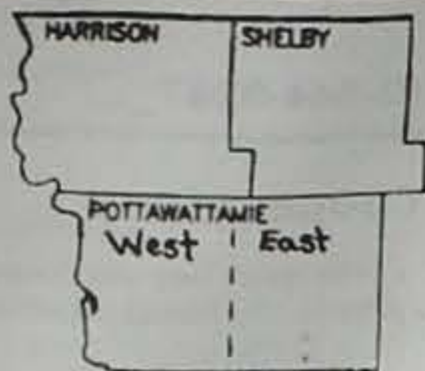




Volume 3
Issue 1

Quad-District Conservation Newsletter



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Spring
1998

Funding approved for new Willow Creek Watershed

by Lou Waite

Willow Creek, which flows through Harrison County, has a long history of flooding. "Old-timers" of the area can recall numerous occasions when water overflowed the banks, or broke through the dikes to devastate the countryside. The feeling was that it was just something which happened periodically . . . something beyond their control.

"I remember in 1957," said Leonard Johnson of Missouri Valley, "when we had a 6 or 8 inch rain in the late evening, falling in a short period of time. Around midnight, I went out and could see the water was running over the top of the banks of the Willow. The road was closed, and water was advancing at a rapid rate. The next morning, it was water everywhere!"

In retrospect, however, Leonard recalled that there were few terraces on the land at that time, and fewer dams to help control the water flow.

George "Buck" Winther remembers the late forties when 2-foot of topsoil was deposited at a low point in the area. Much of the rich loam was also spread out across the farm fields adjacent to the Willow. "They didn't use fertilizer back then," Winther recalled, "so the corn in those fields would become dark green and always yield better. Now when the water recedes, all we find is sand! And the crops are damaged or lost altogether. So what does that tell us?"

What is was telling was obvious, and even more so after the floods of 1982 and 1993 in particular. "After the flood of 1993," Johnson said, "I looked at what had been a field of fully tasseled corn, and I couldn't see one tassel showing anywhere."

Charles Wisecup of Missouri Valley well remembers the years when floodwaters from Willow Creek covered thousands of acres of fertile farmland. "In 1996, we had two floods, three weeks apart," he said. "There were large breaks in the dikes from the first flood, so when the second one hit, there was nothing to stop the water. It was devastating to the crops and also to the people. The crops were ruined, and the ground stayed so wet we couldn't even replant!"

That was the year that H.E. (Whitey) Mensching decided he was tired of just sitting back and enduring whatever Mother Nature's whim dictated. "I didn't know for certain what could be done," Whitey affirmed, "but I knew someone had to try. We had to begin somewhere."

It began with Whitey contacting his farmer friends, Johnson, Winther and Wisecup, and asking them if they would join in the effort. They readily agreed, and thus what was to

become the Willow Creek Watershed Board of Directors was born.

The group came to Russ Kurth, District Conservationist, who recommended they attend a meeting of the Iowa Watersheds organization. At the meeting, they received valuable directions on how to develop their project and how to seek financial aid. Then, with Kurth's assistance and guidance, a Willow Creek Watershed project plan was designed and application made for funds from the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

It sounds simple, but a lot of time was spent in devising the work plan and following all the procedures of making application. "We couldn't have done it without Russ," Whitey emphasized, "and we really appreciate his efforts."

Tentative approval for the 93,000-acre watershed was received in February and final approval in March of this year. Through EQIP, \$100,000 has been granted for expenditures in 1998, and \$250,000 for each of the next two years, unless budget restrictions intervene.

At a meeting held on Friday, March 13, it was decided to use approximately half of the money for terraces and half for grade stabilization and/or sediment control structures. This year, 60% cost-share will be offered for terraces, and 70% for structures to landowners within the watershed.

All these landowners will receive a letter, explaining the purpose and goals of the watershed, and encouraging their participation. They will be asked to complete and return a survey form which will be included. "It is important that they return the survey," Mensching

emphasized, for their response to this will give the board an idea of how and where to proceed."

The emphasis is on partnerships for this project, according to board members. The H & P Drainage District (of Harrison and Pottawattamie Counties) may contribute funds, for the watershed project will benefit their organization. The Harrison County Board of Supervisors may also be a contributor, for improvements in the watershed would protect roads and bridges, etc., for which the county is responsible. The City of Missouri Valley, many times inundated by flood waters in the past, may be included. There may be other local, state or federal entities or organizations also involved in the far-reaching partnership.

Wayne Kierscht, who represented the H & P Drainage District at the session, agreed that being included in the partnership would be of value. "It costs the district money every time a dike breaks, or sediment washes down from the hills and fills the ditches," he said. "Upland treatment and erosion control structures in the watershed would certainly aid in preventing such damage and help us stay within our budget."

The Willow Watershed Board members among them own over 2,000 acres of cropland and one major industry, all lying within the watershed boundaries.

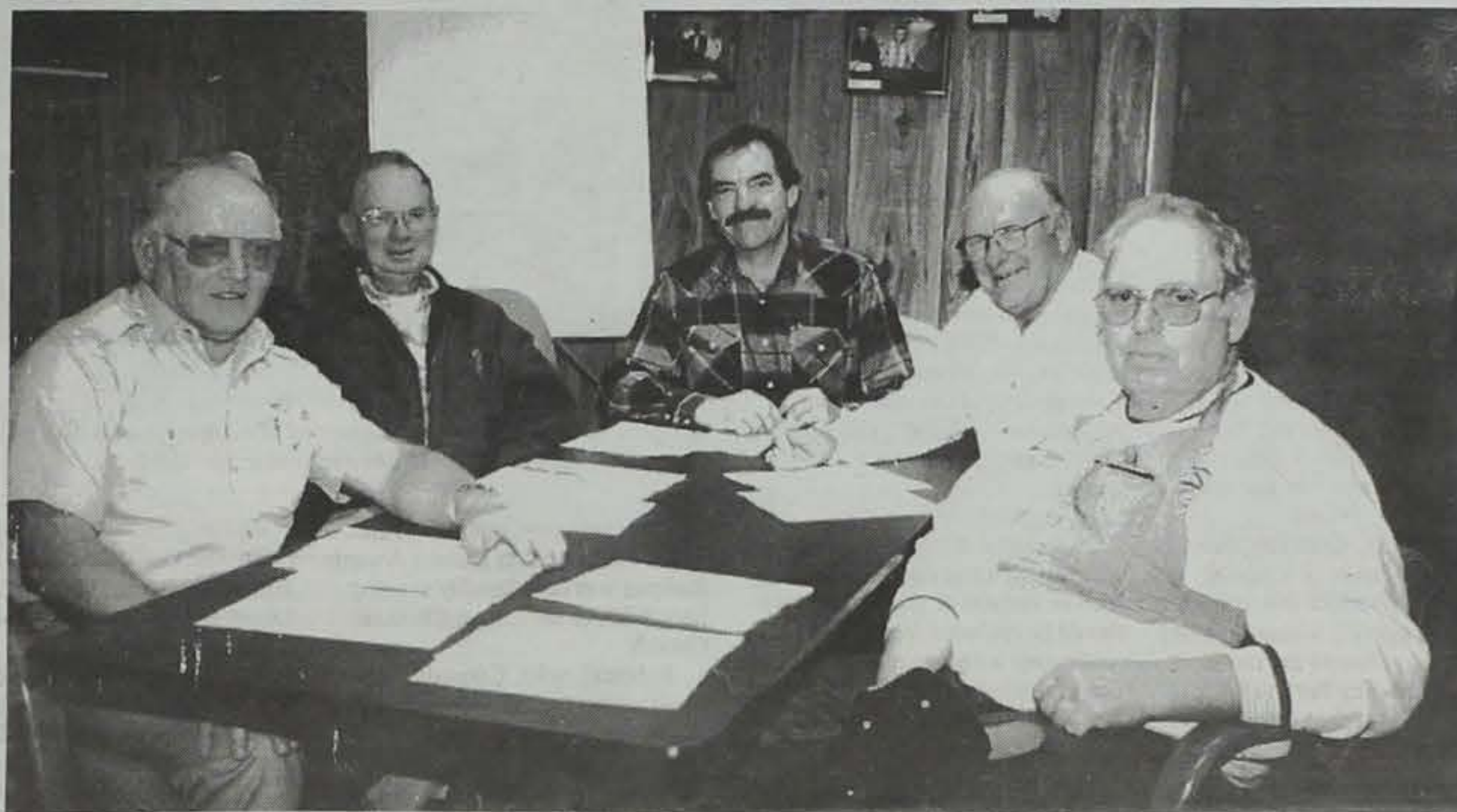
The Board agreed that this is "only the beginning", but it is a beginning which can lead to an end these men have long desired. Mensching, Wisecup, Johnson and Winther are all volunteers, working toward a goal which will benefit

everyone concerned.

As Wisecup expressed it so eloquently, "We need to be good stewards of the land, as well as worrying about the financial angle". Winther agreed, then added, "We need to remember that if we don't get this

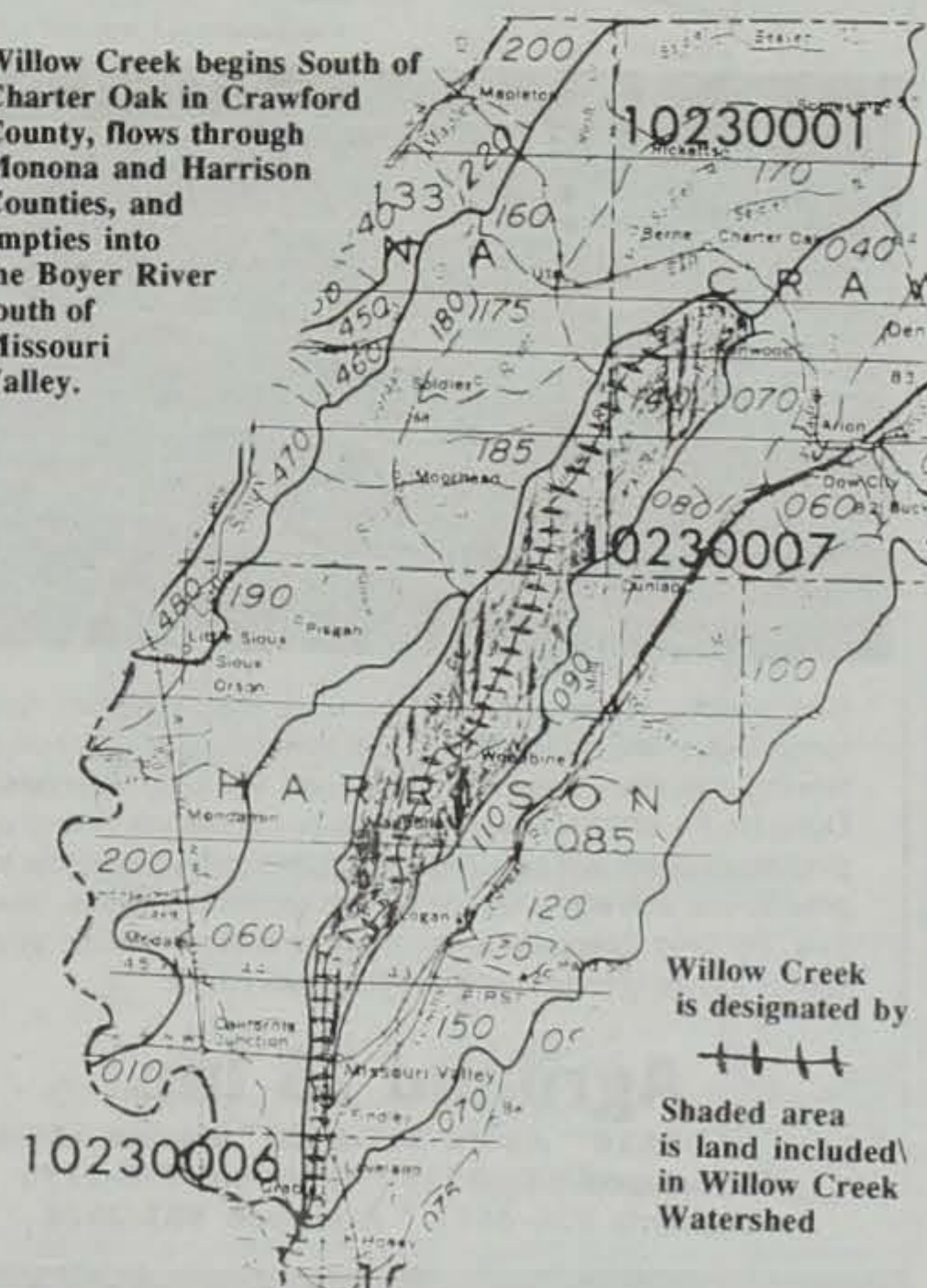
done, somewhere down the road some state or federal official may come in and do it their way. And that very well may NOT be the way we want it done."

This is our opportunity now and we need to act upon it while we can."



Willow Creek Watershed Board members are, left to right, Leonard Johnson, George (Bucky) Winther, Russ Kurth (District Conservationist), H. E. (Whitey) Mensching and Charles Wisecup.

Willow Creek begins South of Charter Oak in Crawford County, flows through Monona and Harrison Counties, and empties into the Boyer River south of Missouri Valley.



Willow Creek is designated by
++++
Shaded area is land included in Willow Creek Watershed

Meeting water needs in a grazing system is a major concern

by Brian C. Peterson
Grassland Conservationist

What is the most important factor in developing a grazing system? The answer to this question might vary, but in many situations, water is the most critical element when trying to plan a grazing system.

Water is important for many reasons. The primary reason is livestock cannot survive long without water. Water needs vary by type of livestock, whether they are lactating and the weather. Beef cattle need 6 to 18 gallons per day and sheep 1 to 4 gallons per day.

Traditionally, in this part of the state, ponds and streams serve as primary water sources for livestock. These will often remain the primary water source in a rotational grazing system. However, other sources should not be overlooked. In many ways you are only limited by your imagination when looking for potential water sources. Some of these include wells, tile line outlets, and rural water systems.

Availability of water can also influence the design of a grazing system. An important concept when designing a grazing system is to try to "bring the water to the livestock, instead of bringing the livestock to the water." Two reasons for this concept are: when livestock has less than 800 feet to go for water, they better utilize the forage in the

pasture. They typically defecate near the water facility, so if the water facility is in the pasture, more nutrients will be returned to the pasture. In addition, if livestock has to move to the water, a lane will typically be needed for this activity. Heavily travelled lanes can become a source of gully erosion.

Making water available to the livestock in each pasture can present many challenges. This, however, is when you should not limit your imagination. A well that might not support livestock for the entire season may work on a rotational system. Rural water that might seem too expensive if used throughout the year could work very well if only used for a calving pasture, winter grazing pasture, or for a single pasture with no other water source. Tile used to drain a sidehill seep-area might provide adequate water during some periods of the year. Some pastures have natural springs that can be developed and used as a water source.

To improve the quality of the water when using surface sources, such as streams or ponds, livestock should be excluded from having continuous access to these areas. This can greatly reduce streambank erosion and improve water quality. You can manage the area and utilize the forage by "flash" grazing at these sites during the grazing season.

Awards banquet honors district cooperators



Cathie Graves of IDALS-Division of Soil Conservation congratulates Rod Plath, winner of the District and also Regional award as outstanding Owner-Operator for 1997.

The Harrison County Soil and Water Conservation District Awards Banquet was held Sunday evening, March 22, at the Logan Christian Church.

Babette Lucke, Commissioner, Chairperson and MC for the evening, gave the welcome and invocation which preceded the dinner.

Recognized for their conservation efforts during the evening and presented their awards by SWCD Commissioners were the following: Elizabeth Plath of Logan and Rodney Plath of Missouri Valley, Owner-Operator Division, presented by Anita Methner.

Scott Pape of Little Sioux, New Cooperator Division, presented by Linda Herman.

Kenneth McIntosh of Missouri Valley and David Lundholm of Grand Island NE, Landlord-Tenant Division, presented by Everette Wohlers.

Dwight Willard of Logan, Isaak Walton windbreak award (planted over 5 years), presented by Doyle Knadle.

Peggy and Eugene McCool of Persia, Isaak Walton windbreak award (under five years), presented by Babette Lucke.

Robert Romeo of Missouri Valley, Natural Area Management Division, presented by Lou Waite and accepted by Dominic Romeo.

Kenneth Hein, Dunlap, Pasture Management Division, presented by Rollie Roberts.

Evelyn Coffelt of Logan,

Conservation Supporter Award, presented by District conservationist Russ Kurth.

Kyle Kaufman, Woodbine, Poster Contest Grand Award, presented by Zane McBride.

Larry Pape of Pisgah, Special Recognition Award, presented by Lou Waite.

Gary Guge, Extension Director, presented awards for Iowa Master Corn Grower Conservation Tillage Division and also Corn Grower Contour Division to O. Vernon Smith of Woodbine. The Soybean Grower Conservation Tillage Award was given to Tom and Lyle McIntosh of Rockford Farms, Missouri Valley. The soybean Grower No-till Division Award was presented to Gail and Duane Witte of Missouri Valley.

Entertainment for the event was by Dale Knauss of Logan, who gave readings of original poetry, and Judith Gruver of Woodbine with vocal and instrumental music selections.

Favorite Recipes

Hamburger Hot Dish

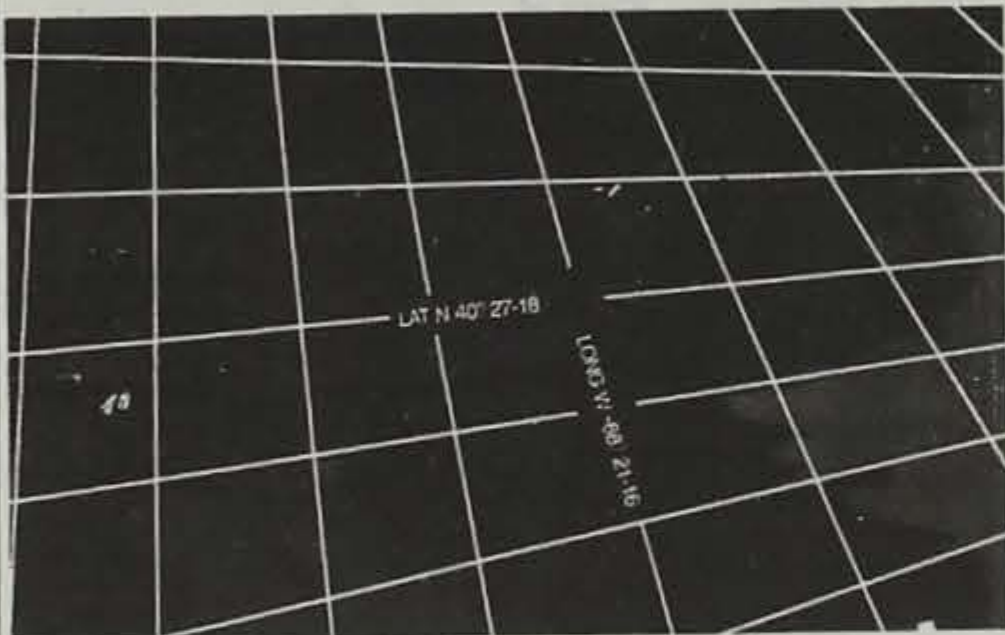
1 lb. ground beef
1 pkg. noodles
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 can cream of chicken soup
1/2 cup diced onion
1 can or small pkg. chow mein noodles
Salt and pepper

Brown ground beef with onion. Pour off grease. Cook noodles and mix all together with ground beef, soups and desired amount of salt and pepper. Add 1/2 the chow mein noodles and bake until bubbly. Spread remaining noodles on top and bake a few minutes more.

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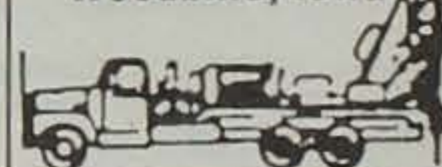
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Woodbine, Iowa



Tree planting enhances and protects Barry homestead

by Lou Waite

While Randy Barry was growing up, he used to love to visit his grandparents, Ben Arthur and Velva Barry, in their spacious farmhouse atop a hill south of Woodbine. From that site could be seen the Boyer River Valley, and the rolling hills in the distance. Even at a young age, Randy enjoyed gazing at the panoramic view. He could always see Woodbine and Logan, and on a clear day, Missouri Valley. He could watch the traffic on Highway 30, and the farmers at work in their fields.

"I decided way back then," Randy recalled, "that some day I would have a house with a view like that." Today, Randy and his family have a beautiful, modern home and they also have a view . . . almost exactly the same view, in fact. Their homestead is about a quarter mile from where his grandparents house once stood.

This is no coincidence, for Randy bought the 240-acre family farm three years ago . . . land his father's family has tended for three generations. Those acres are now included in the 1400, owned and leased, which Randy farms.

But long before he owned the land, Randy had selected the site where he wanted his house to stand. And after he and his wife Lori were married, they both looked forward to the day when it would be built. They even planted a windbreak to protect their house yet-to-be.

"There were no established trees in the area," Randy said, "and we knew how stark it would appear without any. So we planted 60 blue spruce and Austrian pine to the north and west of where we wanted the house to be."

After careful consideration and planning, their home was constructed in 1989, and they occupied it in September of that year.

In 1991, The Barry's decided to add a tree planting to the south and east, and sought the help of the NRCS office to do so. Upon approval, Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) funds were used to help purchase and plant 1400 additional trees. The deciduous (shade) varieties selected were silver maple, green ash and red oak. Evergreens were scotch, ponderosa and white pine, and Norway and white spruce.

The tree-planting area had been

previously seeded, and prior to the planting Randy used a sidewinder, 14-foot rotary tiller, from which he had removed all the teeth. With this he established rows 10-feet apart, patterned to fit the contours of the hillside.

"The trees were put into the ground by a couple using a tree planter," Randy recalled. "The ground was so wet that I had to use my hands to pack the mud around each one. My father, Dean, helped with this, which was really appreciated. I worried about the ground being compacted after it dried out, but luckily this wasn't the case. Actually, the weather those first few years was optimal . . . we never had to irrigate at all. The rains came at just the right times. That doesn't happen too often, I understand."

The survival rate has been above average, as well, but Randy noted that the growth rate of the trees has varied. "You can certainly tell the trees planted in the good soil," he said. "Down the hill, where the topsoil is washed down and accumulates, the trees are bigger. Up

where the soil is more eroded and thinner, they are smaller. We have had some deer damage, but our dog Sheba keeps most of the animals away. Actually, gophers eating the roots have been our worst problem."

Lori chuckled as she recalled that while Randy was using a gopher machine to try to alleviate the situation, he managed to cut their telephone cable in several places. "Yeah," Randy admitted with a grin, "so now I have to do it by hand. But we have the problem pretty well controlled . . . for the time being, anyway."

The Barry's spend many hours pruning and spraying the trees, and manicuring the area. They have had to spray the evergreens for *dothistroma*, an airborne disease which can spread from tree to tree. Randy has a trailer with a motor which powers a hand-sprayer used for the trees, and for spot spraying where needed, such as on dandelions and

other weeds. One year, they had to add Miracid to the red oaks, to help alleviate a high pH factor in the soil. "The pH still needs lowered," Randy said, "but we can only do so much."

The last two years, the Barrys have cut some trees which were too close together and used them for Christmas trees. Last year in addition to the family tree, son Jordan (4) and daughter Taylor (2 1/2) had their own masterpiece, lavishly if a bit lopsidedly decorated by loving little hands. "That was a special time," Lori said, "for all of us."

Randy admitted that they would have established the tree planting, even without cost share, if necessary. "We just like trees, I guess," he said with a shrug.

While Randy's grandfather and father were prominent livestock producers, he prefers growing corn and soybeans. "I leave the carrying on of the cattle tradition to my brother, Lynn", Randy admitted with a bit of whimsy. The HEL land is no-tilled, and extensive terracing has been done on the Barry farms. In fact, Randy's late grandmother Velva once commented that they should name the place "Terrace Acres".

Lori is an accountant at the Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) in Woodbine. She and Randy emphasized that their major interest is their family. As a family, they enjoy boating and water skiing, and also snow skiing. Last

See "Tree planting", page 4



The Barry homestead, showing the larger trees which were planted before their house was built, and the smaller trees in the foreground which they added later.

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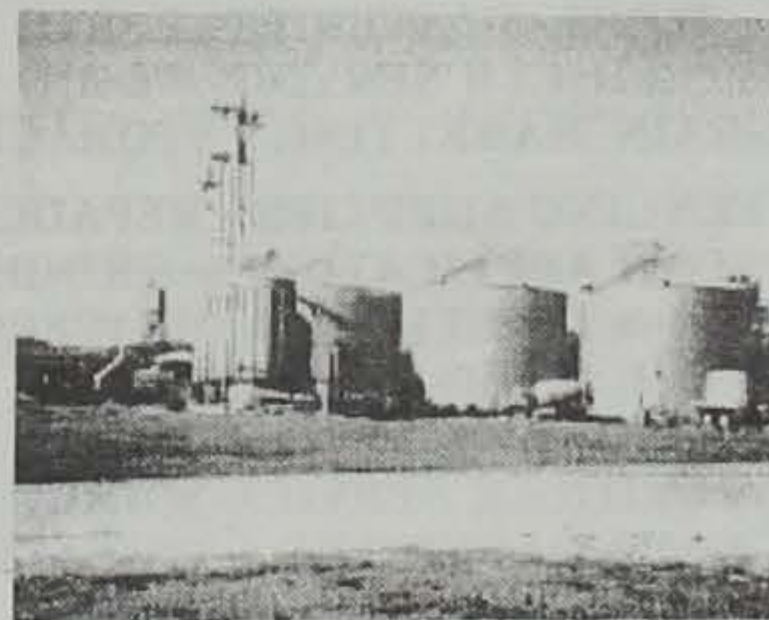
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The trees contrasted sharply with the snow-covered terrain, after the March blizzard

Tips on spring seeding for pasture improvement

by Brian C. Peterson
Grassland Conservationist

Spring signals the start of a new year as trees leaf out, tulips bloom and many calves and lambs are born. It can also mark the start of a new beginning in a pasture. Spring can be an excellent time to interseed improved forages into an existing pasture or to develop a new pasture. Spring will typically provide the moisture needed to get the new forages started so they will survive during the hotter, dryer summer. But there are some management steps which can be implemented to improve the chances of making this seeding successful.

You will need to decide what you will seed in the pasture. The soil types in the pasture and the intended use of the area need to be considered when making this selection. To select a seeding mixture, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service or ISU Extension office.

Timing of the seeding is important. The spring seeding period is rather long, with cool season grasses and legumes lasting until May 15. However it is normally better to seed closer to April 1, when the soil conditions are ready. This allows more time for the small seedling to become established prior to the hotter, dryer summer weather.

When seeding into an existing forage it would be beneficial to graze the existing forage closely after seeding. This will help make good seed-to-soil contact and reduce some

competition from the existing forage. Care must be taken not to allow livestock on the pasture if it is too wet. If it isn't possible for livestock to graze the areas, it can be clipped.

It is important to keep an eye on the new seeding during the year. The new seeding should be up and growing ten to fourteen days after planting. The new stand needs to be monitored for insect or other problems that might destroy the seeding.

To successfully establish the new seeding it will be necessary to graze in a rotation, or mow the pasture to remove competition. This needs to be done while maintaining good leaf-growth on the new plants.

Grazing can be a very effective method of managing the competition in this newly seeded area. Three to five inches of growth is recommended prior to grazing. When the new seeding area is being grazed, the pasture needs to be monitored closely so that it isn't overgrazed and the new seeding harmed. It might be necessary to mow the area if it isn't possible to graze, if grazing was spotty or if weeds are a problem.

A four to six week rest period in the fall is needed, starting about September 1. Late fall grazing after mid October is possible, if there is adequate growth on the new forage. At least 3 inches of residual growth should be left on the new forage prior to winter.

There isn't a "fool-proof" method to ensure successful seeding. However, the closer you follow the basic steps, the more you will improve the chances for a successful seeding.



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Tree planting . . . Continued from page 3

year the family took a skiing vacation to Winter Park, Colorado, with the children also trying out the gentler slopes. Randy and Lori are part of a volleyball team, competing in Woodbine and Magnolia.

The Barrys are members of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Logan.

Russ Kurth, District conservationist commented: "Randy and Lori's tree planting has been well cared for. They are beginning to see the rewards of their hard work, as the trees increase in size and growth rate."

"Anyone interested in doing a tree planting on their farm may stop at their local NRCS office to get the details about the existing tree planting program and availability of cost-share funds. The Barrys received cost-share assistance through the REAP program. This program can pay 75% cost-share for trees and planting of trees on a minimum of three acres.



Randy and Lori Barry, with their children, Jordan and Taylor

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GOOD DEALS...AND A GOOD DEAL MORE

Signup announced for EQIP cost-share; two watersheds approved for funding

The 1998 application period for cost-share funds for statewide environmental practices under USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) will begin April 6.

Approximately one-fourth of the \$4.4 million in financial and educational funds have been allocated for 1998 use in Iowa.

The signup, which continues until May 15, is for landowners who want to receive cost-share to control soil erosion, improve water quality, develop better animal waste and nutrient management systems, and improve grazing lands.

Environmental improvement practices eligible will include, but are not limited to, grass waterways, terracing, manure management facilities, pasture management and nutrient and pest management. Other practices may include tree plantings, wildlife habitat, windbreaks, wetland restoration, conservation tillage or stripcropping.

Fifty percent of the funds will be directed to resource concerns related to livestock production.

This statewide signup is for the landowners and operators whose land is not within the boundaries of the 52 local EQIP projects accepted for 1998, according to Russ Kurth, District Conservationist. Those 52 local EQIP projects in 63 counties will have their own signup period. The statewide signup is for those not included in this group, Kurth emphasized.

Local signups will be scheduled soon, so producers interested may contact their local USDA Service Center to apply for funding.

Producers will be asked to enter into five to ten year contracts that specify the type and amount of conservation work to be done, within a specified timetable. Payments are then made to the producer when the conservation

practices specified in the contract are satisfactorily established. There is a \$10,000 per year limit, with a total limit of \$50,000. EQIP is intended to completely treat all the resource concerns on a parcel of land.

After the signup period ends, there will be an evaluation of the applications. Producer applications will be ranked according to how well the conservation work they plan to carry out will solve resource priority problems at the most reasonable cost to the USDA, Kurth said. Producers approved for cost-share will then be notified.

Willow Creek Watershed

The 1998 signup period for application for cost-share funds for Willow Creek Watershed (Harrison, Monona and Crawford Counties) through the EQIP program will begin April 6 and continue until September 15. Applications received will be evaluated on the 15th of the month, beginning May 15, until this year's funds are all allocated.

Landowners in Willow Creek Watershed can sign up for cost-share assistance to build terraces, small erosion control structures and ponds. Producers will be asked to enter into a 5 to 10 year contract which specifies the type and amount of conservation work to be done. Payments are made to the producers once the conservation practice specified in the contract is satisfactorily completed. Cost share payments will be 60% of the estimated total cost for terraces and 70% of estimated total cost for small structures and ponds.

There is a \$10,000 per year limit, with a total limit of \$50,000.

Landowners interested in farmstead windbreaks, tree plantings, grassed waterways and

animal waste storage structures could apply for cost-share assistance for these practices through the state cost-share program at their local SWCD office.

District Conservationist Russ Kurth stated that the main focus for use of EQIP funds in the Willow Creek Watershed will be to apply conservation structures which reduce runoff. Small structures with ponds with an 80 to 120 acre drainage area would be ideal for this program. There are also funds from this program for construction of small "dry" dams with a 20 to 40 acre drainage area.

Landowners in this watershed with questions about this program should contact their local SWCD office for further information.

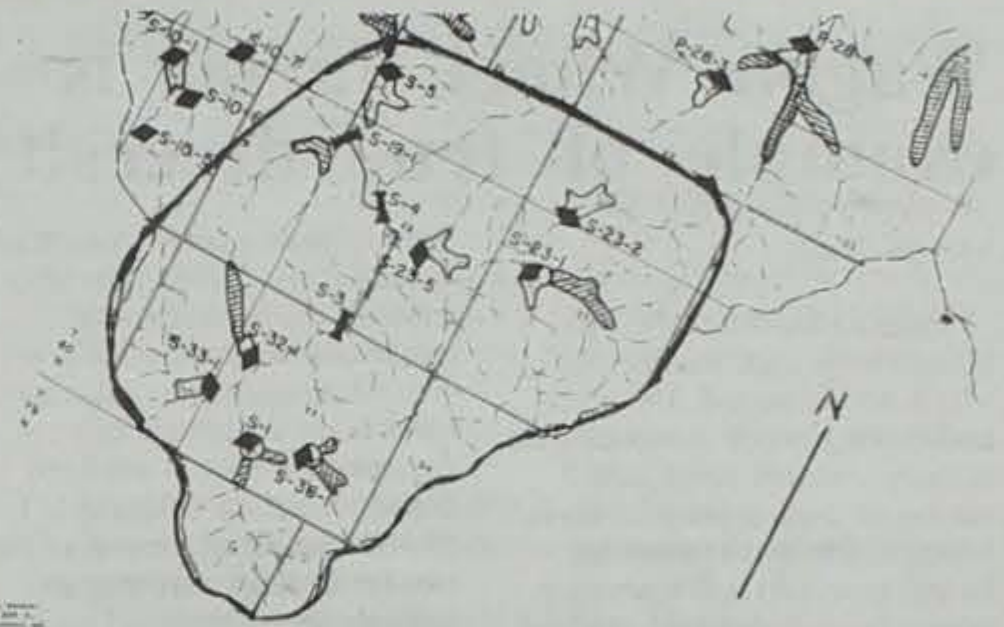
Mill-Picayune Creek Watershed

Mill-Picayune Creek Watershed is also approved for the EQIP program. Harrison County landowners in the approved sub-watershed will be eligible to receive cost-share and incentive payments to complete conservation systems on their farms.

Producers in this sub-watershed will be eligible for 75% cost-share of the estimated cost for terraces, water and sediment control basins and waste storage structures for existing livestock operations. They could receive 50% cost-share to improve pasture seeding.

Incentive payments will also be made to producers who will do Integrated Crop Management (ICM) of \$5 per acre, per year for three years, and \$15 per acre per year for those who establish planned grazing systems with 5 or more paddocks.

For further information, contact the SWCD-NRCS office, 712-644-2210.



Mill-Picayune Watershed Site 5 area. See story at left.

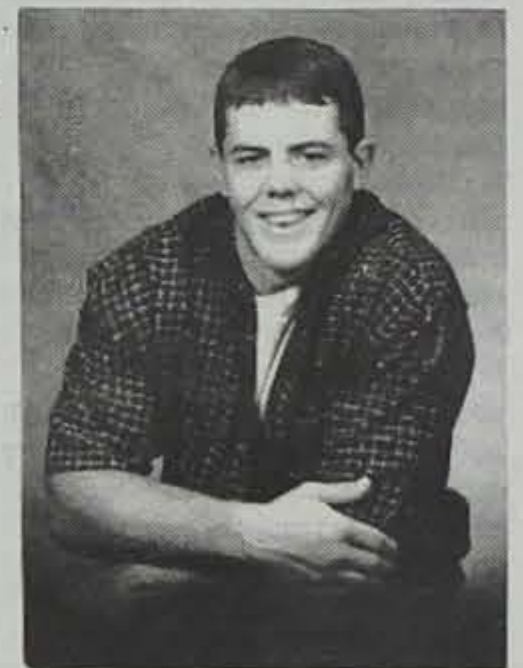
Guill is awarded district scholarship

Brad Guill of Persia has been selected to receive the recently established District Scholarship award of \$100. Harrison SWCD Commissioners decided to fund this annual award, to be presented to an applicant chosen by the scholarship committee. The applicant must be planning to pursue higher education in an ag-related field.

Brad is the son of Bruce and Sheryl Guill of Persia. His father operates the family farm and his mother is credit manager at the Farm Service Cooperative in Harlan.

A student at Tri-Center High School, Brad is involved in music and athletics, is a member of the Student Council and various other school committees. He is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Persia, and active in church affairs.

In his application, he stated, "Growing up on our family farm and helping my parents on the farm influenced my decision in choosing a career in agriculture. I plan to attend a four-year college and graduate with a degree in environmental science and a minor in biology. In the last year, I have



Brad Guill

had a special interest in the seed industry. I feel it has great potential for growth of new technology."

Brad will automatically be eligible for the Conservation Districts of Iowa Scholarship State Award Program. Those scholarships are given in the amounts of \$800, \$400 and \$200.

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Wagon Wheel Farms is example of true diversity

by Lou Waite

Entering the drive of *Wagon Wheel Farms*, one readily sees why it was so named. The neatly landscaped grounds surrounding the attractive, modern home have a number of those appurtenances in evidence. The entire farmstead, located near Avoca, is a pleasing, immaculately maintained site (and sight!).

In writing these articles, I don't usually make personal observations or comments. Actually, using first person in this instance is a journalistic "no-no", but forgive me this time if I digress.

While conducting many interviews, I have never before been greeted by a lovely lady Llama, either! As the creature gracefully extended her long neck toward my face, I nervously recalled stories about what Llamas do if they don't like you. While she batted her long eyelashes and whiffed at me, I tried to convey the message that I was no threat.

"This is Annie", said the man who had a firm grip upon the Llama's halter, "and she is only trying to kiss you." From then on, between Annie and me, it was love at... well, at least second sight!

Neal Schirm, the interviewee, showed me the remainder of his Llama herd, each of them as tame and amenable as the first. I also was

introduced to "Gabby", a purebred quarter horse stallion, who after inhaling my scent, royally condescended to allow me to pet him. Other quarter horses nearby came to the fence to give me a curious once-over. A pet tabby cat coiled around my ankles until I picked it up for a caress. And the two family dogs were tongue-lolling appreciative as I scratched behind their ears. It was an animal lover's paradise, and it was a long time before we got to the actual interview itself.

Neal said that he had always liked to have "different" animals around him. He bought his first Llama five years ago, and now has four females and two males. The young are called "cria", and three are raised and usually sold each year. The gestation period for the species is a full year. "Annie" was reared from a cria, but was retained and became very much a family favorite.

"The demand for Llamas has increased during the past fifteen years," Neal informed. "They make good guard animals, such as with sheep, for they will protect them from dogs and coyotes. They only spit when they are upset and angry, but they hum to each other as a means of communication. They hum to us, probably for the same reason. They make a musical, flute-like sound, which is different when



Neal and Annie, the lovable lady Llama.

they are "talking" to their babies than when they are communicating with an adult Llama."

Many of the animals come from Chile, Bolivia or elsewhere in that hemisphere. Once they come to the States and are crossbred, however, they are known as "domestic" or "U. S. bred"

Neal noted that a male Llama sold for \$25,000 at a recent auction, and his owners had paid \$50,000 for him three years prior to that. Top females sold for around \$4500, and one cria Neal admired went for \$875. "I liked that animal," Neal said, "but am of mixed emotions about adding to or replacing my breeding stock. I probably should have bought the young one, for as more county fairs, etc., get into the picture, the price will undoubtedly go up. Llamas make great projects for kids, for the animals become very tame... like dogs... and are

very good-natured unless teased or abused."

The Schirm Llamas are classed as a "medium wool" variety. They are carefully brushed or curried, the wool is saved and sold to a company in Wisconsin. Once the wool has been cleaned, it can be used in a number of ways. For example, it is excellent for spinning, since it is less oily and of a softer texture than sheep's wool.

Llamas are also becoming popular as show animals (such as at county fairs, etc.) and the Schirms have won awards at the Clay County Fair. Of course it was the lovable Annie who walked away with the Grand Champion ribbon in the medium wool class.

The animals are judged for conformation, wool, color, etc., and must perform creditably on an obstacle course (jump over, walk around or through barricades, etc.)

"It is hard to breed for color, Neal said a bit ruefully. "The tri-color animals are the eye-catching ones... such as brown, tan and white, or brown, tan and black, etc. But it is difficult to predict color or markings in the young, in spite of the appearance of the parents."

Llamas for show are all registered, so registered animals should be purchased to qualify, Neal warned. His are registered with the American Llama Association, and listed in the magazine, *Llama Link*. "Each month the national publication lists three or four states in a certain region and lists all the breeders in that area", Neal explained.

The Schirms also raise registered Quarter Horses, and have done so for the past 25 years. Neal and his wife, Pam, both ride and are members of the *Rawhide Saddle Club* of Atlantic.

"I used to haul the mares 200 miles or so for breeding," Neal recalled, "but I got tired of that. So two years ago I bought my own stallion, Gabby's Watch... the Gabby of earlier mention. (Gabby is royally pedigreed and registered.

See "Wagon Wheel Farms" continued on Page 7

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Curious yet friendly creatures, the Llamas surround Neal as if to ask "what's happening?"

Wagon Wheel Farms

Continued from page 6

and appeared to be a real gentleman. If quarter horses can be said to be beautiful, then add that to his list of characteristics. Of course, that is a personal opinion.)

Gabby's harem consists of five mares and a number of colts, who are sold, Neal stated, "all over the United States." The horses are in great demand by the range cattle industry, and are expert (if well trained) at working cattle.

Neal also has mules, and breeds two of the mares to Jacks (each year). Some of the mule colts are broken to ride before being sold, some are not. "I've sold mules to people in Washington, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa", Neal said. "With the Llamas, horses and mules, we get to meet a lot of nice people in a lot of places. I guess that is part of the enjoyment for me. And, as I said, I just love animals." Then with another grin, he added, "You have to, to do what I do!"

Neal voiced the same thoughts about farming, while recalling that it was an occupation he chose rather than coming to it through family tradition. "My Dad owned a feed and fertilizer business, and offered me the opportunity to manage that, but I chose farming instead," Neal reminisced. He bought his first 130-acre farm in 1970, and since then has added 6 more for a total of 900 acres. He also leases another 400 acres. His father Albert (Al) and mother Dixie are partners in some aspects of the operation, and assist when and where needed.

The land, which is mostly highly erodible, is no-tilled, with a corn/bean rotation. Neal began no-tiling five years ago, and has found it to be a valuable way to save soil, time, expense and wear on equipment. He bought a new corn planter and bean drill and went totally to no-till the first year he tried it. Now he does some custom work with these implements, along with a round baler and a combine.

Included in his holdings are 50 acres of hayland, where rotational grazing is implemented to maintain

a Black Angus cow-calf herd of 120. The herd sires are Maine Anjou and Simmental, and the calves are sold each winter. In the past, 2400 hogs were finished yearly, but after losing his hired help, Neal decided to rent the unit facilities to an outside producer.

"I have appreciated the assistance of the NRCS personnel," Neal affirmed, "and the cost-share which we have received. We do some terracing each year, and all the field borders and waterways are installed. We still need some terraces on rented land, and will continue until that is completed."

Neal and Pam are also owner of the Heart of the Country antique store in Walnut, operated by Pam and her mother, Doreen Knop. Neal assists with purchasing, refinishing and repair, and with Pam enjoys attending auctions or seeking antiques "all over the country".

Their children are Heather, who is a doctor's assistant in Atlantic; Mindy, a senior at Walnut and Tyler, a 6th grade student. The siblings all assist with the family ventures, and Tyler enjoys riding the mules. In the past, as 4-H members, Heather's Main Anjou steer was Reserve Grand Champion

and Mindy's Simmental heifer was named Grand Champion at the East Pottawattamie County Fair.

The entire family enjoys trail riding, and last year participated in a horseback ride through the Black Hills of South Dakota.

In addition to the Llama association, the Schirms are members of the American Quarter Horse Association, the Iowa Mule Assn., and others. The family attends the Peace United Church of Christ in Walnut, where Pam teaches the young adult class. Neal is a past member of the church board, and the Board of Deacons. He now serves on the property planning committee.

"I am concerned about the future of farming," Neal mused, "and I'm not certain I would encourage Tyler to farm. He likes to draw, and may go into drafting, which might be the best for him. I feel the small farmer will have difficulty competing against farm conglomerates. It's the same with livestock production... it's hard to get a cattle buyer to come to a small producer. They would rather go to the big feedlots."

Then with a shrug and a smile, Neal concluded, "But it's anyone's guess, isn't it? Nothing in life is without risk."

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How the months were named

Everyone learned to remember how many days in each month by memorizing "Thirty days hath September, etc.", but how many recall learning how the months were named? The Farmer's Almanac gives that information as follows:

January: From the Roman god Janus, the keeper of the gates, who was pictured with two heads, thus able to see the past and the future.

February: From the Latin word "to smoke", since it was the Roman month for purification.

March: Named for the Roman God of War, Mars.

April: From the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite.

May: From the Roman goddess of growth, Maia.

June: From Juno, wife of Jupiter and the goddess of women, marriage and childbirth.

July: From the Roman emperor, Julius Caesar.

August: From Caesar's successor, Augustus Caesar.

September: For the Latin word for "seven" since it was the seventh month of the Roman year.

October: From the Latin word for "eight", since it was the 8th month of the Roman year.

November: From the Latin word for ninth.

December: From the Latin word for tenth.

Also from the Almanac comes the following (no author listed)

Autumn is a vamp. She uses her charms of Indian summer, bright October skies and leaves ablaze with color to beguile us into forgetting the coming of winter. Then she indulges in temper tantrums, tossing around rain and wind and sudden temperature drops and even premature snowstorms, just to warn us that we had better watch out!

The result of this fickle behavior is that we are confused by Autumn's mood changes and leery of her not-so-subtle warning that the worst is yet to come.

We have forever tried to outguess the vagaries of Autumn, and now in spite of the ultimate in weather-predicting equipment, we still miss by a mile. Is a computer a better forecaster of the elements than that rooster weathervane on the barn roof? It told old-timers which way the wind blew and what to expect from upcoming weather.

Does a highly-paid TV weather technician do a better job of forecasting than that feeling in our bones?

Old-timers watched the skies for their weather reports, while now we watch the TV for ours. And still there are unpredictable "weathers" that will always catch us by surprise.

One old adage still holds true here in the Midwest: If you don't like the weather today, just wait, for tomorrow and it will be different.

(It's kinda like the USDA directives, isn't it?)

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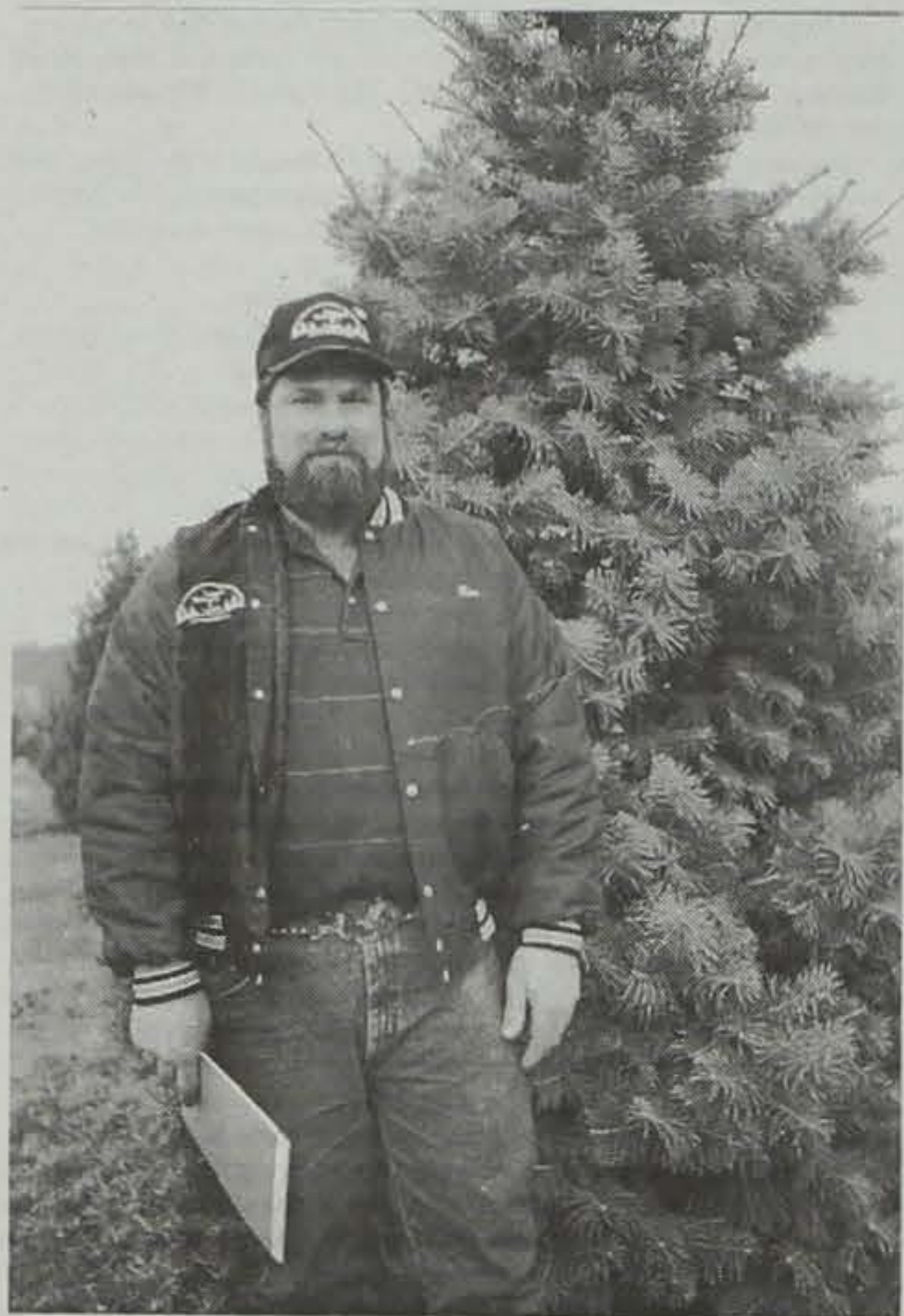
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Tremels' biggest problem? Never enough time!



Ron Tremel and a Concolor Fir tree such as those he sells at his Nursery and Lawn Ornament business location near Earling

by Lou Waite

Ronald (Ron) Tremel, of near Earling in Shelby County, gave up farming at the end of last year. It was not because he wasn't successful at that occupation. It may have been because cloning of humans is still in the experimental stage. A less tongue-in-cheek explanation is simply that the nursery business the Tremels began 19 years ago was taking a major portion of their time.

What began as a basic tree/shrub nursery business has gradually grown to include landscaping, design and maintenance, production of lawn ornaments, sale of flowering perennials, customer services and much more. "Since I can't add hours to the day," Ron said with a smile, "I had to set some priorities. So we rented out the land, and are now concentrating on the nursery." The business is technically listed as Tremel Nursery and Lawn Ornaments.

When one views 18,000 containers of shade and fruit trees and shrubs filling an acre of land, and another four-acre tract planted with evergreen (Christmas) trees, one can understand the decision. Add to this the many perennials which are offered, and the colorful variety of lawn ornaments (bird fountains are the most popular), the landscaping services, etc., one wonders if the Tremels' days are long enough even now.

Ron noted that supplying trees and shrubs for farm windbreaks comprises about 75% of the business. These serve both a practical and esthetic purpose. But he also supplies trees, shrubs and perennials for urban projects which

are more of an ornamental nature. He also does the landscaping for many of these projects, as well as for individual customers.

"I usually suggest a design, and once it is approved, do the planting," Ron remarked.

"Sometimes the customer is involved with the work, and I serve as advisor. Others have me do the whole thing, and maintain it afterward. Whichever way is fine with me . . . whatever works. We strive to please."

Ron noted that the demand for perennials has increased, and is the reason those were added to their inventory. Popular varieties are roses, hybrid day lilies, hostas, peonies (tree and bush), silver mound, creeping phlox, etc. Ron commented that the old-fashioned, sweet-scented roses are coming back in the scene. "But my wife Kathy is the perennial expert," he said with a grin, "as well as being involved in the entire operation. She can do anything I can do, and some things better, but don't tell her I said that!" (We won't!)

He went on to note that Kathy also does the painting of the ornaments, is bookkeeper and takes care of customer relations. All this in addition to being wife and mother, and breeding and raising miniature horses (more about this later).

The Tremels began their business with "bare root" stock, but now use 9" potted liners. The stock is purchased 3 to 6 inches tall, depending upon the plant, then are transferred from a small pot to a 3 to 4-gallon sized container. They grow in these pots until they are ready for sale. Deciduous (shade) trees are

grown in 15-gallon containers.

Ron commented that he is working toward developing a better root system so recently has begun coating the interior of the pots with what is called "spin out". This has a latex carrier which is a concentrated micro-nutrient system. The root tips grow until they touch the coating on the pots, which "burns" the root tips off. The plant then sends out more roots to compensate. These new shoots branch out into new soil, rather than growing around and around and eventually "strangling" or shutting off sustenance to the plant.

"Root tips absorb moisture and nutrients, so we want to encourage the growth of more and more of them," Ron explained. "After planting, the tree or whatever will recover faster and with less shock. We used to spray the spin-out onto the inside of the pots, but now some pre-coated containers are becoming available. We have used root control bags in the past for the same purpose, but the spin-out is easier and more economical to use." Then with a lift of the eyebrow, Ron added, "I'm never satisfied . . . never think it (the system or process) good enough. That's why I like to try new things."

Survivability of the plant species and satisfied customers are the key, Ron said. Both of these have increased, which is verification that the "new things" he tried have been successful. He gave a valuable hint for keeping deer or other "critters" from nibbling at the new evergreen/deciduous tree growth. "Just take some miniature bars of soap, such as are given out by motels, etc., leave the wrapper on, and tie two or three to several trees in the grove," he advised. "The stronger the fragrance of the soap, the better. This does work!!"

Ron prunes and trims trees and shrubs. He has an established customer route which covers approximately a 25-mile radius around Earling, with a few "detours" here and there which range further afield. He would like to accommodate more customers, but once again said, "Time (or lack of it) is the problem."

"I hear people complain that

there is not enough work for them to do . . . they can't find jobs," Ron said, frowning slightly, "and I say, baloney! There's work to do if you are willing to do it. This is hard work, yes, but it has its rewards. You have to know your limits. You can't do it all! The problem is, in my opinion, some people just don't want to put enough effort into whatever they do to make a success of it."

The Tremel siblings are Daniel, 12; Katie 9 and Kevin 6. They are members of the Northern Explorers 4-H club, and assist with the family operation.

Katie is involved with her mother, Kathy, in the raising of registered miniature horses. Currently there are 6 of these in their herd, with one new colt expected in the spring. Ron explained that miniature horses represent all the familiar breeds, such as Palomino, Buckskin, Appaloosa, etc., except that they are much smaller. Class B miniatures average 34" to 38" in height, to the withers. Theirs are all Class A, averaging 34" and less in height.

The smallest miniature ever recorded was 19" tall, but that size is very rare. The Tremel stallion measures 27 inches in height.

Miniatures are kept for pets, and Ron explained that youngsters who weigh 50 pounds or less can ride

them. But many are raised for show, and the Tremel siblings show for 4-H projects. They also raise rabbits for 4-H show. For Kathy and Katie, and even the boys, the horses are also a hobby.

Ron's hobbies are antique cars and street rods, and his sons undoubtedly share an interest in this . . . (it's a guy thing!) Ron also collects toy tractors and enjoys toy shows, where he can buy, sell and trade with other collectors.

"But of course with Kathy and I, the family and family activities always come first," Ron emphasized.

The Tremels attend St. Joseph's Church in Earling, where he is a member of the Parish Council. They belong to the Iowa Club of Miniature Horses and several other National Horse Registries; Iowa Nurseries and Landscape Association and the North American Concrete Producers Association. They are members of the Farm Bureau, and very active in community affairs.



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Farmers can laugh at themselves, right? The following was submitted to the newsletter, and we hope it will prove the truth of the previous statement.

A day in the life of a farmer

by A. Nonymous

- 5:00 a.m. - Wake up
- 5:30 - Check on hired man
- 6:00 - Breakfast at local cafe
- 7:00 - Trip to Big R
- 7:45 - Check lottery numbers
- 8:00 - Drop wife off at real job
- 8:15 - Drive slowly down middle of gravel road and check on corn and beans
- 8:30 - Stop at the elevator and watch corn slide into grate
- 8:45 - Drive tractor down middle of main street, blocking both lanes
- 9:00 - Park at cafe for snack
- 9:30 - Check mail for latest government check
- 10:00 - Farm report, radio
- 10:15 - Discuss board of trade with local banker
- 10:20 - Hit on the bank teller at the drive through
- 10:30 - Stop at post office to gripe at postal employee about late government check
- 11:00 - Update farm report, radio
- 11:15 - Check with doctor about irregular pulse
- 11:30 - Start thinking about lunch
- 11:31 - Stop at farm supply to price fertilizer. Gripe about prices. Drink free coffee. Gripe because is not fresh pot. Gripe about monthly statement, even tho haven't opened it yet. Flirt with office clerk
- 11:45 - Stop at implement dealer to check on new colors of hats and jackets
- 12:00 - Lunch
- 12:45 - BS session
- 1:00 - Stop at home for Roloids and bathroom
- 1:15 - Begin painting shed
- 1:20 - End painting shed
- 1:30 - Watch Jeopardy
- 2:00 - Regis and Kathy
- 2:30 - Days of Our Lives
- 2:24 - Nap

East Pott SWCD/NRCS SWCD staffers work with schools

The Soil and Water conservation District in the East Pottawattamie County strives to maintain a program of working with the area schools to supplement their curriculum in conservation. Their goal is to give conservation presentations to teachers and students and provide poster activity for the students as a summary.

The judging criteria credits fifty percent for effectivity of the message as it pertains to the theme. This year's theme is "Wonders of Wildlife".

Twenty-five percent consideration is given to artistic ability and neatness. The other 25 percent is based on originality.

This year's participants were the 6th grade students from AvoHa-Shelby-Tennant; 5th graders from Riverside South and 6th grade classes of Walnut Community Schools.

The prize money and ribbons are provided by donated funds. First place in each level receives \$15, second \$10, and third and honorable mention \$5. All participants are given a pencil when their posters are returned.

Sixth grade winners -

Kerne Holtz, 1st; Nancy Schrecengast, 2nd; Tyler Schirm, 3rd; Simon Nielsen, Anna Fell, Jennifer Ploen, honorable mention.

Fifth grade winners -

Kelly Bentley, 1st; John Eyler, 2nd; Rachel Shanno, 3rd; Glenna Freesner, Chris Wax honorable mention.

If you can't be thankful for what you receive, at least be thankful for what you escape!

It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt!

One of the most difficult mountains to climb is the one made out of a molehill.

There must be something to reincarnation, the way people come back to life at quitting time!

Seidel is District Conservationist at Atlantic NRCS field office

Martin Edward (Ed) Seidel will assume duties as District Conservationist on March 30 at the Cass County Natural Resources Conservation Service field office in Atlantic. Until this promotion, Seidel has been a Soil Conservationist at the Shelby County NRCS office in Harlan.

A native of Troy Missouri, "Ed" received his degree in Agronomy from Missouri State University in Columbia, MO.

In 1975, he served as a student trainee in Dubuque County, Iowa with what was then the Soil and Water Conservation Service. In 1976, he continued internship in Jackson County.

In 1977 he began as a Soil Conservationist in Fairfield, Jefferson County, Iowa. In ensuing years, he served in the same capacity in Washington and Osceola Counties. In 1982, he was assigned to Harrison County, and in 1996 came to the Shelby location.

"I have enjoyed the time in Shelby County," Ed said, "working with the office staff, farmers and landowners. I have also enjoyed the Long Branch Watershed activities and other projects with which I have been involved. I have been especially pleased to assist with the 6th grade Conservation Days, and feel it is important to educate our youth about the need to conserve and preserve natural resources."

Ed added, however, that he is looking forward to "new horizons and perhaps a few new challenges" in Cass County.

Ed and his wife Sharon, who is an Adult Basic Education Specialist, plan to move from Logan to Atlantic in the near future. They have two daughters.



Martin E. (Ed) Seidel

Mary is a junior elementary education major at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, MO. Cynthia is a freshman at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, and planning to be a dietician.

Ed is an experienced apiarist, and has become known for the quality of honey his bees produce. He is also a rose-grower/lover and an avid cross-country cyclist, having taken part in RAGBRAI and BRAN.

Sharon enjoys music, crafts and sewing, and takes a deep interest in clients with whom she works as an educator.

No man is in competition with another man, he is in conflict with his own errors.

The only complete mistake is the mistake from which we learn nothing.

Try to learn from the mistakes of others. You can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself!

About the time we learn to make the most of life, the most of life is gone!

Shelby SWCD/NRCS

Filter strips

by Joni Schwery
Soil Conservation Tech

Do you own land along a creek that is sometimes hard to farm due to flooding, erosion from creek overflow or just is always too wet? You can put this land into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) by planting a strip of grass up to 99 feet wide, or grass and/or trees up to 150 feet wide.

Your rental payment will be based on the value of the three predominant soil types, plus a 20% bonus, plus \$5 per acre for maintenance. You can receive these CRP payments for up to 15 years. This is a continuous signup.

Some rental payments may be as high as \$150 to \$175 per acre, per year.

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First public hunting area established in East Pottawattamie



Discussing ways and means for the hunting preserve recently were Mark Shoemaker and Brad Asay, seated, and Clair Acker and Ron Peterson, standing.

It was recently announced that the Pottawattamie County Chapter of Pheasants Forever had donated \$10,000 to be used to help establish the first public hunting area in East Pott. county. The contribution was made to the Pott. County Conservation Foundation and the check accepted by Brad Asay, president of the foundation.

Asay explained that the foundation is a non-profit organization, solely designed for the purpose of preserving habitat and wildlife areas for public use and enjoyment. It is affiliated with the Conservation Board, which maintains and supervises the county parks and recreation areas. He also noted that although the county is the second largest in the state area-wise, it is "sadly lacking" in public hunting opportunities. "There are, or

were, actually none," he said, "until now."

But now, with apologies to Paul Harvey, for the rest of the story.

It all began, it was learned, when two brothers, Harold and Ronald Young, came to Clair Acker of NRCS and told him they were interested in creating a pond on some of their land. Clair had previously consulted Cindy Thompson of the Pott. County Conservation Board about possible expansion into the East Pott. area. When the Youngs made their request, he remembered this and began making the contacts necessary to "further the cause". Among others becoming involved with the project were Mark Shoemaker, Conservation Board Director, Brad Asay, Greg Mathis, District Conservationist, and Mark McCurdy

and Ron Peterson, NRCS engineers.

The site is located five miles east and two miles south of Carson, on Highway 92. The Young Brothers donated 10 acres of the land, and sold the remaining 70 acres of the 80-acre tract to the foundation for \$101,500 on a five-year contract. It will be developed into a public hunting area for upland birds (pheasant, quail, grouse, partridge, turkey) and game such as deer.

At the present time, plans are to replace an old county bridge with an earthen dam, then 10 acres of land behind it will be flooded to create a pond. Native prairie grasses and wildflowers will be planted, providing buffer zones between various wildlife habitat areas. A five-acre plot will be established as a hunting area, and the pond will be stocked with fish. It is hoped to have the area ready for public use by fall.

Peterson, engineer from the Atlantic office, was in charge of the

original survey and coordinated the drafting and design of the plans. He remarked that the state office, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Pottawattamie County Engineer will all be involved in the final approval process.

Asay stated that the donation from Pheasants Forever was a welcome and appreciated beginning for the project, but that further funding is needed. Thus far, anticipated revenue will come from the County Road Department, in lieu of having to replace the old bridge; Quails Unlimited has promised \$6600; and East Pott. SWCD will contribute \$7,000 in the form of cost-share from Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) funds.

"We will be writing for grant requests from US Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Forever, Iowa Farm Bureau, Trees Forever, the Iowa West Foundation, and any others we feel might help us," Asay said. "Forming partnerships such as this is important to the success of any project", he affirmed, "and we hope to encourage other landowners or private and public organizations to do the same."

Asay pointed out that the Young Brothers, by forming a partnership with the foundation, will see a lifetime dream come true -- a fishing pond at the site. Lack of resources

and other problems would otherwise have made the project unrealistic for them. Now, thanks to their dream come true, the public will benefit as well.

"The preserve will be restricted to hunting and fishing... no picknicking or camping," Asay said, "but the public will be invited to enjoy the natural habitat. It will be a low-maintenance facility, providing excellent education opportunities for young and old. We members of the foundation are looking forward to having some of the best public areas such as this in the state!"

Once developed and financially solid, the site will be turned over to the County Conservation Board for maintenance. Shoemaker will then become more involved. "I feel this will be a valuable asset to the county and the area," Shoemaker commented, "and hopefully just the beginning of more to come."

The Pottawattamie Conservation Board consists of 12 members, and there is also a 10 member Advisory Council to lend support. All of these individuals serve on a voluntary basis.

Asay has been a promoter of conservation and an avid outdoorsman "all of his life", and has been with the foundation since the early 90's. A native of the Quad Cities and former police officer, he is a resident of Council Bluffs.

Beedle new Extension Director

Perry Beedle III (Bud) assumed the position of County Extension Education Director in East Pottawattamie County on December 1, 1997. He replaces Don Baker, who retired on January 2 of this year.

Beedle received his BS degree from Iowa State University, with a major in Animal Science and a minor in Ag Business. He served as ISU Extension Associate from 1987 until 1990, assisting with livestock record closings, and as a Livestock Initiative Technician in 1990-91. His most recent prior employment was as Vice President of Oakland State Bank. He has farmed in partnership with his

father, and served with Iowa National Guard.

He and his wife, Marsha, live on a farm southeast of Oakland. They have three children: Perry IV, who is a student at Iowa Western Community College and will transfer to ISU in Ames next fall; Jodi, a junior at Nebraska Medical School of Nursing in Omaha and Lindsay, a senior at Riverside High School, who has applied for admission to Nebraska Medical School of Nursing.

Marsha is employed at Cogley OBGYN Clinic in Council Bluffs.

Beedle has been an area resident for most of his life. "I look forward to serving the people of East Pottawattamie County in this new role," he said, "and anticipate working with many old friends, as well as meeting many new people."

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Tradition and heritage important to Hazel Harvey

by Lou Waite

Hazel Harvey said reflectively, "What is that old saying about taking the person from the farm, but not the farm from the person? I guess that would describe me. I feel a need to protect and preserve my heritage, and continue a family tradition."

That tradition followed by both her maternal and paternal ancestors is, of course, stewardship of the land. Hazel is now owner of farms inherited from each side of her family, located in Valley Township, East Pottawattamie County, near Oakland, Iowa.

Hazel, however, is executive assistant to the chairman of U. S. Equities Realty, Inc., in Chicago. It is a commercial real firm specializing in leasing, management, investment, construction and development of commercial real estate throughout the United States. Just last year, they opened an office in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Hazel's circumstance in not unusual, for "absentee landlords", as they are termed, are quite common in the agricultural picture. But perhaps not as common is the close tie she maintains with her "roots".

"I feel good about having the farms," she said emphatically. "They are still a part of me. I was born and bred in that environment, and I hope to never give it up -- the country will always be in my heart! When I was growing up, a stretch of land, approximately three miles in the Oakland-Hancock area, was farmed by my relatives. Our farm was in the middle, so I was surrounded by uncles, aunts and cousins. Some of them are still there."

The 280 acre farm from her father's side of the family is operated by Dwight (Pete) Hobson, while Robert Scott operates the farm once belonging to her mother's father. "They are two of the best tenants one could have and I am very, very fortunate to have them," Hazel affirmed. "They are hard-working, and just as concerned about the land as if it were their



own. We have an excellent business relationship, with open communication on both sides. They are also friends, and I have known them for almost my entire life."

Hazel keeps in close touch, making trips back to Iowa at 6 to 8 week intervals, visiting her mother, Phyllis (Bingham) Harvey, in Oakland, as well as other relatives and friends. She also enjoys treks to the farms and "communing with nature", as well as noting the progress or changes made.

Some of those changes have included installing headlands, constructing waterways, building terraces, restoring the farm houses where tenants live, no-tilling for numerous years while working with high residue amounts, and more.

Pete Hobson commented, "I have known Hazel and her family for over twenty years, and I have also farmed the land for that long. I respect her as a conservationist... preserving Iowa's heritage... farming."

Bob Scott said, "I have farmed this ground for thirty-three years. The biggest change I have seen is the concern for stopping erosion on the farm. This has been done by

installing tile and building terraces. The 160 acres I farm is 100% better today than it was when I started as a tenant."

Hazel is obviously dedicated to the preservation of natural resources and protection of wildlife. She also has an avid interest in preserving historical buildings, Victorian houses and artifacts of the past. This past year, she was involved in issues relating to constructing a new basement (replacing the old basement which her grandfather dug by hand) under the house where her father was born and raised. (After retirement, he moved to the house where Hazel grew up.) "There were a lot of fond memories recalled and stories told as we tore the old basement apart," she mused, "from tearing out the old coal bin, ripping out the old concrete stand where the milk separator once stood, to finding treasures we are certain my grandfather left behind."

When asked what circumstances caused her to leave the environment she loved, Hazel said, "I married my hometown sweetheart, moved with him to Arizona, where he completed graduate school. We then came to Chicago, where we obtained jobs (both in advertising), and later were transferred to

London, England. After I became single again, I returned to Chicago, and in 1982 began my present employment."

Hazel stated that she enjoys travel, and once she visits Alaska will have been in all 50 states. While living in England, she had the opportunity to travel throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, Greece and Sweden, and has been to "neighbors" Canada and Mexico. "During my travels," she said, "I always make it a point to get to the countryside and see how (their) country life differs from that in America. I plan to see more of the world and the 'universal atlas' is never far from my reach!"

She commented that living in the city allows many opportunities to attend numerous cultural events and frequent good restaurants which are within walking distance. "But," she emphasized, "I never give up the chance of going antiquing, or getting to the country for some biking, hiking, long walks or a night of camping under the stars and breathing our most God-given asset... fresh air!" She admitted that there is some pleasure in smelling the "natural aroma" when passing a livestock barn. "I tell my city friends (with their noses crunched up) 'that is the smell of \$\$ to a farmer'", she said with a chuckle. She added that while growing up on the farm, there were always many animals, and her life

today is shared with a domestic cat, which was recently featured in the March issue of *Cat Fancy* magazine.

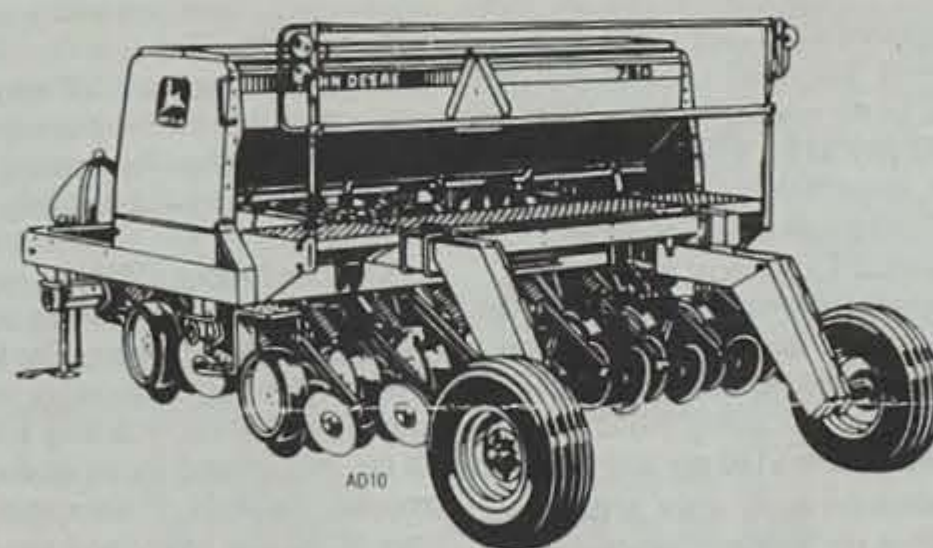
Hazel is a member of the Farm Bureau, Professional Secretaries International, and the Fourth Street Presbyterian Church in Chicago. "This is the church used in filming the movie, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, Hazel confided, "and it was quite exciting to see all the activity involved with it at the time."

Greg Mathis, District Conservationist said, "Hazel is an excellent example of the absentee landlord who understands the responsibility which comes with ownership of the land."

"We encourage all landowners living long distances away to call the NRCS office in the county where their farm exists for information on how to take better care of their farming resources."



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Not into CRP? Get stripped!

by Kevin Gee
Tech. Aide

Do you have areas that did not get accepted into the regular CRP sign-up? Do you have side-hill areas on owned or rented land that does not have terraces, but you would like to be able to do tillage on corn stalks? Would you like to receive the erosion control benefits on grass buffer strips or filter strips while not giving up cash rent or these areas? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions the Continuous CRP Program may be for you.

The Continuous CRP Program basically centers around three items for this county: contour grass buffer strips for the sidehills, grassed waterways and grassed filter strips along creeks. Eligible land for the program includes ground which has been cropped two of the past five years, or has been in the CRP or set-aside program in the past. Sign up for the program can range from 10 to 15 years and applications are taken any business day. Typically, payment is prorated from the first of the month following application and is made on October 1 like the regular CRP program. Thus, if you would enter a piece of land this March, your first-year payment would run from April 1 to October 1, and then a full year payment for the next 9 years. Eligible producers must have owned or leased the property for at least one year.

The payment rates are based on equitable cash rent rates for the three prominent soil types in the area entered. The most common side-hill soils in the county -- 99C, 10D2 and 99D2 pay \$115, \$105 and \$105 per year, respectively. All continuous CRP contracts also receive an additional \$5 per acre per year for maintenance weed control, about the rent rate for that soil. Thus, if you entered a grassed buffer strip 30 to 60 foot wide, containing 99D2 soil, you would receive \$110 per acre per year on however many acres in the strip. There is no "bidding" process in continuous CRP.

The grassed filter strip areas are those along creeks, rivers and smaller streams which typical range from 66 to 99 feet, however slightly narrower strips may be used. Grassed filter strips can be very beneficial to reduce creek bank sloughing, cutbacks into the crop field, wildlife destruction of crop turn-rows, etc. Another plus with the filter strips is that work on creek bank cutbacks may be done in the summer when the contractors are

less busy.

With the local option sales tax money, we are cost-sharing many of these types of projects now at 50% of the constructed cost. The payment on grassed filter strips is based on the soil type(s) in the area, plus \$5 per acre maintenance fee, plus an additional 20% over the regular soil type rate. Two of the most common soil types along creeks includes 11B and 8B. The rates for these soils are \$115 and \$135, respectively. Thus if 8B was the soil in a filter strip area, the rate would be \$136 per acre plus 20%, plus \$5 per acre, or \$167 per acre. Most people will find this rate very attractive as opposed to production on these areas.

If your offer to renew your existing CRP contract was not accepted, or if you have untended hillsides, the grassed buffer strips entered under the continuous CRP may be of interest. Typically, there are two methods to lay out grass strips. The point rows may be put in the crop portion between each grass strip or in the grass strip portion itself. The normal grass width is 30 feet on the upper strips, or up to 60 feet on the lowest strip if there is just one strip entered. However, if the point rows are put in the grassed areas, the strip may be much wider on these correction areas. Normally, people choose 90 to 150 feet of cropland area between grass strips to fit planter passes. With grassed buffer strips, you may also enter the small grassed waterways and headlands (up to 66 feet wide) under the same application if in the same area. The continuous CRP may utilize the same brome grass species already established for existing CRP fields without any interseeding.

The continuous CRP is a very good option for many owners and operators in the Midwest. The local NRCS will assist in locating your strip boundaries so you may kill or till the area around the strips for cropping purposes. If interested in a copy of the soil type rental rate for each county, please stop at your local NRCS or FSA office.



SWCD staffers work with schools

by Loleta Hanson
Walnut Elementary
First Grade Teacher

Michelle Zimmerman came to first grade class on Wednesday, February 28. She talked to us about how she became interested in her career. She attended college at Northwest Missouri State and majored in agribusiness.

Michelle worked for the extension

in Shelby County before accepting her present position in Oakland.

She told us about animals needing food, water, air and shelter. We then made animal tracks of a coot, fox, deer, rabbit, raccoon, dog and woodchuck. We made the tracks using stamps and paint. This was kind of messy, but was fun to learn about animal tracks in this way.

What happened to wetland project?

by Emily Snyder
Walnut High School Junior

Although not much has been said about the wetlands project lately, it is still underway.

This project was started by the class of 1996, which did the fundraising and planning. Then those students graduated, the wetland project was handed down to the class of 2003.

The wetland is located on the southwest edge of Walnut. This area has a natural growing underground spring. The students plan to restore it to a natural habitat for plants and wildlife.

The bids for the dirtwork and asphalt trails are going to be taken in March. The designs for the trails

have already been finished by the architects.

The trees have been ordered, but due to bad weather last fall, they were not planted. They are scheduled to be planted this spring.

The seventh grade students hope to start construction in late spring or early summer.

The Phil and Kim Knapp family have also volunteered their time to help construct the wetlands.

First grade teacher Loleta Hansen helped start and coordinate this project, and is still active with it. Mrs. Hansen said, "It's been a long, educational process, but it will be a wonderful place for adults and children to enjoy when it is finished."

Stewardship Week "Wonders of Wildlife" theme

Just about everyone enjoys seeing wildlife in their backyard or in the countryside. Organizers of this year's Soil and Water Stewardship Week observance are hoping that their *Wonders of Wildlife* theme will attract interest from the public and that individuals and families will take the time to apply basic conservation practices that will benefit the animals and birds that are their neighbors, wherever they live.

To encourage backyard wildlife habitat improvements, the East Pottawattamie SWCD invites you to celebrate Soil and Water Stewardship Week April 26 - May 3, and to learn more about ways you can improve wildlife habitat in your backyard and neighborhood. Your local conservation district works with the National Association of Conservation Districts, which helps produce some of the informational material available to you. Stewardship Week promotional materials are suited for use in both churches and schools, as well as general civic gatherings, such as garden clubs.

Darrell Stamp, Chairman of East Pottawattamie SWCD, said "Backyard wildlife improvements can be as simple as placing a peanut butter filled pine cone in a tree for birds, to a project as complicated as installing a wetland or small pond to attract other species of wildlife."

Personnel at the conservation district or other community wildlife organizations can help identify those practices which are best suited for your own backyard, whether it be a small urban porch, or several acres in the country.

To learn more about conservation practices which benefit wildlife, contact the SWCD office during business hours at 321 Oakland Ave., Oakland, IA 712-482-6408.

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Tillage Round Table discussion held

"Pete" Hobson makes response

A "Tillage Round Table" was held on February 18 at the Citizen's State Bank conference room in Oakland. The conference was sponsored by the East Pottawattamie SWCD and featured Dr. Doug Karlen, Soil Tillage Specialist from Iowa State University, Ames.

Karlen showed slides and gave commentary having to do with soil quality, compaction, organic matter, tillage impacts, post CRP decisions, swine manure challenges, crop rotation impacts, etc. He pointed out that soil is a "dynamic, living body" and asked the participants, "Are you sustaining it, maintaining it or degrading it?" He presented a plethora of further information and made suggestions on how to alleviate some of the common conditions which affect soil viability.

During the presentation, input was received from representatives of various ag businesses, financial institutions, implement companies, etc., as well as landowners and operators.

Following the session, Pete Hobson of Oakland was asked to give his impression of the value or content of the round table, and how it might impact his thinking or mode of operation. He gave his answers to a questionnaire which each person attending was asked to complete.

Q - Do producers understand the characteristics of good soil health? Do they understand what compaction really is and what causes it? What creates good permeability in soil?

Hobson - Overall I would say yes, most farmers are well aware of what good, healthy soil is. However, I also believe that what most believe is good soil health is really just good, inherent properties, and the farmers who can improve soil characteristics, such as permeability, aggregate size, organic content, etc., are few and far between. Time constraints and weather conditions are the leading causes of compaction. Economics have prevented some farms adapting no-till (lower gross income or possibly higher input costs). Some good education and analysis would eliminate some of these concerns.

Q - How can machinery selection affect soil health? What are the trends in machinery used in East Pott?

Hobson - There is no doubt that controlled wheel traffic will improve soil structure (less compaction). The easiest way to get there is to operate wider equipment. If the trend is to move away from no-till (which was discussed at the meeting) and go back to minimum till, it is most likely because of cooler, wetter soils in no-till. More no-tillers are trying to address this problem with trash wipers, using IH gauge wheels, seed firmers and different closing wheels, etc. The last two or



Karlen (background center) and some of those attending the tillage round-table discussion. Pete Hobson (with hands under chin) is seated at the right.

three wet springs have been more the aberration than the norm. A lot of no-tillers were first interested in no-till as a way to save moisture and ensure germination.

Q - What is the trend on how to apply nutrients and lime. What equipment is being used and when is it being applied?

Hobson - Topdressing P & K and lime works well for maintenance applications. If this is a build-up program or corrective program (ie, 4-ton lime) it would be most effective if incorporated. The alternative is to topdress repeatedly over a period of years, and the waiting will kill you! Takes a lot of patience, but it also spreads out your cost.

As far as N applications go, I think the long-term no-tillers are moving to injecting N, either 28% or NH₃. Surface applied N in no-till has been popular and is convenient, but as the mulch builds, it seems that topdressed N is less effective (C:N ratio?).

The equipment manufacturers have really improved the N application equipment the past 10 years, and I see no reason why a no-tiller would want to surface-apply N any more.

Q - What is the trend for weed control in East Pott? What chemicals are being used? Are they as toxic as they were ten years ago? What type of chemical control system are successful no-tillers using?

Hobson - The more successful no-tillers are committed to a two-pass spraying system, ie burndown followed by post-emergence or a pre-emerge followed with a post emerge. A one-pass spray system didn't work very well in a tillage system unless it was followed up by cultivation. The no-tiller has substituted a second spraying for the tillage and cultivation.

Roundup-ready soybeans, IM1 corn, Liberty corn, SR corn, etc., are becoming popular for effective, planned systems that are usually aimed at problem weeds. I also believe there has been a move to avoid using some ALS herbicides, or to be sure to include another mode of action to pick up the weeds the ALS's were missing.

Hobson: Personal observations and no-till experiences

(Hobson is a first generation farmer, who as a youth was employed on farms, and early on decided that was "all he ever wanted to do." He has been "doing it" for 21 years, and currently farms 700 acres. His wife, Denise, is employed at Oakland Foods. Their children, all of whom attend Riverside Schools are: Bonni, a junior; Valerie, a freshmen, and Rebecca (Becky), a 6th grade student.)

I became interested in no-tilling as a way to reduce erosion when planting corn into soybean ground. No-till also had the benefit of always having moisture for germination. This worked fine with a JD 7000 planter. I was really trying to ridge-till because I continued to cultivate and then plant alongside these rows the next year. No-tilling into bean ground worked very well and I was set up to use my furrow-opener as trash wipers to move residue out of the way.

N was usually floated on as 28%, P & K topdressed, lime was worked in when going to beans, or plowed coming out of hay. This worked okay; no-tilling corn into bean ground, minimum-tilling beans into corn, and plowing sod. However, as you can see, I really wasn't no-tilling any one field long enough to overcome the effects of tillage in this arrangement. Lack of experience and not too many good choices of herbicides for post-emergence beans is why I continued to minimum-till the beans. This was 1980 through 1990.

In 1991 I hired Bryce Leighton to drill beans no-till into corn stalks. In 1993, I bought my own drill and have no-tilled all my corn and beans since that time.

The drill worked fine, but what also came along at this time were various herbicides which worked quite well with no-till. Round Up, 2-4D, Canopy, Pursuit, Poast, Basagran, Pinnacle, Fusion, Flexstar... they each have their place and a certain situation which favors one over the other. The evolution of a no-till system is different for everyone. Mare's Tail

seemed like a problem 5 years ago, but is not today. Water Hemp was becoming a problem, but is not today, if you plan your system. Lamb's Quarter can be a problem but it can be controlled. The weed spectrum changes and you have to adapt.

Corn herbicides have also improved very much the past five years or so. One change is that I have definitely gone to a planned, two-pass spraying system. A pre-plant or pre-emerge herbicide, followed by a post spraying to get broad-leaf plants. Adjustments can be made as needed with the second pass to changing weed emergence. I also had some success with a total post program on a few fields, but I don't plan for it.

I have moved away from topdressing N and gone to fall-applied NH₃. The covering disks pulling the dirt and residue back over the knife slot seem to have

eliminated the concerns I had with erosion by water running down a knife mark. I may try coultering and injecting 28% as a way to reduce residue disturbance. I'm definitely convinced a no-tiller has to get the N in the ground.

The other concern with planting corn no-till has been the cooler, wetter soil. I am going to try putting IH gauge wheels on my White planter, and Keeton seed firmers, and use the minimum down pressure necessary to eliminate the sidewall compaction. Also, I'm paying much more attention to cold germination, among various varieties. Some corn varieties are much more adapted to no-till, especially concerning germination.

P & K are topdressed and although fertility is stratified, so are your roots, and I haven't seen this to be a problem. I have used Pel lime, but have moved back to ag lime, all top dressed, and will wait for it to filter down through the profile.

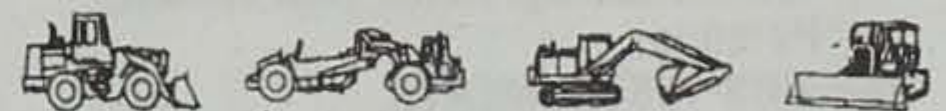
This has been an 18-year learning process. The past five years have been strictly no-till. I feel we have the herbicides that will work (not might work). We have equipment built to handle no-till (heavy planter frames, drills that won't plug up, fertilizer applicators which can reduce erosion, residue spreaders on combines, etc., etc.). We have varieties which are adaptable to no-till. No-till is not trial and error any more. I know we have more problems to overcome. Sidewalk compaction can be a problem, but some equipment modifications may overcome this. Grey leaf spot is a problem, but I believe hybrid selection can lessen its affect and plant breeders are looking into a solution.

To be successful at no-tilling is no different than any other system. Plan your work and work your plan. Most importantly, keep an open mind.

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Interest in continuous CRP sign-up

The USDA Service Center continues to see interest in the Continuous CRP Sign-up. The purpose of this program is to provide flexibility to producers so certain practices will be implemented on cropland.

Thus far, fourteen contracts with approximately 105 acres have been accepted, with more contracts being processed. The practices of interest in this area included grassed waterways, contour grassed strips and filter strips. Currently, 24 acres are enrolled in grassed waterways, 20 acres in grassed contour strips and 61 acres in filter strips.

Reminders concerning CRP ground:

- 1) Annual mowing of CRP for generic weed control is prohibited. Spot treatment which includes spot spraying and mowing is limited to area of infestation.
- 2) Periodic mowing and spraying for cosmetic purposes is prohibited at all times.
- 3) Prior permission is needed for mowing and spraying during the primary nesting season, which is from May 15 through August 1.
- 4) No terraces can be built on CRP ground.

16th CRP sign-up termed successful

During the 16th sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program, held October 14 through November 14 of last year, 39 applications were received by the West Pottawattamie USDA Service Center personnel. Of these, 28 were bid into CRP, with a total of 894.6 acres.

The local offices were notified at the end of January of those producers who were approved to bid their land into CRP. Twenty-six applications were accepted with a total of 878.8 acres.

The majority of producers in West Pott increased their chances of getting accepted by bidding lower than the assigned rental rate and by enhancing the area for wildlife. Enhancement for wildlife included planting various native grasses, trees, shrubs or a combination of all these.

What's up in soil conservation



Super sodbuster

The super sodbuster policy applies only to CRP participants with contracts during the tenth and subsequent sign-up periods, who are owners of highly erodible (HEL) land purchased after November 28, 1990.

CRP participants who are owners of HEL land purchased after November 28, 1990, may not harvest an agricultural commodity from that land if it was not planted to an ag commodity, other than a forage crop in one of the most recent five crop years. For this provision, acreage enrolled in CRP is considered planted to an agricultural commodity.

If pasture is broken up on land purchased since November 18, 1990, CRP payments cannot be received until such time the "sodbuster" acres are seeded back to a forage crop.

Only CRP participants who commit the violation are ineligible for CRP benefits. CRP participants with acres accepted during continuous signups 14 and 17 shall remain eligible.

Pott. County contractors meet

The East and West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation Districts held a county contractors meeting on February 27 at Minden. An estimated fifty people were in attendance for the session.

Each district discussed current cost share policies and other changes. Contractor liabilities and responsibilities of building structures were presented by NRCS Area Engineer Jeff Godwin.

Other topics discussed included pooling agreements involving multiple landowners, cross sections of terraces and plugging and renovating wells.

Following the meeting, dinner was served and sponsored by Fehr's Nebraska Tractor and Equipment, King Equipment, Nebraska Machinery and Thomas Equipment Service.

The district would like to thank the sponsors for their support.

Terracing shows a steady interest

by Julia Gubbels
Resource Planner

While some neighboring counties have seen a decline in terracing, West Pottawattamie has shown a steady interest in terrace construction. Once again, the district has had a successful year of installing these erosion-control structures. Many of the landowners who installed terraces received cost share. A total of 71 miles of terraces were built in the district last year. Of those 71 miles, approximately 37 miles were narrow-base and the remaining 34 miles were grassed backslope.

In addition to terraces, many landowners are interested in alternative structures to control erosion. Currently, there are a few sites with designs that are ready for construction, and numerous ones that are pending cost share and cost estimates.

Those interested in putting in a structure are encouraged to plan at least one year ahead of time.

The West Pott SWCD would like to thank those individuals who installed conservation practices on the land in 1997.

Favorite Recipes of NRCS personnel

Better than potato salad!

- 4 cups cooked long-grain rice
- 8 radishes, sliced
- 4 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 1 med. cucumber, seeded and chopped
- 2 cups thinly cut celery
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 cups mayonnaise
- 3 T prepared mustard
- 3/4 tsp. salt

In a large bowl combine rice, radishes, eggs cucumber, celery and onion. Combine mayonnaise, mustard and salt. Mix well. Pour over rice mixture and toss. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour. Yields 12-14 servings.

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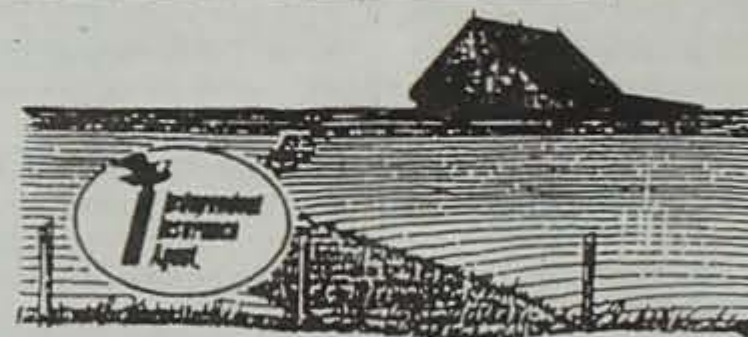
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West Pottawattamie County SWCD Annual Report

1-M Operating Budget FY97

96-97	(7-1-96 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/96)	\$ 2,500.00
Supplemental Allocations	\$ 955.00
Commissioners' Travel	\$ 1,652.88
Office Supplies, Expenses, Dues	\$ 1,690.96
Recalled by DSC ()	\$ 111.16
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 0.00

3-M Cost-Share Budgets FY97

96-97 Vol. IFIP	(7-1-96 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/96)	\$ 41,035.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$ 76,371.00
Spent or Obligated Funds	\$ 87,724.21
Recalled by DSC (12/31/97)	\$ 0.00
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 29,681.79

95-96 Vol. IFIP	(7-1-95 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/95)	\$ 40,760.00
Supplemental Allocations	\$ 64,770.00
Spent or Obligated Funds	\$104,944.54
Recalled by DSC	\$ 0.00
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 585.46

94-95 Vol. IFIP	(7-1-94 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/94)	\$ 37,585.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$ 69,937.00
Spent or Obligated Funds	\$106,102.00
Recalled by DSC	\$ 1,420.00
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 0.00

REAP Cost-Share Budgets FY 97

Practices	(7-1-96 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/96)	\$ 9,345.00
Completed Terrace Projects	\$ 6,970.00
Completed Tree Plantings	\$ 0.00
Recalled by DSC	\$ 2,375.00
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 0.00

Forestry/Native Grasses	(7-1-96 to 6-30-97)
Allocation (7/96)	\$ 2,162.00
Completed Tree Plantings	\$ 1,519.85
Completed Windbreak Plantings	\$ 0.00
Recalled by DSC	\$ 642.15
Balance Unobligated 6/30/97	\$ 0.00

Other State Cost-Share Budgets

No-Interest Loan Program	(1-1-97 to 12-31-97)
Balance (1/1/97)	\$ 41,586.80
Allocation (5/28/97)	\$ 23,400.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$ 0.00
Completed Terrace Projects	\$ 39,763.00
Incomplete Terrace Projects	\$ 21,935.43
Balance Unobligated 12/31/97	\$ 3,288.37

County Cost-Share Budgets

Pottawattamie County Local Option	
Sales Tax (L.O.S.T.) Fund (1-1-97 to 12-31-97)	
Balance Unobligated 1/1/97	\$ 80,978.09
Allocations	\$109,249.18
Cancelled/Overobligated	\$ 441.12
Completed Terrace Projects	\$ 24,465.08
Completed Structure(s)	\$ 0.00
Incomplete Terrace Projects	\$ 11,037.50
Incomplete Structure(s)	\$ 41,880.50
Office Equipment	\$ 3,872.81
Balance Unobligated 12/31/97	\$109,412.50

Summary of 1997 Cost-Share Projects

Projects (1/1/97 to 12/31/97)	Number	Amount	Unit
No-Till	---	91,150	Acres
State Cost-Share Terraces	---	248,160	Feet
State No-Interest Loans	---	31,680	Feet
County Cost-Share Terraces	---	31,680	Feet
Federal Cost-Share Terraces	---	58,080	Feet
NonCost-Share Terraces	---	15,840	Feet
State Basins	3	-----	-----
Structures Designed	3	-----	-----
Windbreaks	3	3.1	Acres
CRP Contracts Accepted	56	2,025	Acres
CRP Continuous Sign-up	31	391	Acres

1997 Personnel

District Commissioners

Randy Williams, Hazel Dell Township	Chairman
Mark Schnepel, Silver Creek Township	Vice Chair
John M. Dea, Minden Township	Treasurer
Dan McGinn, Garner Township	Treasurer
Robert F. Young, Lewis Township	Commissioner
Robert M. Jensen, Neola Township	Ass't. Comm.
Clint Goos, Keg Creek Township	Ass't. Comm.

NRCS

Lyle Peterson	District Conservationist
Lois Crawford	Soil Conservationist Tech.
Tom Bottoms	Soil Conservationist Tech.
Henry Tordoff	Soil Conservationist

County

Julia Gubbels	Resource Planner
---------------	------------------

State

Tracy Bruun	District Secretary
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BrainTeaser

There are three words in the English language which end in "gry". One is "angry". Another is "hungry". Everyone knows what the third One stands for.

Everyone uses them everyday.

And, if you listen carefully, I have given you the third word. What is it? - gry?

Do you have the answer? If so send it to the Quad District Newsletter, 715 N 2nd Ave., Logan, IA 51546.

A bit of humor

(Baseball season will soon be here)

Old Bill was a really big baseball fan -- a fanatic, in fact. One day he asked his minister, "Is there baseball in heaven? I have to know!"

The minister knew of no references to baseball in the Bible. But seeing how important it was to Bill, he prayed for divine revelation upon the matter.

The next day he went to old Bill and said, "I have good news, and I have bad news. The good news is, yes, there is baseball in heaven. The bad news is that you are pitching tomorrow!"

Speaking of heaven . . .

A man approached St. Peter at the Pearly Gates, and was told, "Before you can enter heaven, you must be able to correctly spell the password, which is 'love.' The man spelled the word correctly, then St. Peter said, "Do me a favor and keep an eye on the gates while I run some errands. The man agreed.

Lo and behold, the next person to approach the Pearly Gates was the man's wife. She explained that she had been in a fatal accident while returning from his funeral. He in turn passed on to her the information about spelling the password before she could enter Heaven. "What is the password, she asked, and the man replied "Czechoslovakia!"

The cowboy went to a fancy, big-city restaurant, but the maitre d' wouldn't let him in without a necktie. "Don't you have one I can borrow?", the cowboy asked, but was told there were none.

Undaunted the cowboy returned to his pickup and looked for something he could wear as a substitute. He soon re-entered the restaurant with a pair of jumper cables neatly tied around his neck. "Will this do?," he asked.

"I suppose so, the maitre d' said, grumpily, but don't start anything!"

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Tordoff once rejected job in Hawaii to stay with conservation



Henry Tordoff

by Lou Waite

On January 3 of this year, Henry Tordoff retired from his position as Soil Conservationist with the Area 4 Natural Resources Conservation Service staff. It was the end of a 42-year career in helping protect and improve natural resources.

Henry was born on a farm northeast of Estherville on August 4, 1937. "At that time," Henry said, "we had no running water or electricity, and my Dad had a big crew of relatives and neighbors threshing oats on the day I came into this world! Threshing machines looked something like today's combines," he explained, "but remained in one spot and horses brought the oats to them. It was then pitched by hand into the large machine, which separated the oat kernel from the straw (stem)."

"My early days," Henry recalled, "were spent hauling wood and water to my mother's kitchen, and feeding the chickens and pigs, plus gathering eggs and milking cows by hand. We obtained electricity in the mid forties. My Dad farmed with horses, but by the time I was old enough to do a lot of field work, he bought a tractor. It had steel wheels and could plow twice as much ground in a day as several teams of horses."

When Henry was ten years of age, he attended a conservation planning meeting with his father. The meeting, held in a neighbor's house, was led by what was then a "Work Unit Conservationist." His father signed with the program, and implemented a rotation of corn, soybeans, corn, oats, meadow, meadow to control erosion.

"Our farm was very wet," Henry said, "so we had to install a lot of underground tile to remove excess water. The Soil Conservation

Service, as it was known then, designed and staked out our tile. Tiling was a good conservation practice and resulted in good land use."

Henry attended high school in Estherville, where he was a member of Future Farmers of America. The advisor recommended that he consider employment with the Soil Conservation Service, as it was known then. On May 26, 1956, he began employment at the SCS field office in Algona. His salary, as a WAE, was \$1.42 per hour. "After two weeks," Henry said, "the Work Unit Conservationist, Lyle Reidinger, told me I might as well aim at being the boss, and convinced me to attend college." So, in 1959, Henry graduated from Iowa State College with a degree in Agronomy. His was the last class to graduate before it became known as Iowa State University.

"After I graduated," Henry said, "I received an offer from Dole Pineapple to move to Hawaii and work as an Agronomist. But I was a dedicated conservationist, wanting to save soil, so I turned them down."

From 1959 to 1963, Henry was a Soil Conservationist at Primghar, and he said that job gave him solid technical training, plus experience as a "conservation salesman." "I spent a lot of time just plain selling conservation... from door to door," he reminisced.

From 1963 through 1968, Henry was at Emmetsburg as a

Work Unit Conservationist; from 1968 to 1973 he was a District Conservationist (DC) in Storm Lake; 1973 to 1979 was spent as a DC at LeMars. While there, he served a special assignment as the Western Iowa Non Point Source Coordinator, holding meetings in 23 western Iowa counties.

In March, 1979, he resigned from SCS and began his own Agricultural Consulting and Earth Moving Construction business. But conservation was in his blood, so in 1989, he gave the business to his son and returned to SCS. The next years were spent as a Soil Conservationist in Donnellson and Oskaloosa, and in 1992, he came to Council Bluffs to assume the position from which he retired. During his working career, he had served with SCS or NRCS in 31 counties, and as District Conservationist for 17 years in four counties.

When asked to define the changes in conservation activities during his career, Henry said,

"In my first District Conservationist job, I spent 80% of my time working in the field in direct assistance to the landuser, and 20% of my time with paperwork. In my last job, I spent 20% of my time in the field giving assistance to the landuser, and 80% doing paperwork! Twenty years ago, the way the field office staff spent their time was determined by the Commissioners of the Soil Conservation District. Local people were the ones who decided what activities were important."

"Today, those decisions are made by bureaucrats in Washington D.C. and they fool the local people into thinking they have a part in making decisions. This is done by having community meetings and asking for opinions. Then Washington comes out with a program and in order to administer it, the local field office staff has to spend their time doing paperwork which provides the necessary proof that Washington's rules are being followed and it can be proved their program is a big success!"

"This has helped the big farmer and made it so that the only landusers that come to the NRCS for help today are the ones who want some cost-share money for a big practice. Due to the compliance aspect of the 1985 Food Security Act and the fact that the NRCS was and is a part of the administration of this act, most landusers are fearful of even having the NRCS on their land. They hesitantly take the risk of being involved with NRCS in order to get cost-share money."

"The last year I spent with NRCS was spent in a local field office and I must sadly admit that a very small percent of the field office staff time was spent in the field, helping a landuser with solving a soil or water conservation problem."

"How to change the trend, and return to locally controlled conservation?? In my opinion, local people need to join with the Soil and Water Conservation District,



Mark Schnepel, E. Pott. Commissioner Vice Chairman, is shown accepting the World Herald Award from Cathie Graves, Field Representative for IDALS-Division of Soil Conservation.

West Pott SWCD winner of Omaha World Herald award

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District was selected as winner of the 52nd annual Omaha World Herald Soil Conservation Program award. The monetary award will be used for educational purposes. An engraved plaque was also received, as well as certificates of merit for each district commissioner.

The award honors agriculturalists who strive to conserve the state's soil and water. Basis for selection includes district governing board activities and soil conservation district activities.

The district commissioners are involved with preparation of the annual report, making personal contacts with district cooperators and reviewing sites of potential soil loss problems. In addition to working with cooperators, the district also works with various local, county and state

organizations for cooperative assistance in the conservation program.

Various activities are conducted by the district each year. Programs include the conservation poster contest, IASWDC scholarship, Arbor Day, conservation education field days and more. Presentations and programs are conducted by staff upon request from teachers and students on various topics regarding conservation, erosion and natural resources. The district also continues to support technical and financial assistance to the landowners for implementation of conservation practices.

All of these accomplishments were made possible by teamwork and dedication from commissioners staff and cooperators, according to Lyle Peterson, District Conservationist. He adds, "Congratulations on a job well done!"

Commodity Groups, Environmental Organizations and State and National Political Leaders to reduce national bureaucratic control of the local office!"

Henry concluded a bit wistfully, "I was privileged to be able to spend most of my career in the field, getting to know and help farmers. I made thousands of friends, and I feel that I had a part in protecting and improving our natural resources." (And so you did, Henry. You did!)

Henry and his wife Lillian have been married 40 years. Their daughter, Marilyn, is a registered nurse and clinical nursing instructor

with Western Iowa Tech and occupational health nurse at Marion Health Center, Sioux City. Her husband is a Woodbury County Deputy Sheriff, and they have a 12-year-old son.

Son Bill owns and operates Tordoff Agricultural Services, an earth-moving construction company. Last year, the company completed 60 large hog confinement systems.

Henry, meanwhile is free to pursue his hobbies: raising Arabian horses, operating their 147-acre farm, avid reading, hunting and fishing.

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Native grass drill now available

by Mark Beedle
Soil Conservation Aide

East Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District has available for rent this spring a Great Plains 10-foot, no-till drill. The drill program was developed to meet needs of producers in this district. This type of program has seen great success in neighboring counties.

The drill will seed all types of native grasses and alfalfa. It will be an excellent tool for use in pasture renovation, grassed waterways, filter strips, field boards and CRP acres.

Rental rates this first year will be \$6 per acre. The producers will provide their own tractor and person to operate the drill. The district will transport the drill from place to place and give instructions on how to set it.

Producers interested in renting the drill for spring are asked to call NRCS at Oakland, 712-482-6408, or call Mark Beedle at 712-482-6778.



New park ranger at Botna Bend

by Chris Williams
Naturalist

John Fenner is the new park ranger at Botna Bend County Park, having assumed that position recently with the Pottawattamie County Conservation Board.

A native of Council Bluffs, Fenner previously interned as a park ranger during the summer of 1996 and 1997. He has also been an animal keeper at Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha. At that time, he dealt specifically with hoofed animals, such as giraffes, zebras, gazelles, antelope, llamas and wallabies. For several months, he was at the new wildlife zoo being developed at Mahoney State Park.

Fenner has a BA degree in Environmental Science from Simpson College in Indianola. He also gained extra credit in the pre-veterinary program at the college. His educational background and experience in animal husbandry had made him a valuable staff employee, and a great asset to the elk and bison herds at Botna Bend Park.

We are excited to have John at the park, and look forward to his ideas for improvement of it for all visitors. If you have a chance to stop at Botna Bend, welcome John into the community and see all the new park improvement he is bringing about.



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Read the back of the application? You should!

How many of you have ever read the back of the application form when signing up for conservation practices that are cost shared by the Soil and Water Conservation District?

Well, there are a few things you should know if you haven't read it.

Permanent practices:

1 - Sign a twenty (20) year maintenance agreement. Copies of this agreement are available from the Soil Conservation District office. The agreement contains the following requirements:

a) Applicant or successors will maintain the erosion control capabilities of the practice.

b) Approval of the SWCD commissioners is required prior to removal, alterations or modification of the practice.

c) Applicant or successors will notify any prospective purchaser of this agreement.

d) Failure to follow the conditions of the maintenance agreement will require the applicant or successors to maintain, repair or reconstruct the practice at his/her own expense.

2 - Certify the actual cost of the project

3 - Sign a receipt of warrant.

Temporary practices (contour strip-cropping):

1 - Sign a five (5) year performance agreement.

a) Applicant or successors will continue practices for length of agreement.

b) The recipient shall be allowed to work out a sub-agreement to transfer the performance agreement to a new landowner or farm operator who agrees to continue to implement the practices during the remaining time period of the agreement.

c) Failure to comply will require applicant to repay money provided to them as a result of this agreement.

2 - Sign receipt of warrant.

All programs are subject to requirement contained in Chapter 161A of the Iowa Code and Division of Soil Conservation rules Section 27 of the Iowa Administrative Code.

By signing the cost-share applications you indicate that you have reviewed the back of the cost-share form (IP - 1 Addendum) and understand the conditions that apply.

Next time you sign up for cost-share, take a moment to read the back of the application.

The man who sings his own praises usually gets the wrong pitch.

We know that a fool and his money are soon parted, but it would be interesting to learn how they got together in the first place.

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Low water crossing now in place

Sometimes known as
a "Missouri" crossing

by Mark Beedle
Soil Conservation Aide

A new low-water crossing has been completed in East Pottawattamie County, near Oakland on the Bernie Bolton farm. You may be asking yourself, what is a low water crossing? It is a new type of structure for this area and will be evaluated for design changes and improvement for further work of this type. These crossings were often termed "Missouri Crossings" in the past.

The objective of the project was to establish a creek crossing for livestock and light vehicles and to provide a degree of streambed stabilization. Its targeted advantages over a culvert type earthen fill or wooden bridge was to offer a safe, low-maintenance structure that would be livestock friendly as well as raise the elevation of the stream by 1-3 feet.

The following is a list of construction items used in the project and a brief description of each.

Gabion baskets -- Wire cages hand-filled with rock and tied shut to keep rock in place.

Geoweb -- A 6" tall plastic honeycomb type material which cells are filled with rock. Purpose is to hold rock in place in the stream current. These are 20-foot sheets laid on top of the baskets.

Filter Fabric -- Cloth-like material to cover the base to allow water

movement but to keep soil and rock in place.

Rip Rap -- Large, clean rock, 3 to 8".

Gravel -- 1 to 2".

The crossing was placed on a straight portion of the stream. The drive approaches were excavated at a 5 to 1 ratio. The side banks were sloped at a 2 to 1 or flatter slope. The drive slope was covered with filter fabric and gravel. The stream area was excavated about 3 feet deep. Filter fabric was placed in the bottom covered by 1 foot of rip rap. This rip rap was bordered on each side by the 3-foot tall rock-filled gabion baskets. The 6 inch geoweb material covering the rip rap was hand-filled with gravel. This is the actual drive-over surface.

On the day of completion, a tandem dump truck and backhoe used in construction easily crossed the new structure.

Staff members, SWCD commissioners, as well as those involved with the construction, are eager to follow the stability and maintenance of the crossing, after times of changing temperatures and water flow rates.

Anyone wishing to see the structure is invited to stop by or contact the Oakland NRCS or Bernie Bolton.

East Pott. SWCD and Loess Hills Development and conservation Authority were partners in this project.

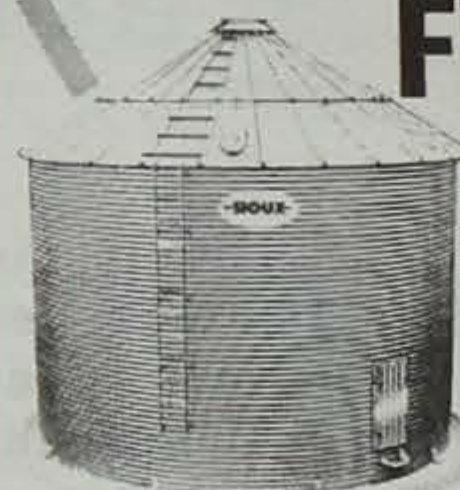


The creek prior to the "Missouri crossing" being installed



The above two photos show phases in the process of constructing a low water crossing on the Bernie Bolton farm

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Lou Waite receiving the NAACD award from Cathie Graves, Field Representative of IDALS-Division of Soil Conservation.

Lou Waite wins writing awards

Louretta (Lou) Waite recently received a first place state award for "Excellence in Conservation Reporting" from the Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. She accepted the award at the chapter meeting in Ames on February 12.

Previously, the Quad District Conservation Newsletter for which Waite writes, and also edits and produces, was Runner-up in the nine-state North Central Region of

the National Association of Conservation Districts' newsletter competition. The publication covers East and West Pottawattamie, Shelby and Harrison Counties, and is mailed to 6000 readers in 15 states. Award ceremonies were held February 3 in Nashville, TN.

A long-time journalist and former newspaper editor, Waite has been employed as an Information Specialist with USDA NRCS for seven years.

Conservation practices revolving loan program (no-interest loan)

by Konda Slagle, Secretary

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts have access to a fund which provides loans at no interest to eligible landowners for constructing permanent soil conservation practices.

In this program, eligible landowners can borrow up to \$10,000 at no interest, for up to a ten-year period, to construct terraces and water and sediment control basins.

To be eligible, a landowner must be able to secure the loan and be capable of repaying the loan in ten annual installments. Some restrictions apply.

Each district must submit a list

of names of interested landowners to the Division of Soil Conservation office in Des Moines in April. The exact date has not yet been determined. Once the Division has received the requests from all the districts in Iowa, it will then divide the funds between the districts who made requests for funding.

Those wishing to apply for a no-

by Babetta Lucke
Commissioner Chair

The first watershed was organized in Coon Valley, Wisconsin in 1933. The topsoil there was starting to be formed over 10,000 years ago, at the time westerly winds carried a blanket of loess silt from nearby receding glaciers to Coon Valley and into Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois, known by the geologists as the driftless area (or land the glaciers forgot).

In the 1850's, with 10 inches of rich topsoil, settlers began clearing trees, and plowing prairie grasses to plant crops and raise livestock. In the late 1920's, half of the topsoil was lost because of farming practices. The gullies formed and took the topsoil into the creek bottoms, which filled the streams and caused flooding. This was happening throughout all the country.

President Franklin D Roosevelt in 1933 chose Hugh Hammond Bennett (the soil scientist with the USDA) to head a new Soil Erosion Service, two years later renamed it the Soil Conservation Service. Today it is called the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

He chose Coon Valley as his experiment for the first Watershed Project because it was close to the Upper Mississippi Valley Erosion Experiment Station in LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

His concept was the government would provide fertilizer, lime, seed, and labor to farmers willing to begin conservation practices on their land. This wasn't easy, as the

interest loan or wanting more information may contact their local soil and water conservation district.

Watershed history and update facts

farmers thought the government was taking their land from them.

Most of the work centered on soil saving practices like strip cropping, crop rotation, fencing livestock out of woodlands, flood control, and improving the wildlife habitat.

As the years passed the farmers became good stewards of the land and put pressure on their neighbors to do the same.

Soil losses averaged 50 or more tons per acre at the start of this project and now the NRCS states they are from 4-5 tons. What an improvement!

Just four years after the Coon Valley Project was started the first Soil Conservation District was established in North Carolina and now today there are 3000 districts in the US.

Finishing up I wanted to give you a few facts about the Mosquito Watershed: Application was made for it in November of 1959 with PL566 funds. Directors at that time were D.E. Hamann, James E Stamp, Robert Zacharis, and Walter E Wear.

In April of 1965, the watershed

work plan was started, at that time there were 162 farms located either entirely or partially within the watershed district.

The total drainage for the project is 24510 acres or 38.3 square miles and it is about 12 miles long and 5 miles wide. It is estimated there is over 1 million feet of terraces (190 miles) built which has really improved the soil loss within the watershed.

The total estimated cost in 1965 was \$1,458,290, to be completed in 8 years. There are 57 structures planned and today there are 14 structures left to be built.

The first project was completed in 1968 -- site 13, Wilfred Brown and site 13-1, Schley Brothers. Site 13 is a cement grade stabilization structure (concrete chute spillway) in the field and site 13-1 is the dam now Schley Park.

Today the directors are Wilhelm Stamp, John Stamp, Lynn Grap, and Scott Dollen, who are still very active and want to see that the original purpose of the watershed gets carried out.



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Iowa's trumpeter swans being restored



by Ron Andrews
and Dave Hoffman
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources

Iowa's trumpeter swan restoration program continued on track in 1997. Thirty-six additional neck-collared one and two-year old trumpeter swans were successfully released in the summer of 1997. To date, 85 trumpeter swans have been released in Iowa: 4 unmarked birds in 1994; 14 in 1995; 31 in 1996 and 36 in 1997. All trumpeter swans, except those that escaped in 1994, are marked with green neck collars (F##), green plastic leg bands (F##) and USFWS leg bands.

Some of the Iowa-released swans which migrated during the winter of 1996-97 went as far south as west-central Missouri and east-central Kansas. Three trumpeters released at the Union Slough NWR near Titonka migrated to southeast Colorado, near Fort Lyon. Two of these birds were re-sighted at Monticello, Minnesota, the

following spring -- a straight line round trip distance of over 1300 miles. At least 5 of the Iowa released swans spent the summer of 1997 within Iowa and several others were reported in southern Minnesota. We also received a report that one of our swans was part of a pair which produced two cygnets to flight stage in 1997 near Lake Titonka, Minnesota. Production in the wild is a major milestone for our project and we hope that 1998 will be the year that we have our first wild nesting swan in Iowa since 1883.

Migrating swans from other states

For the past several winters, we have had several swans from Wisconsin and Minnesota stop in Iowa, with a few staying for the winter. Trumpeter swans from Wisconsin have spent the past four winters on Blackhawk Lake near Lakeview, Iowa. Swans from the Lake Itasca region of Minnesota have spent portions of the past four winters on the Winnebago River near

Mason City. We also had 3 trumpeters from Michigan observed on the Mississippi River near Burlington during the spring of 1997. During the winter of 1996-97, numerous swans, both marked and unmarked, were observed in Iowa and even are being reported this winter.

Known swan mortalities

To date, 18 of the released swans are known to have died: 5 from power line collisions, 6 shot by violators, 4 from diseases and 3 from unknown causes. Additional swans presumed dead but never recovered include 1 injured by an eagle and 5 that are missing from the release sites and presumed dead, as they were never observed in flight. This is more mortality than we would like to see, but hopefully by releasing large numbers of swans, we can overcome these losses.

Trumpeter swan partnerships

Through a cooperative agreement with the Wisconsin DNR, we obtained 15 eggs from the Alaskan nesting grounds in both 1996 and 1997. Jim Pichner, curator at the

Minnesota Zoo, hatched 12 of 15 eggs in 1996 and 13 of 15 in 1997. The cygnets were hand-reared at three separate sites by private cooperators, with only 1 cygnet mortality. The majority of these young birds will be released during the summer of 1998. At this point, we do not expect to obtain any additional eggs from the Alaska breeding grounds. We have acquired several additional swans from Wyoming, Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Mississippi. We have informal cooperative agreements with the Milwaukee Zoo, the Northeast Wisconsin Zoo, the Jackson Mississippi Zoological Park, the Minnesota Zoo and Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines. In 1998, we will have 30 cooperators/contributors holding 32 pairs of swans which could potentially produce enough cygnets annually to sustain our release efforts. Our goal is to have 15 free-flying nesting pairs of trumpeter swans by 2003.

Developing a standardized database

We have attempted to develop a uniform swan observation database that we hope will be useful in compiling and transferring

East Pott SWCD/NRCS

16th CRP signup information

by Tracy Robinson
Program Assistant
East Pott. FSA

East Pottawattamie County has received notification of accepted and rejected CRP offers for the 16th signup. East Pott. had 15 of their 31 offers accepted for a total of 964.2 acres, which was 71% of the acres offered.

Ten of the accepted offers were existing CRP Contracts which have expired or will be expiring in 1998. The effective date of the contracts that have expired will be March 1, 1998 and October 1, 1998 for the remaining contracts.

Acceptance into CRP was determined by the following factors:

Quad-District Quarterly Conservation Newsletter

715 N 2nd Ave
Logan, IA 51546
Lou Waite, Editor
712-644-2210
FAX 712-644-3247
Published four
times yearly
USPS No. 170

observations between cooperating entities throughout the country. We believe standardized databases will allow electronic transfer of observations and thus quicker access to data on the Interior Trumpeter Swan population, as well as what is happening with swan populations in the rest of North America.

We have also developed a *Trumpeting the Cause for Wetlands/Trumpeter Swan Restoration* educational booklet for schools, which we hope will be useful in educating students about wetlands and swans.

- 1) Wildlife Factors: includes cover to be established, endangered species, proximity to water, adjacent protected acres, contract size, wetland to upland ratio.
- 2) Water Quality: including location, ground water, surface and wetland benefits.
- 3) Erosion Factor: erodability index.
- 4) Enduring Benefits: adding a practice which would remain in place beyond the contract period (for example, tree or shrub plantings, or restoration of rare and declining habitat).
- 5) Air Quality: wind erosion.
- 6) State or National Conservation Priority Areas (CPA's) none in Pott County.
- 7) Cost Factor: dollars offered, cost sharing costs and cost per benefit.

The single, most important producer decision involved the cover practice applied to the acreage offered. In East Pottawattamie County, we had 12 of our 15 accepted offers seeding the acres to warm season native grasses. Four of our 15 offers went beyond the warm season cover and added enduring benefits to their offered acres.

The cost was also an important producers decision. To have the best chance to be accepted, producers had to bid below their bid caps, which are calculated by averaging the County Rental Rates for the 3 predominant soil types on the acreages offered. The rental rates for the accepted 16th CRP ranged from \$79.68 to \$105.00. East Pott also had 11 of their 15 contracts waive the cost share assistance for establishing the practices.

We anticipate another general signup to be held in 1998 for CRP Contracts, to be effective October 1, 1999. Watch further newsletters and columns for information on the next signup.

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