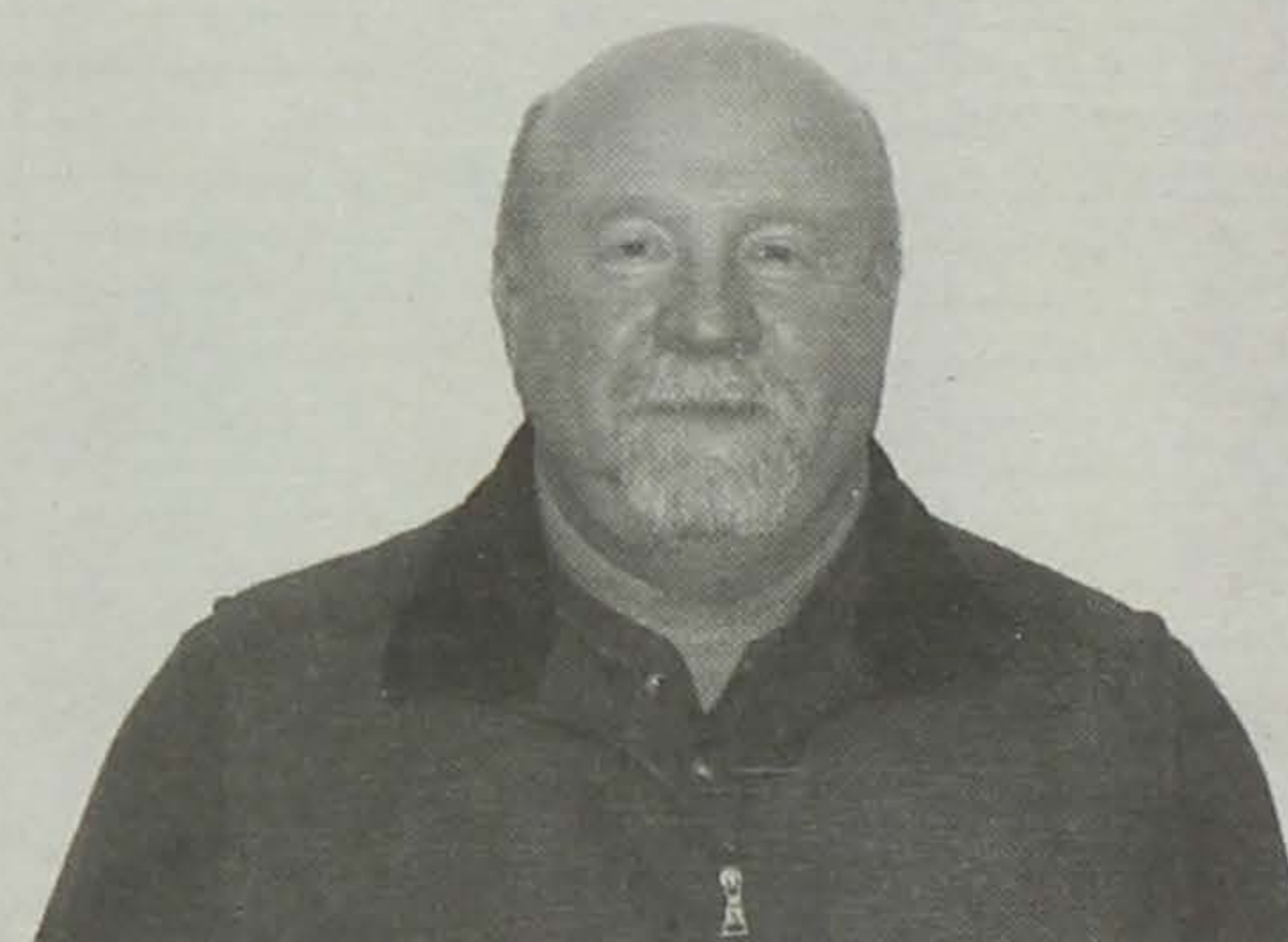
DES MOINES- Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey today announced that Jim Gillespie has been hired as the new Director of the Division of Soil Conservation within the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Chuck Gipp, the previous Director, left earlier this year to become Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The Division of Soil Conservation is responsible for administering state programs and providing leadership to farmers, landowners, communities and others to promote the protection and management of soil, water and mineral resources. The Division also assists Soil and Water Conservation Districts and private landowners to meet their agricultural and environmental protection needs.

"Jim has extensive experience with both the people

and the programs that make-up the Division of Soil Conservation and I know he will provide strong leadership as the Division continues its work to protect our air, soil and water," Northey said. "We had a number of strong candidates for the position and I know Jim will do a great job." "I look forward to working with farmers, landowners, partners, and soil and water conservation districts to continue to build on the 'culture of conservation' that is so strong in our state," Gillespie said. "There are great opportunities ahead for Iowa agriculture due to the growing world population and the need to produce more food, so the Division's work to support efforts to protect our soil and water remains tremendously important. It is vital that these resources remain protected and productive for future generations."

Gillespie has served Field Services Bureau Chief for the Department since 1989. In this position he has overseen the work of 136 employees for the Division in 100 offices around the state and worked in partnership with the 500 elected Soil and Water Conservation Commissioners. Previously Gillespie served as a Field Representative in the Division of Soil Conservation and worked



with county soil and water conservation districts on local resource management issues. He graduated from Northwest Missouri University with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with an emphasis on agriculture. After graduation he taught agriculture classes at Earlham Community School and served as the FFA advisor for four years before joining the Department.

Seamless Customer Service, A Recipe for Success

Brandon Dittman

Western Iowa Field Representative

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation

The 2011/2012 construction season was very successful for the Cass Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and generally very successful for all the 100 SWCD's in our great State of Iowa. Last

year's harvest was early and fall was long and mild. This combination was ideal for farmland improvements such as tiling, terrace, pond, sediment basin, and waterway construction. For many past years it seems the time between winter's end and plant-

ing season or between harvest and winter's onset was abnormally short due to our ever changing Iowa weather! We need a few

Servicesee page 9

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CASS COUNTY SOIL WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2012 Tree Shrub Price List

Potted Evergreens	Size	Sold As	Number Ordered	Price Each	Total
Black Hills Spruce	2-3'	Each		X \$22.00	
Black Hills Spruce	3-4'	Each		X \$30.00	
Black Hills Spruce	5'	Each		X \$58.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	2-3'	Each		X \$22.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	3-4'	Each		X \$30.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	5'	Each		X \$60.00	
Norway Spruce	3-4'	Each		X \$30.00	
Norway Spruce	5'	Each		X \$58.00	
Concolor Fir	12-15"	Each		X \$9.00	
Concolor Fir	18-24"	Each		X \$20.00	
White Pine	2-3'	Each		X \$22.00	
White Pine	3-4'	Each		X \$28.00	
White Pine	5-6'	Each		X \$40.00	
Bareroot Evergreen Upon Request					
Deciduous Shrubs/Trees	Size	Bundles	Number Ordered	Price Each	Total
Lilac, Common Purple	2'-3'	Transplant	10	\$1.00	
Redosier Dogwood	2-3'	Seedling	25	\$1.50	
American Cranberry	2-3'	Transplant	10	\$1.75	
Oak, Red	3-4'	Seedling	10	\$2.00	
Maples, Sugar	2-3'	Seedling	25	\$1.50	
Maples, Rubrum	2-3'	Seedling	25	\$1.75	

NOTE: ORDERS LESS THAN \$100 MUST BE PAID IN FULL AT THE TIME THE ORDER IS PLACED.
ORDERS OVER \$100 REQUIRE A MINIMUM OF 50% DEPOSIT WITH THE BALANCE DUE AT TIME OF PICK-UP

Make Checks payable to: Cass County SWCD

Check # _____ or Cash _____ Receipt # _____

Check # _____ or Cash _____ Receipt # _____

Sub Total
7% Sales Tax
Total
Deposit
Balance Due

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City, State, Zip _____
Telephone: _____

OTHER SPECIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE. Please inquire at our office

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Annual Tree Sales

Tree Sales are held each year at the Cass SWCD. Anyone interested in purchasing trees and shrubs from the SWCD need to order by March 1 of each year. Landowners can apply for assistance through IDALS-DSC for REAP fund to help with installing new windbreaks. For more information, stop in the SWCD office. See order forms on the Cass SWCD web site at cassswcd.org.

Cass County Soil Survey Update

The Cass County Soil Survey Report is now available for free distribution. An open-public distribution meeting will be held on Feb. 8, 6-8 p.m., at the Cass County Extension Office.

The Soil Survey Report is available in three forms: hard-copy soil survey books, DVDs, and internet.

The new soil survey books will be published in limited quantities with larger maps and data tables contained in a 3-ring binder.

The DVDs will include the complete report and an interactive GIS program called Soil-View. This GIS program (developed by ESRI in conjunction with NRCS) allows users to find soils information for specific areas and generate interpretive maps.

The Soil Survey Report can also be found on the internet through:

NRCS Soils website-

<http://www.soils.usda.gov>

Web Soil Survey-

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>

The Soil Survey Report contains information valuable to farmers, land owners, developers, engineers and a variety of individuals involved in land use in Cass County Iowa.

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District Rental Equipment

10 foot Great Plains No-till drill Our drill rents for \$10/acre with a fifty dollar deposit at time of application, which is applied towards your bill.

Applications can be found on cassswcd.org website or you may make application at our office located at 503 W. 7th St., Ste 1 Atlantic, Iowa.

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Atlantic Field Office Staff

Jana Coughlin, Scott Breach, David York, Steve Fluckey and Randall Larsen.



Jeff Sporrer, Resource Conservationist-Cass and Audubon office.

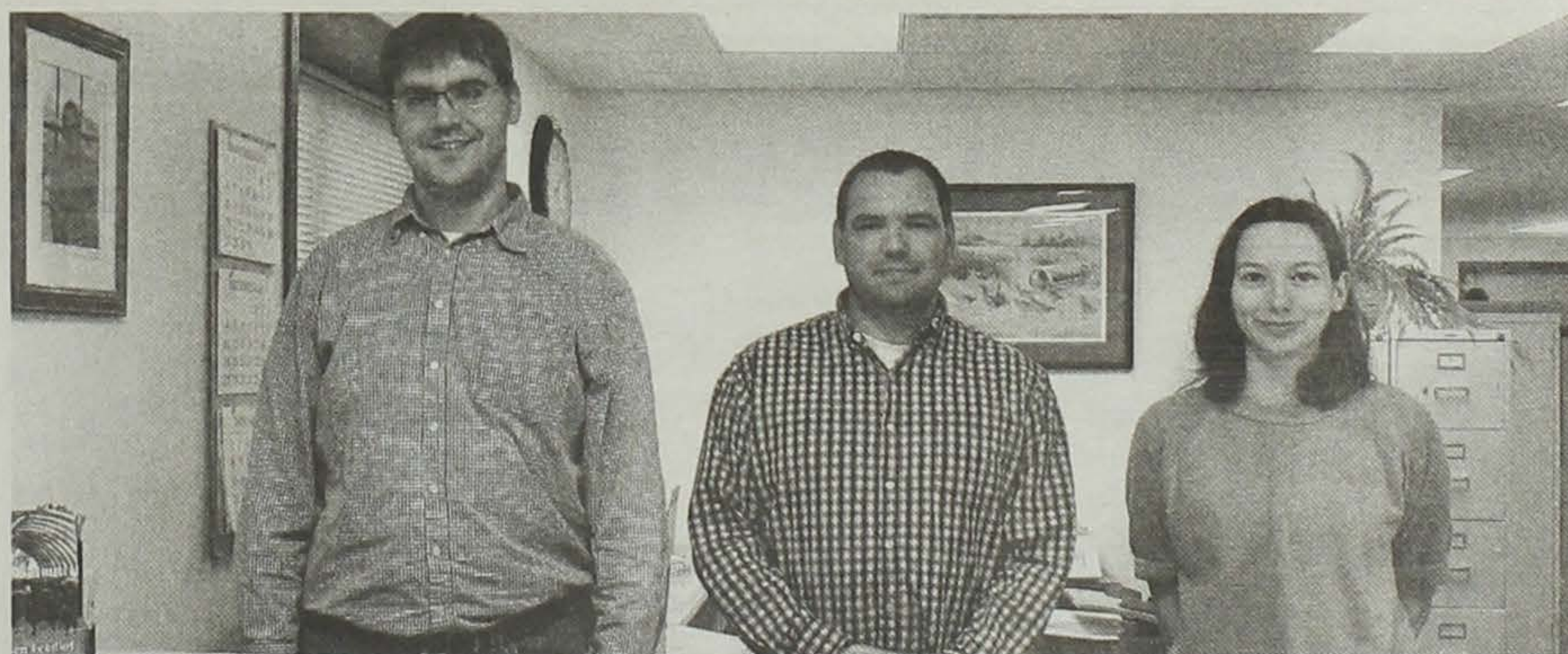
Below - Atlantic Iowa NRCS Soil Scientists (left to right) John Hammerly, Dan Pulido, Valerie Jaehrling

Seamless customer service

ServiceFrom page seven

"perfect" falls such as these to catch up with some projects that have "been on the books."

Nice weather and long construction seasons provide us with half of our necessary ingredients. The efficiency of the employees working for you at the Cass SWCD office provided the remaining elements for our recipe for success. Many folks may not realize there are 3 separate employers at the office. There are employees of the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA- NRCS), the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC), and the SWCD in the Cass SWCD office and many of the other SWCD offices around Iowa. NRCS, IDALS, and the SWCD employees all work together to promote, incentivize, and implement conservation practices. The role of each employee in the office is unique in some ways but can overlap in others; these various positions fit together to create the seamless network of conservation assistance that is unique to Iowa. There are Federal and SWCD employees working to implement State Cost Share Programs and State and SWCD employees working on Federal Conservation Programs. This flexibility allows Districts to allocate resources where they're needed and when they're needed the most; the partnership between agencies maximizes a District's efficiency. Thank you all for your desire to implement conservation practices to improve your farm's long term sustainability and profitability. With our period of excessively wet weather in past years, new erosion issues are a constant. SWCD's all over the state are working hard trying to meet their customers' goals. I'm proud of the partnership at the Cass SWCD and the customer service it provides, I hope you are as well.



Terrace Maintenance

An important part of farm maintenance is properly maintaining your terrace system. A system that is poorly maintained can cause more soil erosion than no terraces at all. Broken terraces can funnel runoff causing large gullies. With adequate maintenance, the life span of a terrace system can be extended. Periodically perform tile, terrace and intake inspections, particularly after a significant rainfall. Repair any damage as soon as possible. Remove excess sediment from around inlets and terrace channels as needed. Repair or replace damaged inlets immediately. Repair any caused by rodents or farm machinery. Maintain vegetation by reseeding when necessary. Brush and trees should be cut and sprayed with approved herbicides. Developing and maintaining an effective operation and maintenance program will ensure that your terrace system is an asset to your farm for years to come. If you have questions about developing an effective maintenance program, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

High tunnel agriculture

By Randall Larsen

Soil Conservation Technician

What is a High Tunnel? A high tunnel is a simple, inexpensive, naturally ventilated Quonset or gothic shaped structure constructed of metal purlins attached to metal pipes with six mil plastic. These structures work well to extend the growing season for soft fruit and vegetable production. Growing soft fruits and vegetables in a high tunnel enhances crop growth, yield and quality. A High Tunnel lets you produce disease free produce and market it fresh for a longer period of time.

Organic producers and farmers market producers can use a High Tunnel to produce more top dollar crops in a longer growing season. Some Advantages of using a High Tunnel are:

- * Improved quality of produce
- * Extended growing season
- * 6 Ft. building heights allows access with machinery
- * Wind protection for plant seedlings

High Tunnel see page 11

Using conservation programs to manage risk

BY DAVID YORK

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

Lately, I've heard a commercial on the radio that talks about managing risk for farming operations. I suppose this company is likely talking about things like forward contracting grain and other tools to help the financial "bottom line." This has gotten me to think that perhaps conservation programs could be used as tools to manage risk. We all know even the best farms have areas that don't produce as well. These areas might be hillsides where the soils are not the best to flood-plains that flood and cause issues growing crops. There might even be cases where a field that has been in pasture for many years was brought into crop production for the first time. Whatever the situation, we have a conservation program that could help.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a good program that allows us to take small areas out of corn and soybean production and seed those down to a mixture of grasses and legumes. We can even take those wet areas with the right soil types and restore the wetlands that used to be there. The restoration can be as little or as much as the landowner wishes to do. These areas will require some sort of mid contract activity to be performed once or twice during the contract period. Specific activities include burning, spraying, interseeding, and disking. Combinations of these activities are also available. Speaking of restoring wetlands, the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a program that provides a more long term solution to some of these wet areas. This program is a little different than the CRP program in that we are required to completely restore the functions and values of the wetland area. This program offers thirty year and permanent easements. Easements values are determined by an appraisal of the agricultural value of the land. Once an easement is purchased, the landowner continues to own the property.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is the Federal Government's cost share program. Through this program, we are able to provide cost share assistance to help improve pastures, or improve row crop land. For pasture land, we help producers install practices such as watering systems, fencing and interseeding. These practices help producers utilize their forage more efficiently and also lessen the damage the animals can do to the land. In row crop land, installing practices such as terraces and waterways can help prevent damage caused by rain and snow melt. Also available to row crop producers is an incentive to install conservation practices during the summer. The Iowa Financial Incentive Program (IFIP or State Cost Share) and the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program are the State Government's cost share programs. These programs are very similar to the EQIP program but really are tailored to smaller projects. REAP also has a forestry and native grass component to it as well. These programs help landowners and producers manage risk in their farming operations just as other tools do. I believe they should be considered just as other tools are considered during the year. If you want to discuss your options, don't be afraid to stop by our office and visit with us. We would be more than happy to visit with you. You can also find more information at the Cass Soil & Water Conservation District's website. The address is www.cassswcd.org

THANK YOU

The Cass SWCD would like to thank everyone who contributed to the publication of the Annual Report

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Federal programs help with Conservation

By Kristy York,
NRCS Program Specialist

Believe it or not, spring is around the corner. Just as all of you gear up for the next crop year, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is also. Staff is busy working toward obligating this fiscal year's program funds. Did you know that each year contracts are written with producers to help them solve resource concerns on their farm? What is a resource concern you ask? A resource concern is a specific natural resource impairment or problem that is likely to be addressed successfully through implementation of conservation practices or activities by producers.

High Tunnel Agriculture

High TunnelFrom page ten

- * Insect protection
- * Plant foliage stays dry because of drip irrigation
- * Water needs of plants are easily managed

Some disadvantages of using a High Tunnel are:

- * Requires fairly regular attention to control internal temperature of the High Tunnel
- * Snow must be removed from base areas along the side of the High Tunnel
- * Disposal cost of the plastic covering after the lifespan of the covering
- * The cost per square foot of production area.

Here in Cass County, Iowa, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (N.R.C.S.) will have cost share dollars available for High Tunnel Systems for crops through our Environmental Quality Incentive Program. High Tunnels will be added to our list of eligible practices for the 2011-2012 year if there is interest or need for it. If anyone is interested in High Tunnels, you may stop in the N.R.C.S. office at 503 W 7th St., STE 1, Atlantic, Iowa and pick up information or you could go to the Iowa NRCS website at <http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov>

Examples you might see after the snow melts this spring is erosion on the side hills of a cropland field. Trampled stock ground or pasture areas where livestock were overwintered also show erosion. An example of a management concern is a shortage of hay for livestock before our pastures green up. These are real concerns. If they sound familiar to you please stop in and visit your local NRCS office. There are people in these offices who can come to your farm and help you evaluate your situation and provide alternatives to help you treat these resource concerns on your farm. NRCS can give you advice and possibly even money toward solving your resource concerns.

Each year the NRCS offices have various Federal program dollars to help you solve resource concern issues or help you with improvements on your farm. Here is a brief rundown of program opportunities available for you. On the federal side you will find Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). EQIP is the primary program that gives financial assistance for solving resource concerns. Commonly cost shared practices include: terraces, waterways, structures and ponds, pasture and hayland plantings, fencing, and prescribed grazing just to name a few. Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is the program to help producers address issues or make improvement on their land for wildlife. Our Private Lands Biologist is more than happy to work with producers, listen to their goals, and make suggestions for meeting those goals. Practices commonly used under WHIP are Brush Management, timber stand improvement, and wildlife seedings using the conservation cover practice. Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a new program that pays producers money based on the current level of conservation they are doing on their land as long as they agree to make additional improvements once their ground is accepted into the program. Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) this is a program that allows producers to enroll into easements and rental contracts by simply agreeing to keep their land in hayland or pasture.

Each of these federal programs has a ranking that must be completed and separate cut off dates throughout the year. However if one of these programs interest you, please stop in and discuss it further with the staff. Appli-

cations can be taken at any point and there is no reason not to apply. Conservation is definitely evident on the land in Southwest Iowa. It is your continued dedication to improving the land that will keep our resources at a sustainable levels for the future; for that I say Thank You to each and every one of you.

We've come a long way

By Steve Fluckey
Soil Conservation Technician

Recently I had the good fortune to come across some rather interesting reading material. Being a conservationist for the last 30 odd years, I often receive various conservation and farming books from family and friends. This year I acquired some pamphlets dating back to the late 1930s that were put out by the University of Missouri Agricultural Extension Service. I enjoyed reading the up and coming "trends" of the time: Conserving Soil by Contour Farming and

Water Management for the Farm. It makes a person stop to think how far we've come with conservation practices.

As I look out my back door, I see a pond that was built by the C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) during the Depression. The dirt was moved by hand with shovels and wheel barrows. The pond was one of the first in the area. Very few of those ponds still exist today. Conservation practices were poor back then, and they were soon filled with silt. Conservationists, and farmers alike, soon realized conservation practices would be needed in the watersheds to prevent the same thing from happening on future sites. The trouble was, not all farmers wanted to hear it. Their sons heard, however, in Ag classrooms across the state where contour farming and seeding waterways were hot topics.

Today, ponds, structures, and terraces are built in a fraction of the time with equipment available now. A variety of programs are available to farmers and landowners with the goal of conserving our natural resources. We can't imagine looking across a field to see gullies so large "that you could hide a two story house in some of them" as my neighbor explained. Our children couldn't imagine digging a ditch by hand, much less an entire pond.

Yes, friends, we've come a long way in the last 70 plus years. It makes me wonder what conservation will look like in another 70.

Got a news tip?
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