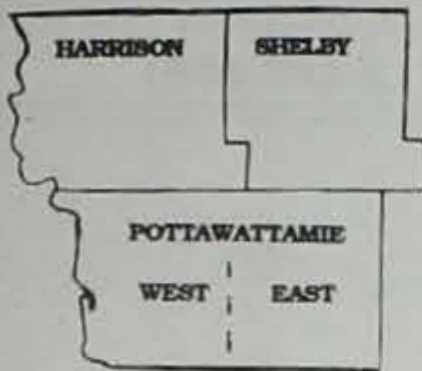
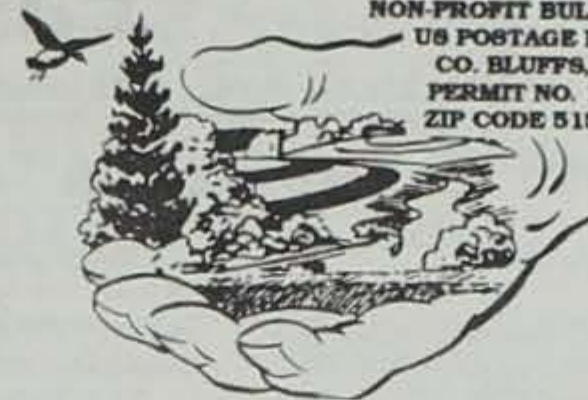




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Issue 2

Quad-District Conservation Newsletter



Summer
1998

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Partnerships aid conservation causes

Partnerships are becoming more and more important in every business and private sector, but are even more so when applied to conservation efforts.

A good example of this is the recent partnership of Pheasants Forever and USDA (Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service).

Earlier this year, Lyle Peterson, West Pott District Conservationist, and Greg Mathis, East Pott District Conservationist met with the Pottawattamie County chapter of Pheasants Forever. They presented the members the opportunity to help cost-share the seeding of CRP filterstrips and bufferstrips to grass -- with emphasis on recommendation of native grasses.

Why filter strips and buffer strips? Because these, along streams or on hillsides, are beneficial for control of soil erosion and water quality. And why native grasses? Because if filter strips and buffers are added, in addition to providing protection from wind erosion, they maximize the good done by making the strips productive to wild bird summer nesting and winter protection. This fact explains gaining the interest of Pheasants Forever.

According to Ed Foss, long time member, Pheasants Forever voted to participate in the program and to provide \$250 per each project, based on the average size of the projects. From their general fund, Pheasant's Forever will earmark a total of \$5,000 for the program, with a request it be used primarily for filter strips along waterways.

"Allocating \$250 to each



A recent successful partnership between Harold and Ronald Young, Pheasants Forever, Qualls Unlimited, East Pottawattamie SWCD, East Pottawattamie Roads Department and others will make it possible for the first public hunting area to be developed in the county. It will be located in the upper sector of the photo, bounded by the two roadways shown.

project will make it possible for a larger number to be funded," Foss noted. "We focused on filter strips along waterways since they are not farmed and will not be farmed. They therefore will provide more permanent wildlife habitat for pheasants and other game birds."

Foss pointed out that contrary to what some think, Pheasants Forever does not try to protect wildlife, ie pheasants and other game birds, simply so they will be available for hunting. "We protect and promote wildlife for public benefit of every sort," he emphasized, "not just for hunters."

Pheasants Forever funds are received from proceeds of an annual banquet, and legal state-sanctioned raffles and auctions. Dues paid by members are not a part of this for they are forwarded directly to the national organization. The organization's net income averages around \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year. Much of this is used for projects such as just described.

For its part, FSA will cost-share 50% of each project under the landowner's CRP contract. Pheasants Forever will provide another 45% if native grasses are seeded. Therefore, the farmer or landowner taking part would have to provide only 5% of the cost. But, equally importantly, they would become the third part of the three-way partnership formed.

According to Greg Mathis, there are "no strings attached" and no additional contract to sign. Participants must agree to maintain the seeding under the CRP contract, and that is all. No one is required to allow hunting.

"Come in and see the staff at your NRCS office," Greg advised. "Talk to them about a warm season grass mixture. They will determine if you are

eligible and roughly how much your seeding costs will be. They can include seed, drill rental, herbicide, fertilizer and lime. Costs will vary by site, seed mixture and soil tests. Only warm season grasses and legume mixtures are eligible."

Farmers can seed warm season grasses themselves rather than hiring it done. Some SWCD's, such as East

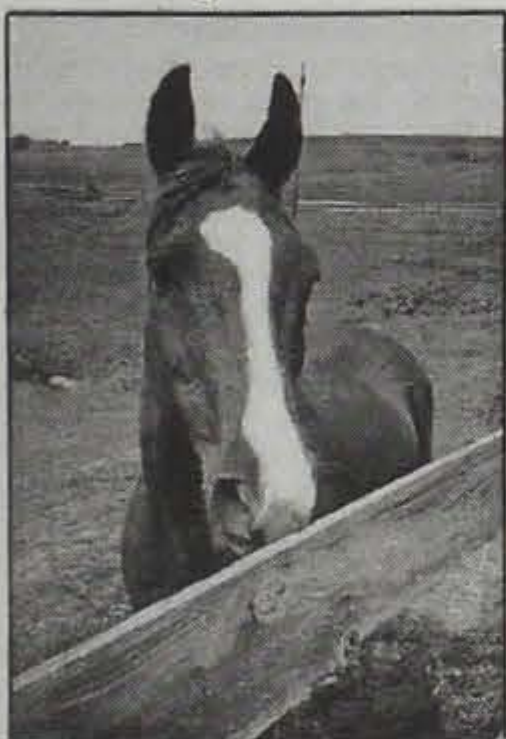
Pott, have drills for rental for this purpose. Pamphlets and advice on warm season grass establishment is also available.

Estimated costs for planting of warm season grass mixtures near streams

20% Switchgrass = 1.2 lbs. @ \$11 per lb = \$13.20
40% Big Bluestem = 4 lbs. @ \$15 per lb. = \$60.00
20% Indian Grass = 2 lbs. @ \$18 per lb. = \$36.00
20% Little Blue = 2 lbs. @ \$15 per lb. = \$30.00

Total	9.2 lbs.	\$139.20 per acre
Interseeder Drill Rental		\$ 6.00 per acre
Tractor & Driver		\$10.00 per acre
Total Cost-share		\$155.20 per acre

FSA @ 50%	= \$77.60
Pheasants Forever @ 45%	= \$69.75
Landowner @ 5%	= \$ 7.75



Arabian Prince

This royal beauty is Berjo Jaydaar. Read about him and his owners on pages 10 and 11.

New address?

If you have moved and wish to continue receiving the newsletter, please send your new mailing address to:

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715 N. 2nd Ave.,
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(The postal service will not forward third class mail, and we flunked mind-reading 101!)

David Schneider is "expanding his horizons"

by Lou Walte

David Schneider began his duties as a Soil Conservation Technician (SCT) at the East Pottawattamie SWCD office on June 3.

A native of Rushville, Illinois, David received a degree in Agricultural Science and Ag Engineering from the University of Illinois, located at Champagne-Urbana.

"I grew up on a farm," David said reflectively. "I love farming and my roots will always be there. But when this position became available, I decided to 'expand my horizons', so to speak."

His horizon's may have been broadened during his college years, when he spent six months in the Netherlands. In an exchange program, U.S. students and Dutch students studied environmental science in each other's country.

"While in the Netherlands in 1995, I visited 13 other countries," David commented. "It was interesting to observe the farming methods and livestock operations, and how they varied from place to place. I witnessed the flooding of the Rhine River, which reminded me of like events at home."

David said that having seen devastation caused by floods in 1993 (Rushville lies between the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers), he was especially interested in

the flood protection measures carried out in the Netherlands. Some of the dikes there were built hundreds of years ago.

"The Dutch have a saying," he related with a chuckle, "that 'God created the earth, but the Dutch created the Netherlands'. That is because the people have reclaimed almost half their country from the sea, and it is an ongoing battle to keep the waters out. They are a great people, and I learned a lot from them. I made many friends while there, and we still keep in touch."

Following his college graduation, David was employed as an environmental manager with a large farm operation on the "Illinois side" of the St. Louis area. "I was comfortable with the job," he said, "and gained some practical experience."

But when family concerns arose, David went home to assist in the settlement of his grandfather's estate. He later purchased an 80-acre tract from the estate, 20 of which is tillable, with the rest in woodland and natural areas.

"My family has been close to the soil for four generations," David said. "They were farmers in Germany and followed that occupation after coming to this country. It's in my blood! My grandfather was a good conservationist, and so is my father, so I think that led to my interest in this job."

According to him, western

Illinois is very similar to Iowa, with the same agricultural background, although not the "rolling hills" found in this part of the state.

"I soon realized that Iowa has a much higher awareness of agriculture and conservation than anywhere else I have been," David declared. "I am very impressed with that. The Armstrong Research Farm, for example, is doing some great things, and I understand there are other such farms in Iowa. I think Iowa 'stole' the idea from Illinois, but the concept has certainly been expanded upon and improved."

The new SCT said he is looking forward to working with the office staff (who he described as being "super") and the local landowners. He noted that the friendliness of all the people has been "very gratifying".

"I am living in a house on the Floyd Knop farm," he related. "Greg (Mathis) helped me find the house, which was not furnished. But the Knops have been so kind. They loaned me furniture, and told me about auctions and yards sales and so forth. I couldn't bring much with me, so I have really appreciated all the help."

David said he also hopes to work with the youth of the area. "I grew up in 4-H and FFA --- even collegiate FFA --- so I hope to continue along those lines. Right now, though, having only been here a week, I am



David Schneider, left is being instructed by Ed Marshall, Civil Engineering Technician, in the use of a Leitz electronic measuring instrument.

concentrating on becoming acclimatized, and learning the duties of my job. I am really excited about that, and hope to contribute something

worthwhile to the 'cause'."

In this writer's opinion, anyone meeting the young man will soon have no doubts about that.

Two SWCD commissioners to be chosen in general election

The terms of two Soil and Water District Commissioners will expire at noon on January 1, 1999. They are Russell Brandes of Hancock, James Township; and Darrell Stamp of Walnut, Lincoln Township.

Any qualified elector residing in the soil and water

conservation district which is all of Belknap, Carson, Center, Grove, James, Knox, Layton, Lincoln, Macedonia, Pleasant Valley, Washington, Waveland and Wright Townships, including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner. An exception is that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any one township.

Incumbent commissioners are Bernie Bolton, Belknap Twp.; Marilyn Von Weihe, Carson Twp. and Terry Gleaves, Center Twp. Citizens of these townships therefore would not be eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil and water conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same manner as for other elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petitions can be obtained from the County Auditor.

These petitions, signed by 25 eligible electors, must be filed with the County Auditor at the Pottawattamie County Courthouse no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 26, 1998.

Individuals elected in November, 1998, will serve a term of four years beginning January 1, 1999. Soil and water conservation district commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county. For further information pertaining to the responsibilities of a commissioner, contact East Pott SWCD office, 321 Oakland Avenue, Oakland. Phone (712) 482-6408.

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Front row, left to right: Adam Pieken, Eric Sieh. Back row, Will Kelly, Amy McMartin, Jen Scott, Josh Smith

Science Club places first in Envirothon competition

by Michelle Zimmerman

Congratulations to the AvoHa Science Club for receiving first place in the oral presentation at the state Envirothon. Team members are Will Kelly, Amy McMartin, Jen Scott, Josh Smith, Adam Pieken and Eric Sieh, alternate.

Seventeen teams, 85 students in all, took comprehensive tests in wildlife, aquatics, forestry and soils -- making observations and performing tests outdoors at the Iowa 4H Education and Natural Resources Center near

Madrid.

The annual competitions is sponsored by the Conservation Districts of Iowa, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Agriculture, and others.

The students tested the acidity of a pond, identified soil types and fish species and explained how they could help fight water pollution in a fictitious but very Iowa-like watershed.

The teams had to give a 15-minute presentation on how they would set up a system to check water quality in a watershed. The area included a turkey products manufacturer, corn and soybean farms, heavily fertilized yards and a dog track.

Terril won first place, advancing to the national competition in July, to be held at Michigan State University in East Lansing. Maquoketa Valley took second place, and Central Lee of Montrose was third. The teams had emerged from a preliminary field of 50.

Congratulations again to the AvoHa Science Club for a job well done!

Science Fair winner

Congratulations to Emily Kesten for receiving second place at the Riverside Middle School Science Fair. Her project demonstrated that contour strips work best in reducing erosion.

"I used two boxes filled with soil, one with grassed contour strips and one without", Emily said. "I elevated the ends of the boxes, then poured 2 cups of water into them. The contour strips didn't leak at all, but the box without them leaked much more. I did this experiment four times to make sure the results weren't flukes."

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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Enthusiasm runs high in Farm Creek Watershed priority area

by Terry D. McLain
FSA County Executive
Director

The Farm Creek Watershed priority area covers approximately 10,470 acres in southern East Pottawattamie County. Agriculture is intensive in the area, as over 90% of the watershed is devoted to row crops. This watershed was selected by the Local Conservation Work Group partly because of its small size, and partly because the watershed

headwaters are located in East Pott County. Other reasons for designating Farm Creek Watershed as an EQIP priority area were the various conservation concerns in the area. Farm Creek is degrading rapidly, and swallowing many acres of prime farmland in the process.

NRCS and FSA held initial public meetings on Farm Creek on April 1, 1998 (no foolin'!) We could tell from the outset that interest in the EQIP from area landowners was high. When we

announced that approximately \$250,000 in federal cost-share had been approved for conservation practices, and cost-share for most practices was being offered at the 65% cost-share level, enthusiasm began to grow.

At the end of our initial signup period on May 15 we had 44 applications, covering over 79% of the land in the Farm Creek Watershed. Many producers will take advantage of this opportunity to install practices such as terraces, sod waterways, ponds, grade stabilization structures, streambank stabilization practices, windbreaks and livestock waste systems. Others plan to seal abandoned wells, establish prescribed grazing systems, and establish

windbreaks. EQIP will change the watershed for the better, forever.

EQIP provides cost-share for producers under 5 to 10-year contracts. Practices cannot be started prior to County Committee approval of the EQIP contract. A cost-shared practice must be installed within 12 months of contract approval. If you have questions regarding the EQIP program, or the Farm Creek Watershed in particular, contact the East Pottawattamie County USDA Service Center in Oakland.

Dry fire hydrants put to good use by fire-fighter personnel

by Michelle D. Zimmerman

Since the installation of two dry fire hydrants in East Pottawattamie County, both have been used on two separate occasions, at both ends of the county.

The first fire was located near Minden, and the dry fire hydrant near Clayton Young's farmstead in the northwest part of the district was utilized. The second fire was located south of Walnut, and the dry hydrant at Bruce Heyne's pond was used to extinguish the barn which was aflame.

Dry fire hydrants are the newest tool for fighting fires in rural areas. These hydrants provide access to water sources for local volunteer fire departments to fight fires. A dry fire hydrant is simply a suction pipe laid underground (below frost level) from an all-weather access road to a natural or man-made water source. This eliminates the need to haul water from urban communities.

Probably the most critical element of rural fire suppression in Iowa is water supplies in ample quantities to meet the fire-fighter's immediate emergency demands. As a general rule, at a minimum, a fire department is required to produce 250-gallons of water per minute within five minutes of

arrival, and maintain that flow for at least two hours.

Walnut volunteer fire-fighter Darrell Stamp remarked, "The dry fire hydrant SAVED valuable time in hauling water to the site. With the Hancock Volunteer Fire Department pumping the water supply, and the Walnut VFD hauling the water and extinguishing the fire, we were able to protect the house and other outbuildings from being damaged or destroyed. Many rural communities are fortunate to have access to and realize the benefits which these dry fire hydrants provide."

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"Wild things exist only if you have the graciousness to allow them to."

Joy Williams

by Michelle D. Zimmerman
County Resource Planner

The East Pottawattamie County Soil and Water Conservation District held their essay contest, which promotes soil and water conservation to high school students. The purpose of the essay contest is to have the students gain knowledge on current environmental issues, for example nonpoint pollution, wetlands, wildlife habitat areas, etc. This year's theme was "Wonders of Wildlife". The theme focused on the relationship between wildlife, wildlife habitat and proper land management, especially on lands managed for urban and suburban home sites, farms, and private production lands. The most important concept is the need for everyone, no matter where they live, to practice good soil and water stewardship and enjoy the wonders of wildlife.

Fifty percent of the judging criteria consists of the effectiveness of the message as it pertains to the theme. Twenty-five percent consideration is given to originality. The other twenty-five percent is based on content.

Award-winning essays reveal youth's interpretation of theme

This year participants were high school students from AvoHa-Shelby-Tennant and Riverside High School. The prize money and certificates were made possible through donated funds.

Congratulations to the winners, whose essays appear below. Thanks to all who participated. The District looks forward to holding the essay contest again next year.

First place award Natural Wildlife by Eric Miller Riverside High School

Nature is the only true place that I can go to clear my head. Whether it is in Fremont stalking deer, or Minnesota canoeing through continuous lakes and rivers. It allows me to relax and think clearly about what I must do.

Nature is the source of all life. It is the beginning, the end, and the in-between. Without nature we would not be here on this earth. It keeps us alive; it keeps us fed.

The chirp of the birds in spring wake me from my cold winter hibernation. Out of my cave, I stroll to see the green grass and budding trees. Life returns to the community that was transformed into such a desolate place. The cold is gone and the thought of summer approaches.

I crouch behind a log without moving, for if I move my prey will escape me for one more day. The mosquitoes swarm around my head as I listen and watch. The deer, my prey, stands there waiting for the slightest sound to bolt for the trees. Now he is 5-

feet away and I could jump and kill it, but I do not. That is not what I'm here for. Four exposures are left, and the fawn lays on the other side of the log. I take a quick picture, and the mother and her child scurry off into the woods. I got what I came for.

Silently, canoes slip into the break. Across the water they slide to the songs of eagles and fish. Beautiful plants surround the lake. Trees that seem to reach the sky. All that separates you from nature is the sheet of aluminum you sit in. At this point, your pure gut instinct takes over and the only thing that matters in life.

Beauty should be preserved so that others can see what you have seen. Without it only death and destruction plague the land, and the only place you would see a White-tailed deer, a mongoose or a Sun bear is in a Museum.

Second place award The Wonders of Wildlife

by Dan Rold
AvoHa High School

There are many wonders of wildlife. With wildlife on every continent in the world, there are wonders of wildlife happening all the time. If you think about it, somewhere in the world there is a wonder of wildlife happening right now. However, most people don't think of the things that happen around them every day as wonder.

A wonder of wildlife could be different for every person. For example, a person in Iowa might think a kangaroo carrying its baby kangaroo in a natural pouch is a wonder of wildlife. However, a person in Australia that sees kangaroos every day might think that is normal and not a wonder at all.

Around the world there are many varieties of wildlife. Each of these has something wonderful about them. For instance, isn't it a wonder that an elephant can suck water up through its trunk and give itself a shower by shooting that water back out of its trunk onto its body? Also, isn't it amazing that a chameleon can change colors with its surroundings? Both of these wonders are unique to each of these species of animals. However, there are many wonders of wildlife that are the same throughout an entire family of organisms. One example would be fish. I think it is incredible that they can somehow breathe under water.

All plants are also wonders of wildlife. I think it's a wonder that they can all make their own food. Most people think of plants as needing a lot of help to survive. For example, people are always complaining about having to water their gardens and lawns. However, many species of plants can thrive in climates that are much harsher than those in which any humans can survive. Also, some plants can go weeks or even months without water.

Another wonder of wildlife is all of wildlife's ability to adapt to its surroundings. For instance,



Beth Fajen

Scholarship winner

by Michelle Zimmerman
County Resource Planner

The 1998 East Pottawattamie SWCD scholarship winner is Beth Fajen of Carson. The scholarship will be used to further the award winner's education at the college level.

Criteria considered for this award is service, character, leadership, an interest in conservation and scholastic achievement. The applicant must be pursuing an agricultural or natural resources related career.

Some of Beth's extra-curricular activities include track, cross-country, drama club, art club, FCCLA and FFA. She has been very active with

community events such as assisting with sanitary efforts following the Carson Rodeo; helping clean up the community after a snow storm in 1997; assisting with needy family projects; taking part in the Helping hands and Caring Hearts project at the Micah House; painting the school parking lot, etc. Some of Beth's hobbies include horseback riding and gardening.

She plans to attend Iowa State University in Ames, or Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville and pursue a major in pre-vet.

Beth says she chose pre-vet because she has developed a love for nature and animals. Congratulations, Beth!

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cats and dogs can be trained to live indoors when their natural habitat is outdoors. Also, some rats and birds have been able to adapt to living in urban areas. Many farm animals have adapted to living on farms and eating food that is different than food that they have been used to eating.

In conclusion, there are many great wonders of wildlife around the world. Some people might not think of all of them as wonders, but if just one person thinks something is a wonder, then it is. Also, each species of wildlife has something wonderful about it. Therefore, the wonders of wildlife are great and people should stop to admire them sometimes.

Third place award The Wonders of Wildlife by Jamie Nihsen AvoHa High School

One of the true gifts of living in Iowa is the many wonders of wildlife. The wild animals that roam the plains, to the plants and flowers that grow freely. By taking a short trip through any park or grove you would find the true beauty that thrives in this wonderful state. These wonders can only be truly appreciated by witnessing them.

One of the first things you would notice is the bountiful amount of trees. More than 2.5 million acres of timberland still exist in Iowa. This is what makes the trees such a great asset to the beauty of our state.

In our area of Southwest Iowa there is an abundance of Oak,

Maple, Cedar, Pine and Fir trees. Recently, our country roads were renamed. The state decided to give tribute to our beautiful trees by naming each road after a different species. While trees could be considered a wondrous wildlife in themselves, they also provide shelter and food for the animal population.

These trees are a haven for numerous birds that live here. The most common birds are Robin, Cardinal, Blue Jay and Sparrow. These birds seek shelter and build houses in the trees that grow vastly across the plains. The only birds that have a legal hunting season are pheasant and quail. These remarkable wonders of wildlife thrive on the many wild berries and insects.

Along with the many birds, the deer also find homes here. This is probably one of the most amazing animals that roams freely. The common deer is found in every part of Iowa. The deer, though not overly abundant, has a controlled hunting season. They are such a mysterious species that they are one of the greatest wonders of wildlife.

Trees, birds and the deer are only a few examples of many that add to the beauty of Iowa. So many wonders exist that people don't realize how truly grateful they should be to witness them every day.



Remember sun-safety in the field this summer

Long days outside in the warm flow of summer can be a serious hazard. Researchers are learning more about the relationship between the invisible sun rays and various forms of skin cancer and diseases such as eye cataracts.

Skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer in the United States. The American Cancer Society estimates that 800,000 new cases of highly curable forms of skin cancer are diagnosed each year.

New cases of melanoma, the most serious and life-threatening skin cancer, were expected to number 38,300 in 1996, with 7300 cases resulting in death. Skin cancer has increased at a rate of 4 percent each year since 1973, and is 40 times higher among whites than blacks.

These trends have serious implications for farmers and others who spend much of their working hours outside.

Sun exposure

Research has shown that cumulative sun exposure is a major factor in development of skin cancer. Small changes occur in the skin each time it is exposed to sunlight. People who burn easily, rarely tan, freckle or have a fair complexion, have blonde or red hair, or have blue or gray eyes, experience greater skin changes. Skin cancer is usually not associated with a single, painful sunburn, but rather with repeated exposure to the sun and changes in the skin's makeup. The sun's rays, however, are more damaging during the summer months and at midday hours than other times. You can get a sunburn during other seasons and at other times of the day, but cumulative sun exposure is the major concern.

If you notice a new growth, mole or discoloration, or a sudden change in an existing mole, see a physician. Early detection of skin cancer if the first step for successful treatment.

The back of the neck, ears, face and eyes are sensitive to sun exposure. Luckily, these and other body parts easily can be protected by wearing proper clothing, sunglasses, or sunscreen. By taking precautions and avoiding the sun's most damaging rays, you may be

able to reduce your risk.

Hats

Protection for the face and other parts of the head can be as simple as wearing a hat. When selecting a hat, consider the following questions, and balance your needs in each of these areas.

Coverage: How much of your face, ears and neck are shaded by the hat? **Coolness:** Is it cool enough to be worn on hot days? **Comfort:** How does the hat feel? Will it stay on during various tasks? **Commitment:** Will you wear it?

Clothing

The thought of wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants in the summer might sound uncomfortable, but proper clothing can protect against the sun and minimize heat stress. Lightweight clothing, preferably 100 percent cotton, provides both comfort and protection.

Sunscreen lotions

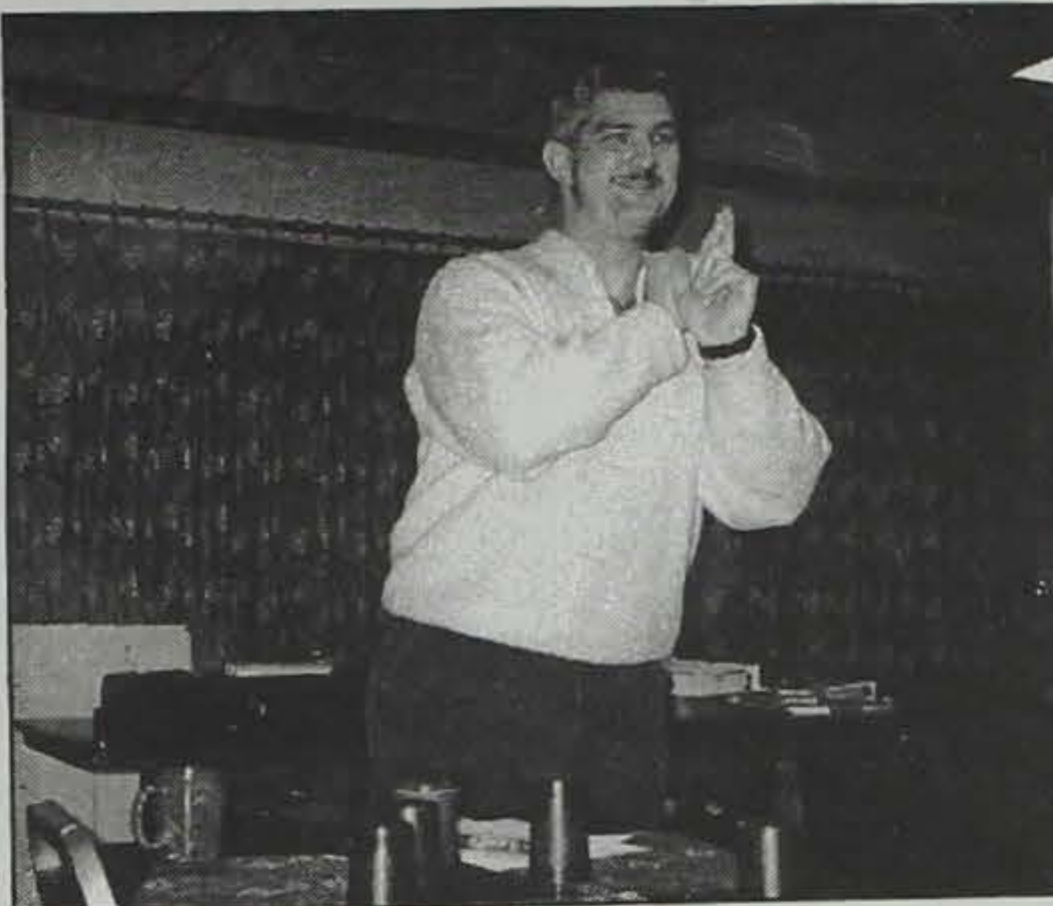
Sunscreens recommended for outdoor workers should have a sun protection factor rating of at least 15. This means that you are protected from a reaction to the sun's effects 15 times longer than you are without the sunscreen. Read the label to know when to reapply sunscreen and whether it is waterproof.

Sun avoidance

The easiest way to reduce exposure to ultraviolet radiation is to avoid the sun. Critical times are midday hours between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. This may be impossible for some active individuals, but scheduling tasks around this period could reduce exposure when the sun is most dangerous.

Sunglasses

Even the most effective hats can block only 50 percent of the ultraviolet rays that reach the eyes. Use caution when selecting sunglasses because they vary widely in the amount of protection from ultraviolet radiation. A peel-off label on the lens indicates its UV rating, or percentage of ultraviolet rays blocked by the sunglasses (the



Who izzit??

Recognize this VIP, who was captured by the roving photographer as he illustrated a point during a recent regional meeting? For those who don't, it is Jeff Zimprich, Area Four head honcho. Area Four is comprised of Harrison Shelby, Audubon, Pottawattamie (East and West), Cass, Adair, Madison, Warren, Mills, Montgomery, Adams, Union, Clarke, Lucas, Fremont, Page, Taylor, Ringgold, Decatur and Wayne Counties in southwest Iowa.

Cooking & household hints!

The white of an egg will remove chewing gum from anything, even hair, without a trace.

When making hamburgers, mix a little flour with the meat, and the patties will stay together nicely.

Use crushed potato chips instead of bread crumbs for meat loaf filler. The flavor will make an excellent addition.

To make a fluffy meat loaf, beat an egg white until stiff and add it after all ingredients have been mixed.

Use a small amount of baking powder in your gravy and the grease will disappear. When making meringue for

pie, add about 1 tbsp. of clear corn syrup to the egg whites. Makes the meringue expand and stand up higher.

To fill freezer bags quickly, place food in a quart jar, slip bag over jar, then invert. The bag is quickly filled and the top is clean for sealing.

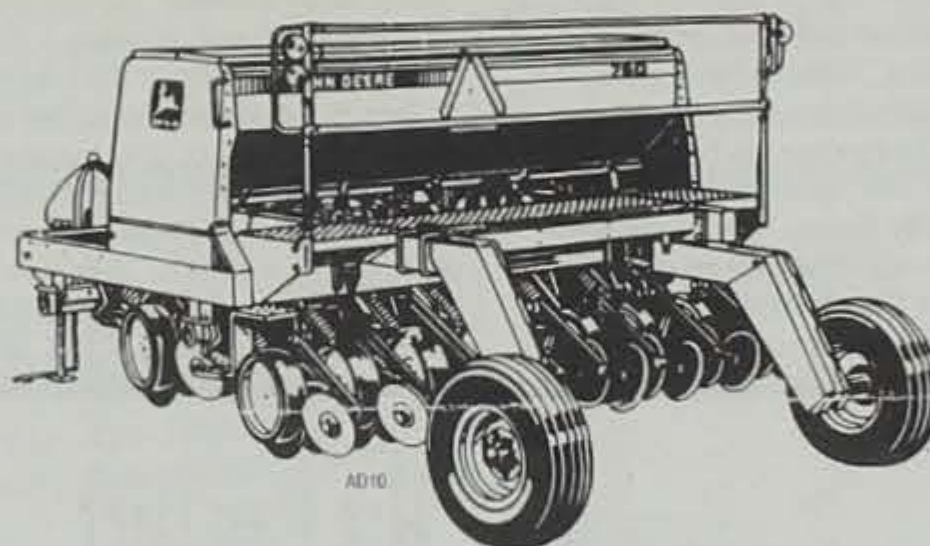
An easy way to freeze chickens is to put them in half gallon milk containers. Cover chicken pieces with water and

staple shut. They will not dry out or get freezer burn.

Put salt on raw egg which has been spilled on the floor, and you will be able to sweep it up with a broom.

When scalding milk, a small amount of sugar added and not stirred will keep the milk from scorching.

Use a meat pounder instead of a fork to make a pretty design on your cookies.



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All the comforts of home plus beautiful surroundings

by Lou Waite

Nine years ago, Joanne Lapke decided to utilize a large, empty house located on the family farm west of Dunlap, in Shelby County.

The dwelling was one of three attractive homes surrounding two small lakes on the spacious family "estate". For many years, the houses were individually occupied by Zeno and Lois Lapke and two of their sons with their wives and families — Kenneth and Jenene and Bernard and Joanne.

When Kenneth and Jenene moved to Denison and went into business, their house sat unoccupied for several years. Because of proximity to the barnyard and other houses, Bernard and Joanne bought it, with the idea of making it into a guest house.

"It was such a nice house," Joanne reflected, "and I had hated to see it sitting empty. For some time, I had thought that perhaps there were people who would like to get away to a quiet, scenic country retreat." Then she declared, "I was right about that. We began this nine years ago, and the house has been well used the year around."

After some remodeling and redecorating, the house was completely furnished. "It gave me an excuse to get some new furniture for my own house," Joanne said with a smile. "All my old furniture is in the guest house." The furnishings are very attractive, utilitarian and comfortable, with bedding, linen, dishes, appliances, etc. included.

The modern kitchen features a large table, perfect for family or friendly dining. The living room looks out upon one of the lakes, with a "big-screen TV" as a focal point. Steps lead up to the second

level dining area, also overlooking the lake, with a lounge sector at the far end of the room. There are three bedrooms on the second level, a central bath and half bath. In the basement is another large bedroom and bath, laundry area and storage. Central air and heating add to the amenities.

Appropriately, the guest house is labeled "The Get Away", and many of the "guests" have returned year after year. "We have come to know many of them so well," Joanne said, "that they are almost like an extended family."

Families have indeed taken advantage of the site for anniversary receptions, birthday gatherings, holiday events, etc. One couple was married there in the outdoor setting, and remained for their honeymoon. Joanne chuckled as she recalled that she made most of the arrangements for the wedding, including doing the decorating, contacting a clergyman, ordering the wedding cake and preparing and serving the refreshments. "I received a very warm thank you from them," Joanne said, then hastened to add, "but I don't want to do that again!"

On some occasions, such as Memorial Day weekend, the guest house is shared by individuals or couples who are not members of the same family. It is also used to accommodate guests of the Lapke families who "overflow" the main house. Birdwatchers, hikers, bikers and nature lovers come from far and wide. Many are from the city, just seeking a peaceful, relaxing weekend. But most of the time, it is family members who gather to spend some quality time together. Here, they can allow their children freedom to run and play without worrying about traffic or human predators. They can teach them about wildlife and nature, and



The guest house is in use almost every month, and many times reserved a year in advance.

respect for those things and each other.

For the past nine years, the same group of pheasant hunters has returned each fall. They journey from New York, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Arkansas, Michigan, Ohio and several other states to enjoy not only the hunting, but a special relationship which has been established with the Lapkes. A scene hanging in the living room of The Get Away was painted by one of the pheasant hunters and presented to his hosts. It portrays the hunters in their bright regalia, with all the accoutrements and vehicles used during a typical outing, outlined against a lush Iowa autumn setting.

The ponds are stocked with fish, which young anglers love to attempt to snare. There is a barbecue pit among the trees, surrounded by rustic benches. A picnic table is located on the grounds. The large back lawn is perfect for volleyball, croquet, lawn tennis or other games. A large garage protects guest vehicles from



One of the two ponds, stocked with fish, where anglers can try their luck. The ponds and their pastoral surroundings are a favorite with young and old alike.

the weather.

It was surprising perhaps to learn that the Get Away is used all year. Church retreats are held there; sleighriding and ice-skating parties in winter; holiday gatherings and others. Families spend Christmas there, and even decorate festively in seasonal decor.

"Many people who have stayed here keep in touch with us, writing or calling when they hear about a flood, or dry weather, or some other happening which might affect us," Joanne mused. "As I said," we have become good friends as well as guests and hosts."

She noted that guests leave the premises clean and neat, and she

has never had anything stolen or vandalized. She laughed when she remembered one incident which had her wondering for a while, however.

"We had a family here celebrating their mother's 100th birthday," Joanne recalled. "When I came to clean, I noticed one of the dining table chairs was missing. I thought it had probably been carried somewhere else in the house, but after looking, I could not find it. About a month later, one of the sons called me, very apologetic. He said that he had noticed one of the chair legs was loose, so he had put it in his trunk and taken it home."

Continued on Page 7



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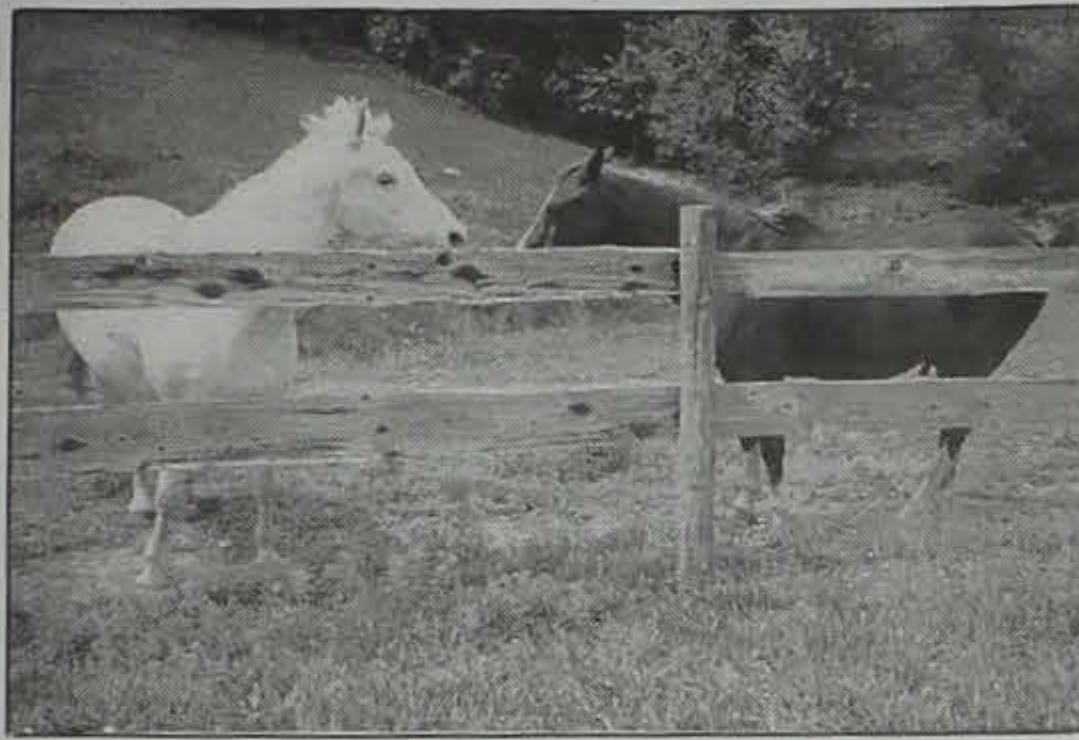


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are found at Lapke's peaceful "Get-away" guest house



Two of the registered Arabian horses for which the Lapkes are famous. Pictured lazily enjoying the sunshine are Berjo Beau and Berjo Jaydaar.

Continued from Page 6

intending to glue and return it. Of course, you can guess what happened! He forgot about it until he happened to open the trunk later. But he did repair it and bring it back, still very embarrassed about it.

Joanne does all the cleaning and maintenance, with help from Bernard and sometimes a neighbor lady. She cooks meals for the pheasant hunters each year, and will cater anniversary or wedding events

upon request. Otherwise the guests bring their own food and do their own cooking. Joanne also adds special touches such as flower arrangements in the rooms, colorful toss pillows, area rugs, etc. "I try to make it look like a home", she said, "not just a place to stay." (It does!)

Joanne and Bernard's children are Cindy Pryor, Woodbine; Nancy Coenen, Omaha; Denise Baldwin, Dunlap; Leo, Earling; Trish Kuehl, Omaha; Tom, Bellevue, Iowa and

Jill, a recent graduate of Iowa State, Omaha. The sixteen grandchildren love to visit (and why wouldn't they?)

Bernard and Joanne raise Arabian horses, registered under the trade name of "Berjo", a combination of letters from their names. Berjo is used as a prefix for the name of each horse, and used only by horses registered on the farm.

In 1996, Bernard attended the International Endurance Race at Junction City, Kansas as a crew-member for the U.S. team. The race was 100 miles across country, with four members on each team. The teams were from 17 world countries.

The race began at 6:30 a.m., with 78 horses starting, and 33 completing the race in the allotted time (ten hours of riding time).

The Endurance Race has a veterinarian check approximately every 20 miles, and horses are monitored for pulse, respiration and condition. The crew assists the horse and rider through the vet check by cooling the horses, etc.

The U.S. team won the event; France was second and Switzerland third. One point of interest was that the Swiss team had leased a horse from a lady in Wisconsin. His name was Berjo Thor, and had been raised and trained on the Lapke farm!

Bernard also spends part-time working with Jim and Ruth Schaben's thoroughbred horses at their Dunlap farm.

Bernard and Joanne lease their cropland to a neighbor, but maintain the cow herd, pasture and hayland. Minimum tillage is practiced and careful attention paid to the maintenance of terraces, waterways and headlands.

The farm has the first



Joanne, seated at the large table which invites one and all to sit and enjoy a meal together, play cards, or just chat.

conservation plan written in Shelby County. The first terraces were built in the early 40's with an Allis Chalmers and a 2-16 pull-type plow. Since that time, all the land has been terraced, and most through cost-share programs.

The ponds on the property are mostly structures of the Mill-Picayune Watershed program. Bernard's father, Zeno, was very active in the watershed program. Today, the water from this area is controlled and no longer floods the Boyer Valley.

Bernard and Joanne are members of the International Arabian Horse Association, very active in community affairs and attend St. Patrick's Church in Dunlap.

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Heidebrink pleased that 80,000 seedling trees planted in Iowa within a 30-day period



Greg and Russ Kurth, Harrison District Conservationist, discuss plans for tree planting operations to be carried out in Harrison and nearby Counties.

by Lou Waite

Greg Heidebrink of Nemaha is obviously a young man who takes his job seriously. In so doing, he covers a lot of territory, with the "locus focus" being on northwestern Iowa. Thanks to Greg and the program he promotes, within a 30-day period, 80,000 seedling trees were planted in Iowa.

Greg grew up on a farm near Luther in Boone County. He graduated from United Community High School, located rurally between Boone and Ames. In 1993, he received a degree in Forestry from Iowa State University.

For one year following graduation, Greg was employed on a tree farm near Ankeny. Then he accepted a position with Missouri and Mississippi Divide Resource Conservation and Development, more commonly known as M & M RC&D.

The M & M office is in Sac City, and serves the six county area of Sac, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie and Audubon. Greg works with the Forestry Service Program (FSP), a "full circle" forestry regime. As explained above, he travels state-wide when required, and at the time of the interview, was calling upon landowners in Harrison and Shelby Counties.

Greg explained that a full circle forestry program includes timber stand improvement, disease identification, and the entire realm of tree planting. The trees are mainly interred in CRP ground, on riparian

(streambank) areas, etc.

"Landowners who have been approved for cost-share and are thinking about tree plantings come to the office for information," Greg noted. "I look at the site and determine the soil type and terrain, etc. Some areas are easier to plan than others, and I also consider the owner's wishes as long as they fall within the required guidelines."

"I write a plan if they don't already have one, and make recommendations about which species of trees to plant, etc. For example, a farmer contacts the office and says he has an area along a creek which is in pasture. He has heard of the Riparian Buffer Program and wants to take advantage of it. I look at the site and ascertain whether or not he and the land are eligible for the program. If so, I devise a plan and an estimate for the cost of the tree planting recommended. The owner would see what his yearly CRP rental rate would be (150 feet of pasture land on either side of a stream can be enrolled). The Farm Service Agency (FSA) would then check the three predominate soil types and the value of each, take the

weighted average of soils and arrive at the annual rental rate if a tree planting was done. Then the farmer can decide if the program is feasible for his operation."

"To clarify, if a farmer has a pasture he has been renting out for \$25 to \$30 per acre, and he can put in a 150-foot zone at rates as high as \$175 per acre, the financial advantage of doing so is pretty obvious. That is also true of the environmental benefits, and most farmers take that into consideration as well. They can enroll for a period of 10 to 15 years in the Riparian Buffer Program. They will be paid the equivalent rental rate as long as they maintain the area as required under the CRP contract, and refrain from grazing it."

Obviously many farmers have found the plan advantageous, and Greg's services are in great demand. As stated in the first paragraph, 80,000 seedling have been planted this year, and more will be done in the fall. "We planted 7,775 on one day," Greg said, "but the average is around 4,000 per day. Planting is done in the spring, but some riparian areas have been so wet that planting was deferred until fall."

With a grin, Greg commented, "I have found that if the landowner has some 'sweat' involved, he takes a little more pride in the project than if I do all the work. I usually do the planting, then notify the owner when it is time to spray and mow. The farmer may take care of these himself, but I do a lot of the spraying, since I am licensed to apply the chemicals required. Many do their own mowing, but I will also take care of that upon request. Sometimes the farmer's tractor is used to operate the tree planter, which saves him expense. It also saves me from having to haul a tractor with the planter from site to site."

When questioned about details of a typical tree-planting plan, Greg said he likes to use the "8X10" method. He explained this means trees are planted 8 feet apart in each row, with the rows being 10 feet apart. For shrubs, he follows a 4X10 format (4 ft. apart in rows 10 ft. apart). Up to 13 rows of trees and shrubs can be planted in a pasture zone, and 20 feet of grass.



A tree planting operation in progress.

"This combination serves as a living filter, and it slows the flow of the water so that more of it infiltrates the soil," Greg informed. "However, it takes four or five years to become established enough to become effective. Some trees or shrubs are lost due to animal (deer and rabbit) appetites, and to other causes. Tree shelters help prevent animal damage. It is difficult to supply water for the large plantings, so we have to trust Mother Nature to take care of that."

Greg estimated that 99% of the tree planting projects with which he is involved are done under the auspices of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency. "The program will have a big impact on the

environment," he said, "and I want to commend the landowners who are farseeing enough to recognize that fact, and contribute to the accomplishment of it."

Greg's wife Laurie shares his interests, and holds a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology.

She is currently a bank employee, but "looking for something in her field".

Greg's present hobby may revolve into a full-time occupation as it gains popularity. He makes furniture, such as Hoosier cabinets, refectory tables, pie safes, gun cabinets, etc. "None of the scraps of wood I discard go to waste", he said with a chuckle, "for Laurie rescues them and uses them for her craft projects."

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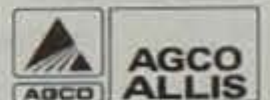
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Jim Sharp, Shelby District Conservationist, background left, illustrates a point to students attending outdoor classroom sessions.



Jeff Darling, Soil Conservation Technician, background, was one of the instructors during Conservation Day activities in May.

Tips for summer tree care

After the trees have been planted, there are a few things which can be done to insure that they will thrive throughout the summer.

1) Sometimes what is NOT done to newly transplanted stock is just as important as what IS done. Bare-root stock should not be fertilized at planting time. The roots are very fragile and susceptible to burning.

2) Spring-planted stock can be fertilized in the fall of the first year or the next spring, with the proper fertilizer for the species.

3) If a dish area is not left around the tree when it is planted, one should be built and the sod removed to prevent competition for water and nutrients.

4) Tree mats or mulch (such as wood chips, grass clippings, straw

or even several layers of newspaper) will do to hold moisture in the ground and prevent weed pressure.

5) Tree shelters can really help get new plantings off to a quick start and will also act as protection against animal browsing and windburn.

6) A good idea any time, but for sure the first couple of years is to make certain the plants get one inch of water every ten days. In the late fall, increase to soaking the ground every week until the ground freezes.

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May means education month for the Shelby SWCD staff

May 6 - Poster Contest

The first place winners in the annual poster contest, sponsored by the Shelby County Conservation Board and the Shelby County Soil & Water Conservation District, have been announced. The theme this year was "Wonders of Wildlife".

First place winners were:

3rd grade - Jessica Gordon, (Jean Gordon), Harlan, attends West Ridge Elementary School, Harlan.

4th grade - Caitlin Leinen, (Sherry Leinen), Earling, attends St. Joseph's School, Earling.

5th grade - Marie Reinig (Tom & Denise), Portsmouth, attends St. Joseph's School, Earling.

May 8 - Career Fair

Joni Schwery and Jeff Darling technicians, represented the Shelby County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service at a Career Fair, held at West Ridge School in Harlan.

The Career Fair was designed for people of all ages so they could become more aware of the wide variety of careers available.

There were between 80 and 90 careers represented at the fair.

May 13 - Conservation Day -- Outdoor Classroom.

Students enjoyed fresh air and a lot of hands-on learning at the outdoor classrooms held during Conservation Days. The event was held at Prairie Rose State Park for sixth graders of Shelby County.

The students were taught about soils by Jeff Darling, Soil Conservation Technician, and Jim Sharp, District Conservationist.

One of the hands-on activities was soil probing. The students could view organic matter, topsoil layer and subsoil layers. Another of these activities was making it "rain" on sample small fields.



Pethoud honored

Jim Sharp, District Conservationist, presented Ron Pethoud, right, with a Certificate of Appreciation for his fine contributions to Conservation Days over the years. Pethoud, a sixth grade science teacher in Harlan Community Schools, founded the school-and-conservation-led nature day in 1969.

demonstrating that conservation practices such as no-till planting and cover crops were beneficial for conservation. The runoff from the "rain" showed definite differences in

soil erosion.

Other classrooms included Naturewalk, Forestry, Parks, Fishing, Fish ID, Recycling and a demonstration of the groundwater flow model.

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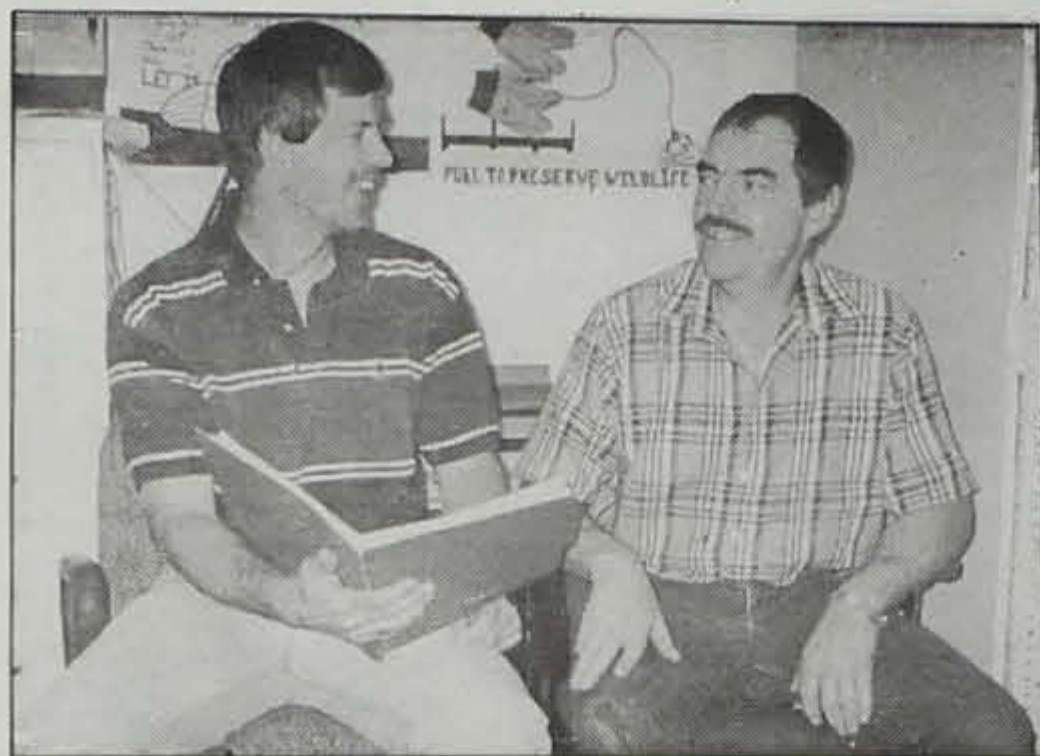
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Visits to the Czech and Slovak Republics



Kelly Summy, left, and Russ Kurth chuckle over Kelly's recollection of a humorous event which occurred during Summy's sojourn in the Slovak Republic.

by Lou Waite

Kelly Summy of Midwest Ag Services, Inc. and Gary Thien of Thien Farm Management, Inc., both in Council Bluffs, have had an experience which many would envy. They were given the opportunity to visit the Czech (Thien) and Slovak (Summy) Republics, both in 1994 and 1995. As members of specialty teams they had the chance to observe agricultural and agribusiness practices, then help advise and assist the farmers there in bringing about improved

methods of production, financial management, etc. The project was sponsored by Iowa State University, via a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) program.

This is the first in a series of articles concerning the project.

Overview

Robert W. Jolly, Professor of Economics at ISU, stated:

"The CFSR is an industrial country. Agriculture, in terms of its contribution to the gross national product (GNP) or employment is comparable to

Western Europe or the United States. Technological improvements in agricultural production have resulted in a shift of labor to other sectors of the economy. Despite agriculture's apparent decline in importance, successful privatization of this sector in the Czech and Slovak Republics is a strategically critical issue. Agriculture and agribusiness are tied to several objectives for both Republics, i.e., food security; export growth, import substitution; rural development and political stability; environmental quality.

"Although privatization efforts in the Republics will tend to emphasize manufacturing and services, the agricultural, food, forestry and natural resource sectors must successfully make transition to a market economy. Failure to do so will seriously jeopardize privatization in the non-ag sector."

"Before attempting to introduce a new mode of operation, one has to understand the old. In the past, under Communist rule, ownership of all means of production was either state or group (collective) owned. The basis for managing the economy and all economic units was the plan. Developed by the state, the plan had the status of law. The workers had no part in developing it.

"The plan established a target rate for economic growth and production quotas for each economic unit. The job of the manager was to meet the production order. A system of taxes and subsidies was used to redistribute income and support socially desirable but unprofitable enterprises. (Everyone was employed, but in order for this to be so, many were given "busy work" to do.)

"Financial markets did not exist. Funds followed real resources prescribed by the plan. The banking system was part of the treasury. Extension funds for capital investment reflected economic and social objectives specified in the plan.

"Plan objectives included full employment, guaranteed pension, health care and education."

Summy: "Originally each collective was made up of several small villages about 5 or 6



This museum is the restored residence of a formerly influential family which fled Slovakia during World War II. Photo by Kelly Summy.

kilometers apart. People didn't live on the farms, but in the villages, traveling from there to the farms to work. The government assigned each worker a job. They were told what to produce, and some of the crops weren't necessarily suited to the climate. There were quotas to meet, but it didn't matter how hard they worked for they got paid the same. There was no incentive to produce more, take care of the equipment or learn anything new. There was no employee management, and no chance to develop any economic background. The people were conditioned to this, so when times changed, it became a struggle for them to become familiar with a different system. That was the team goal -- to try to help them develop strategic management, decision making, personnel management, asset and liability restructuring, marketing, modernization, etc."

Thien: "Our purpose was to assist them in changing from a demand economy to a supply and demand economy. The old ways obviously stifled creativity and prevented people from looking at and analyzing different options. There was no incentive in their business structure for them to take risks. I got the impression that before Communism failed, the people were led to believe they were leading the world in technology and agriculture. But after the "wall" came down, they

realized they had been misled. So when we were there, they were in a situation where the agricultural structure was being reorganized.

Summy: "Unemployment was high, because once the republic had to become self-sufficient and show a profit, it was necessary to lay off some of the workers. And the difficulty in finding new jobs (which were scarce to none) had to do with the fact that most of the workers were trained to do only one thing, and that is all they knew how to do. With unemployment so high and economy so low, it created a vicious cycle which would take years to overcome. Actually, they had more or less gone back to a barter system, since there was no cash flow."

Thien: "Another problem the country was having was in trying to comply with a new law which said the land formerly confiscated by the Communist party had to go back to its original owners or heirs, or restitution be made to them. Actually, the people never lost their rights to the land, but only the right to use it. They were forced to put it into the collective operations."

Summy: "Much of the land had belonged to Jews who were exterminated during World War II,

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"broaden horizons" for all concerned



Shown in the photo, left to right, a Slovak agronomist; Dana Markova, interpreter from Slovakia; Kelly Summy, consultant; Nina Jurewicz, American citizen living in Bratislava, serving as in-country coordinator; Milan Biros, President of Zborov Collective; Lee Killmer, USA, consultant and ISU dairy specialist; Pavel Bodor, President of Ozdany Collective; Filip Sabol, President of Cecejovce Collective. Photo by Summy.

and no heirs existed. The state still owned that land, and it could be sold. But no one had the money to buy land, even though its value was low. And the state would not sell the land to outsiders, fearing investors would take over the country."

Thien: "The government was also finding compensation difficult. For example, if a farmer in 1940 was forced to bring in a team of horses for collective use, and descendants are found today when tractors are used, what determines the amount of restitution?"

Both men noted that laws differed somewhat in each republic. In one, the land was to be returned to the oldest child. In the other, it was to be divided among the remaining heirs. But the biggest hangup in either case was finding and identifying family members involved.

The Czech philosophy was not to discourage the private farmer, but make the large operations more efficient. This made it difficult for private farms to be established. Landholdings were (and are) very small. And since many people are skilled in only

one area, as previously mentioned, the available labor force is technically inefficient.

Thien: "Sometimes I felt they tried to raise too many crops. Large operations had a number of associates, raising 10 to 15 different crops. These included corn, rape, wheat, rye, barley, potatoes (they're big on potatoes), sugar beets, sunflowers, poppy seed, medicinal herbs and plants, licorice root, flax for feed and also linen, and much more. One farm raised a certain thistle which was refined for the drug cyclosporin -- an anti-rejection drug used following organ transplants. There are only two sites in the world where this is produced, one being in the Czech Republic.

"Many little specialty crops are also grown. One farm had its own lab, producing medicinal elixirs of some kind. There are bakeries, slaughter houses, breweries,

mechanization shops, small manufacturing plants, etc. All of these were originally created by the Communist regime so that everyone would have a job. Now they are struggling to survive. And that is why they needed to learn to grow only what is economically feasible, and how to market it."

Summary: "Many of the Slovak farms have computers and FAX machines. The people are very well educated. Our project on each trip was to visit three farm collectives and spend 5 to 7 days at each. We would meet the farm management team, inspect the premises and become better acquainted with the personnel. Then we would hold a workshop, usually at the county seat, and invite the managers from other collectives, ag management people, etc. to attend. We had good attendance, and the use of an excellent interpreter. We would address agronomic issues, financial matters, budgeting, cash flow management, decision making, etc. We talked about ag land management and production. They raise so many crops that we had to do our homework to be prepared to answer their questions. Their climate is similar to the Dakotas -- arid and with a short growing season."

Thien: "I was in the Czech Republic seven times in 1993, 1994 and 1995, usually staying two weeks. We held seminars in various areas, spending an approximate two-weeks in each location. The information we presented was individualized for each site, and we tried to address specific needs and wants for all phases of their operation. At first, the people were very cautious. But gradually, we gained their respect, and the next seminar would have a bigger attendance. The government made a great effort to publicize the seminars, which helped. At first, we addressed the economic end,



Gary Thien reminisces with Russ Kurth about some of his experiences in the Czech Republic during several trips he made to that country.

but then began including a dairy specialist and a swine specialist in the teams, because all the farms have cows and pigs.

"I might add that it is unwise to get into an American history contest with the Czechs! You would lose! It's amazing what they know about our history ... more than many Americans, I would guess. They feel we were criminally cruel to the Indians, and slavery was equally condemned. Not that their past history is blameless, but I doubt if we know half as much about theirs as they do ours!

"Czechoslovakia was split into the separate republics in 1991 or 1992. Most didn't agree with the act. The Czechs were more Austrian and German, and Slovaks more Ukrainian and Hungarian, so they had what was termed a 'velvet revolution'! No shots were fired and no one was hurt, but the country was divided.

"When I was there, everyone had stories about Communism and World War II. They were very emotional when telling of family tragedies and what happened with the country. But Czechs really want to be like Americans and would like their country to be like America."

Summary: "In Slovakia, 25% of the population are gypsies. Most are nomads with their own villages. To others, the gypsies are considered worthless, thieving and irresponsible. One farmer paid 100 krons (\$3.33 American dollars) for someone to guard his

potato patch so the gypsies would not steal the potatoes.

"It wasn't difficult to identify the 'die-hard Communists'. They drove certain cars, and when they would drive by you could tell the people really resented them.

"I found the people to be very friendly and wonderful hosts. The food was excellent, with a wide diversity. They are high on pork and potatoes and soup. Every meal began with soup.

"They also liked their (alcoholic) drinks, which were served with breakfast, lunch and dinner. These usually were vino (wine) pivo (beer), cognac, and slivovitch, a home brew which tasted a lot like Everclear! Not to partake was a sign that you were not being sociable, and it offended them! But the people also liked to laugh, and had a wonderful sense of humor. Sometimes our communication was limited to hand signals and 'pictionary', but we understood each other for the most part. And when we had an interpreter, we sometimes wondered how she/he was translating our information, for we got laughs where there really should not have been any. They meant well, however, and were a good people, who really wanted to succeed."

Next issue -- Farm and livestock operations, the economy, and government policies in the Czech and Slovak Republics.

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Commissioner positions to be filled

by Konda Slagle, Sec.

The terms of two Harrison County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will expire on January 1, 1999. They are Linda Lee Herman of Pisgah, Jackson Township and Everett Wohlers, Jr. of Missouri Valley, Calhoun Township. Successors will be chosen at the general election on November 3, 1998.

Herman stated she will not be a candidate for re-election. Wohlers has not yet indicated his intent.

Any qualified elector residing in the conservation district, which is all of Harrison County, including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner, with one exception. The exception is that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any one township.

Incumbent commissioners are Zane McBride of Logan, Jefferson Township, Babetta Lucke of Persia, Washington Township and Anita Mether of Magnolia, Magnolia Township. Residents of these townships, therefore, would not be eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil and water conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same manner as for other

elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petitions may be obtained from the County Auditor or the Harrison SWCD office.

The petitions, signed by at least 25 eligible voters, must be filed with the County Auditor at the Harrison County Courthouse no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 26, 1998.

Individuals elected in November, 1998, will serve a term of four years, beginning January 1, 1999. Soil and water conservation district commissioners serve without salary. They guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county. Commissioners are reimbursed for their meeting expenses.

For further information pertaining to the responsibilities of a commissioner, those interested may contact the SWCD office at 715 North Second Avenue, Logan, Iowa 51546, or call (712)644-2210

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!



Shown are, kneeling front, left to right: Danielle Johnson, Sarah Faylor, Ryan Foutch and Matt Barney. Second row: Troy Donelson, Hannah Tripp, Stephanie Swanger, Ashley Auen, Brooke Knauss, Lexie Alvis, Kendra Miller, Michael Norton and Matt Siefert. Back: Sara Neil, Mrs. Hanigan, Anna Frisk, Eric Niedermyer, Richard Scott (hidden), Molly Blackwell, Tyler Swift, Phillip Craig, Derrek Melby, John Espenmiller (kneeling), Austin Helm and Chris Dickinson.

"Trees for Kids" enhances environment

by Lou Walte

For the past six years, Sheila Hanigan's fourth grade classes at Logan-Magnolia Elementary school have been planting trees on the school grounds. Some few years ago, new school buildings were constructed because the old site had become inadequate and obsolete. However, the spacious grounds surrounding the new buildings not only needed landscaping, but were bare of trees, shrubs, flowers, etc.

That has been remedied, and much of it involved student participation. Now existing on the grounds is a plot of native grasses and wildflowers. A

wetland project site has been established. And, of course, the trees planted by Sheila's students and other students are enhancing the scene.

The program which Sheila coordinates is called "Trees for Kids", and is co-sponsored by Mid America Energy, People's Natural Gas, Iowa Nurseries and Landscape Assoc., Iowa State University Extension Service, Iowa Bankers Assoc., Iowa Education Council, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Trees Forever and Iowa Wood Industry Association.

As in the past, funds for purchase of the trees planted this year were provided by the

First National Bank of Logan, a member of the Iowa Bankers' Association.

Sheila sought the assistance of John Espenmiller, who for the past four years has selected the tree varieties, consulted with Superintendent Ed Gambs about placement, and assisted the students with the planting.

John noted that two or three trees have been planted each spring. This year, three flowering plum trees were placed by enthusiastic students under John's supervision.

"It's great to get kids involved with planting trees at a young age," John said. "If just one or two kids in the group will remember the experience and carry out tree planting in their adult lives, it's all worthwhile."

John recalled helping plant trees when he was a Cub Scout, and remembers the feeling of satisfaction he gained from the experience. "In later years I would see the tree and how much it had grown, and think, 'I helped plant that tree!'"

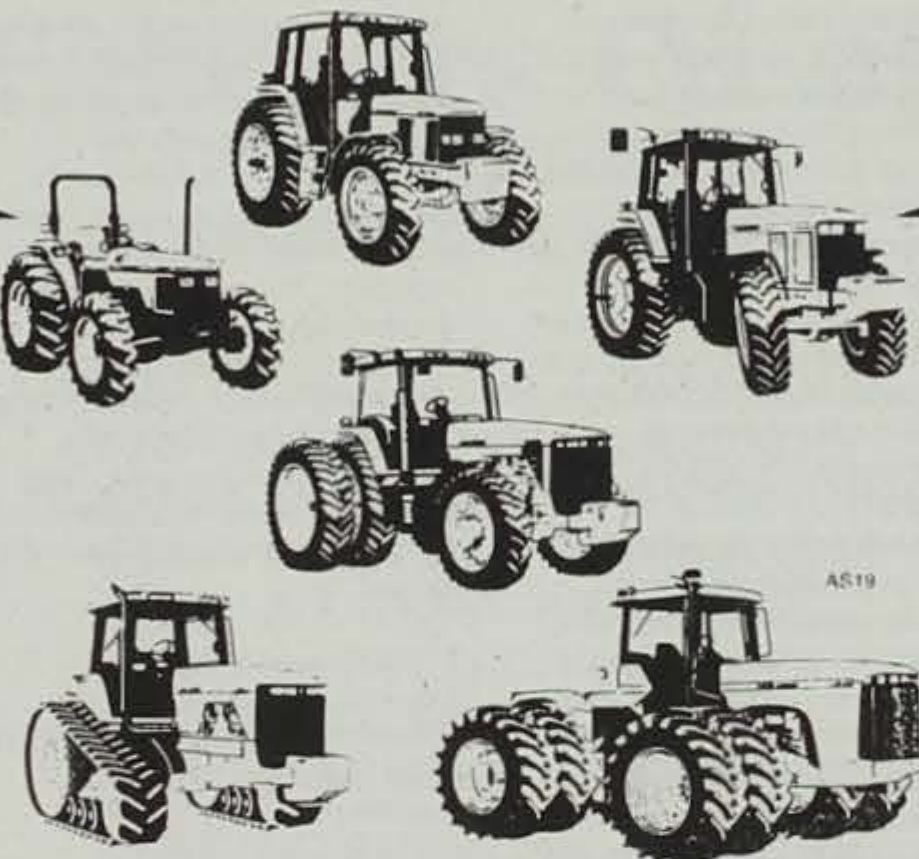
Sheila commented that the purpose of Trees for Kids is to educate students about the value of trees, and to encourage the planting of landscape-sized trees on school grounds or in other public areas.

"The students learn proper planting procedures while helping with the planting," Sheila said. "Many of them later have been heard to say, 'Oh look, I planted that tree. Look how it's grown!' They take a personal interest that way, and it helps them understand the importance of trees to our environment. It's a great program, and I am happy to see it being carried out in this area!"

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

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Left to right, Babetta Lucke, John Sullivan (accepting for brother Jim), and Brian Book.



Corey Clark is congratulated by Babetta Lucke

Poster contest

by Konda Slagle
Secretary

In May, Woodbine, Missouri Valley and West Harrison schools participated in the annual conservation poster competition. The contest is sponsored by the Harrison County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Jim Sullivan was first place winner and Brian Book received second place. Both attend Woodbine Community Schools. Third place went to Corey Clark from West Harrison Schools.

Sullivan's first place poster has been forwarded to regional competition.

Babetta Lucke, Chairperson

for the Harrison SWCD, presented each of the winners with ribbons and cash awards.

Jim Sullivan was not present for the award ceremony, so it was accepted by his twin brother, John.

Brain Teaser

Hidden in the following are eight rather shopworn expressions. Can you uncover them? For example: "An eruption in a cook pot" would be: "A flash in the pan". Get the idea? Find the answers on page 18.

1. The studded structures that are responsible for supporting a construction, and bearing the weight of its outside top covering have the reputation of sporting pinnae.

2. There is a far greater value to being securely shielded from peril, danger, injury or damage than there is to behaving carelessly and ending up in a state of doleful, repentant perturbation.

3. It is suggested that our as yet immature descendants can occupy the space within our line of sight but they must not ever engage or activate our auditory senses.

4. The total and complete absence of data-revealing tidings regarding events or personalities can provide a workable hypothesis that the aforementioned situation or circumstance is auspiciously dispositioned.

5. The location of the property or quality that distinguishes organisms from inorganic materials is also the site of the feeling that what is wanted will definitely occur.

6. Partaking of a food product that is taken from a tree of the rose family sometime during each and every time period delineated by a sunrise and a sunset definitely deters an advocate of the Hippocratic oath.

7. What a human eye and

mind consider to be particularly delicate, refined, elegant or artistic in appearance is limited in its extent by the thickness of the outer covering of the perceived person or object.

8. All beneficial and propitious concepts and occurrences will ultimately bestow themselves upon the individuals who merely non-assertively remain in a state of immobile readiness.

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Eager Beaver Engineering Association of America (EBEAA) Tallest Beaver Dam Competition

All landowners of Harrison, East and West Pottawattamie and Shelby Counties are eligible to enter the contest for the tallest beaver dam discovered in their area.

Plugged culverts and intakes do not qualify. The dam must be a beaver-designed and built structure, meeting specifications of the Eager Beaver Engineering Association of America field manual.

Entries are due by August 15, and may be submitted to NRCS offices in the county wherein the dam is located.

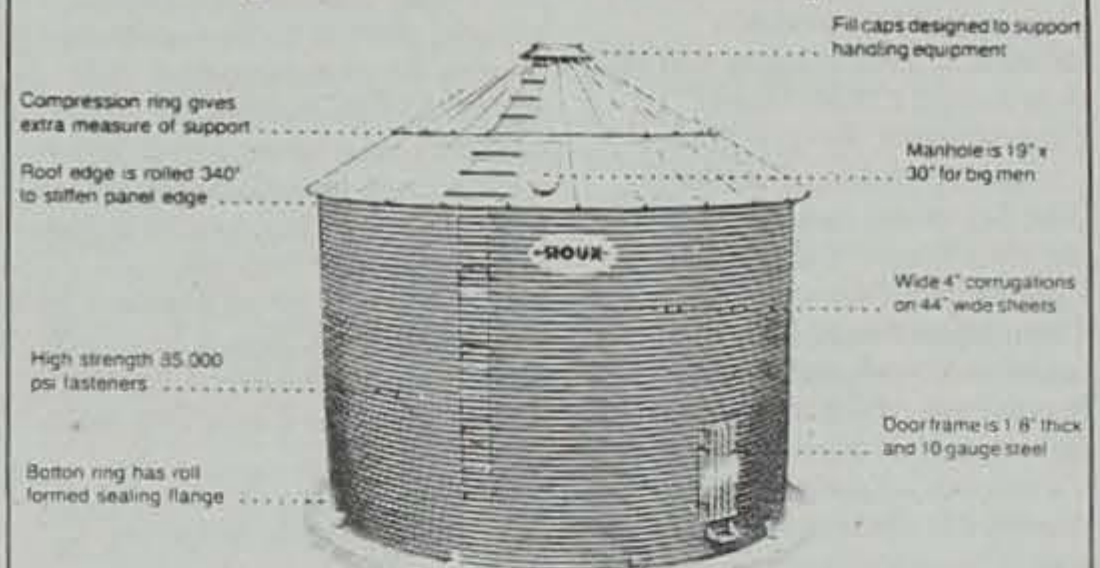
When making entry, please provide owner name, tract number and a detailed description of location. Marking the site on an aerial map (available at the NRCS offices) would be very helpful.

The dam will then be inspected by certified Eager Beaver personnel, who will establish the height by taking a transit shot at the highest point of the dam and the downstream toe.

Winners will receive an official certificate, and the satisfaction of knowing they have the busiest beavers in the three counties involved.

Results will be listed in the next issue of the Quad District Conservation Newsletter.

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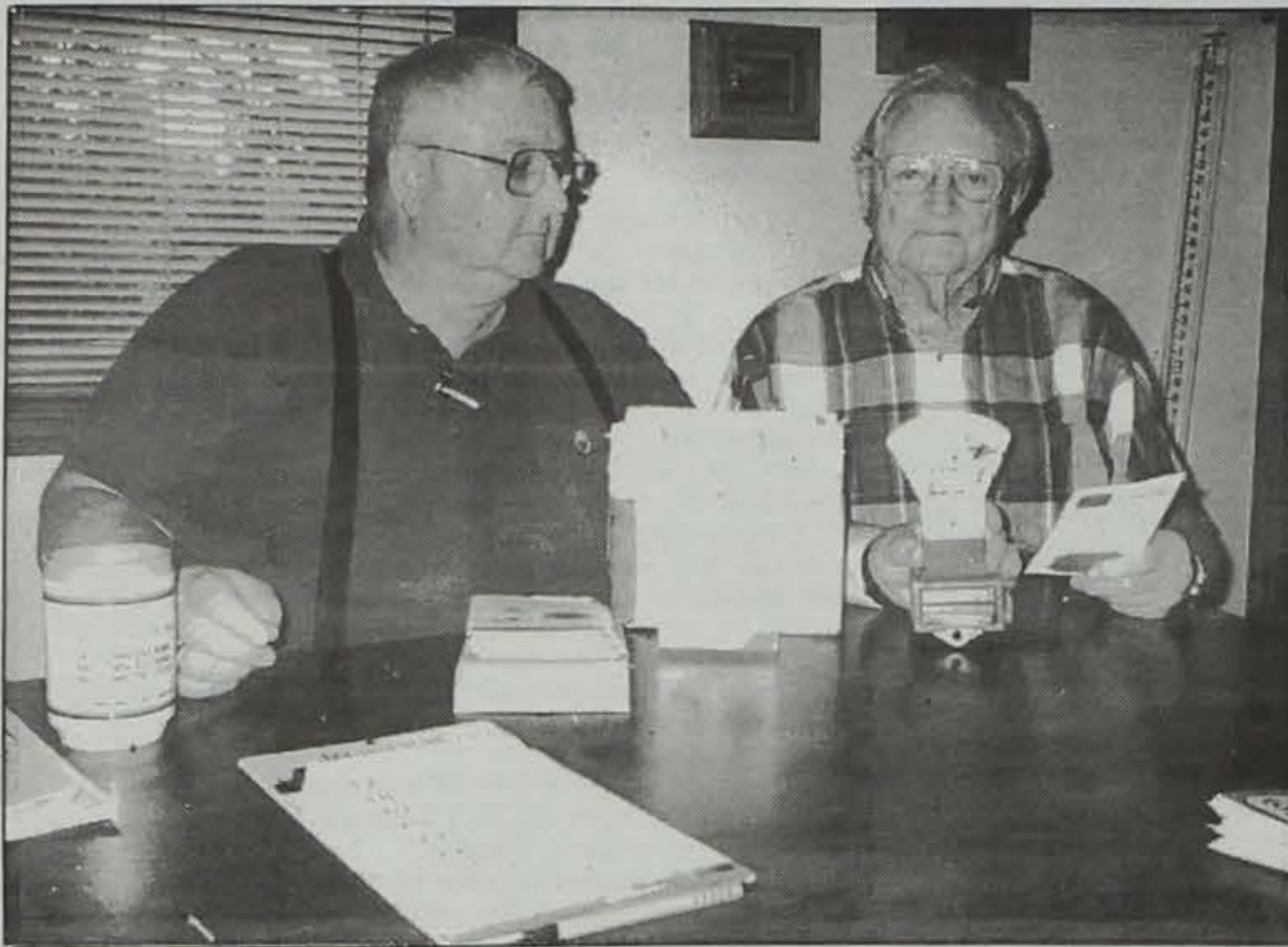
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Clifford Johnson's long career encompassed many changes

Lyle Peterson and Cliff Johnson reminisce about the days when a "Cherokee Scout" contour level, which they are examining, was the latest in conservation tools, but is now considered an antique artifact. Manufactured by Carlson and Craft at Cherokee, Iowa, the contour level was advertised to "pay for itself in a few hours." According to Peterson, it was a great innovation of its time.

by Tom Bottoms
and Lou Waite

The September, 1954 issue of the Iowa Soil and Water state publication stated in the editor's preface:

"For the first time in the history of Iowa Soil Conservation Districts, Commissioners will hold their Annual Convention in Council Bluffs, Iowa." (Note: it was the eighth annual session.) "Our September issue will feature the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District Commissioners and the conservation program they have directed and carried out the past eleven years of this organization."

One of those attending that session was Clifford Johnson, who was at that time County Extension Director, and also secretary of the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District board of commissioners. (It was many years later before it became the Soil and Water Conservation District).

In his report, which was included in the issue, Johnson said: "The West Pottawattamie Soils Commissioners take an active part in the development of the County Extension Service educational program and we as Extension Agents in the county work closely with the soils district in conducting the educational phases of the conservation programs. Many special projects are sponsored jointly by the district and our office."

Johnson said he derived great satisfaction from his association with and service to the district throughout the years from 1942, when he came to Council Bluffs, until his retirement in 1976.

A native of Elk Horn, Iowa, he grew up on a farm and attended the local country school and high school. In 1932, he graduated from

what was then Iowa State College with a degree in Animal Husbandry, and a Vocational Ag teaching degree.

For two years following graduation, he worked as a livestock buyer for Commission firms at the Omaha Stock Yards, and sold cows and bulls to packers. "During the drought years of 1933 and 1934," Cliff recalled, "producers were having to sell their cattle because they had no feed or water for them. They couldn't afford to buy what little feed was available. Cattle prices were very low, with cows selling at \$1.25 per hundred-weight and top beef steers at \$4.00 cwt. Those were very hard times."

Cliff also worked on the family farm, and remembers he and his

mother picking corn by hand, tossing it into wagons pulled by a team of horses. "My father was a candidate for Shelby County Supervisor at the time," Cliff said, "so it was my mother and I who got the crop out."

Cliff also reminisced about driving a team of horses hitched to a cultivator. "We had to cross check the fields (cultivating across north to south, ie, then coming back east to west), and it was very difficult to keep going straight. Farmers took pride in having absolutely straight rows back then. But there was concern about how much soil was being lost, and conservation was being talked about."

Cliff accepted a position with a firm in Clarinda as a 4-H Club Agent, and also served part time as

an AAA farm program advisor.

"My job with AAA was to convince farmers they needed to cut down on their crop production," Cliff said with a chuckle, "and they didn't take that too well . . . they weren't interested. It was a tough sell."

From 1937 until 1942, Cliff served as Ringgold County Extension Agent, then came to Council Bluffs as County Extension Director. The rest, as one might say, is history.

"When I first came to this county," Cliff said, "contour farming was already being promoted, but hadn't been totally accepted. I used to go with Walt Weiss, Area Conservationist and served as advisor while he explained about contour farming and other conservation measures. Walt was a tremendous person, and deserves a lot of credit for the progress of conservation at that time. He and I would demonstrate contouring to farmers, even plowing back-furrows, etc., to show how it should be done. This was before the conservation district was organized, you understand."

"Some landowners were concerned about conservation, but we made a great effort to reach all that we could and give them the information. There were mostly dirt roads in the county, so with mud, bridges washed out, etc., it was a real struggle. In 1943, the Missouri River flooded 10,000 acres in three townships in the county. The land never got planted that year. I think this had more than anything to do with increased interest in conservation, for in 1944, the conservation district was organized."

Cliff served as secretary for the district board of commissioners for 35 years, and participated in many projects which were joint efforts

between SCS and his office. One of these was the 100-acre experimental fruit farm, sponsored by SCS, the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce, County Farm Bureau and Iowa State College (now ISU).

"The fruit farm was located where Cow Patties is now," Cliff said, "just off Highway 191. In 1941, a late frost killed all the orchards in the area. The fruit farm experimented with ways to produce hardier, improved stock. Fruit producers would come to demonstrations there, and I remember dwarf apple trees were becoming popular at that time. Other hybrid fruits were also being introduced. The fruit farm was a benefit to all of southwest Iowa. Too bad it isn't there any more."

Cliff said that Richard Bullard, DC in Council Bluffs during that decade, was a "tremendous asset" to the district. "He worked so well with the people," Cliff muses, "and had a good philosophy about his work and life in general."

In those early years, according to Cliff, most terraces were built using a disc-plow. Farmers who owned one would build terraces for other farmers. These were "regular" terraces, not the level constructions of today. Then came the "Whirlwind Terracer", and finally the more efficient big "cats".

"It took time for people to accept each of these changes", Cliff said. "In the beginning, farmers felt they were sacrificing crop land to build terraces, but in time, they came to see the benefit of it. You know farmers can be stubborn. They have to be shown before they believe. Our aim was to do a convincing job of 'showing'."

Cliff noted that he was one of those instrumental for bringing the

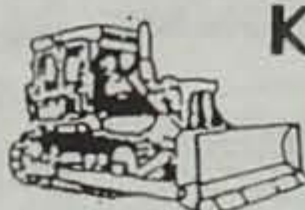
Clifford Johnson
Continued on Page 15

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Peterson has seen many "peaks and valleys" during his 40-year career

"I have no real bricks to throw. I feel that NRCS has been good to me!"

... Lyle Peterson

by Lou Waite

Lyle Peterson was born and grew to adulthood in Stanton, Iowa. He attended Iowa State College (as it was then) and received a degree in Animal Husbandry.

He was introduced to conservation early in life by his father, and when older, helped his father build terraces on the family farm. "I grew up with conservation", Lyle said fervently, "and knew no other way of life."

His knowledge was furthered during his college years when he spent summers working at the "Erosion Farm", an experimental station between Clarinda and Shenandoah. It was at this farm that Dr. Browning and associates devised the universal soil loss equation, which is still used today. Lyle's duties at the site increased his interests in conservation, as well as giving him some worthwhile hands-on experience.

It was only natural then that following graduation, he interviewed for a position with the Soil Conservation Service.

"The interview was held in Des Moines," Lyle said, "and at the end of it, they told me they weren't hiring just then because they had no money. I couldn't understand why they would conduct an interview when they had no intention of hiring. But I went home, and took another job. That was in 1958. Then at the end of May of that year, I received notice that if I was still interested in the job with SCS, I should report to Centerville. The starting salary was \$4900 annually - a good wage for that time."

Thinking back, Lyle reflected, "I had looked at jobs with other companies, and had some good opportunities. But actually, I had never felt I wanted to advocate what they stood for. When this job was offered, however, I realized this (conservation/stewardship) was a product for everyone -- beneficial for anyone who would accept what I was promoting. That was my conviction then, and it is my conviction now. On June 30, I reported to Centerville, and I have never looked back!"

In May, 1962 Lyle assumed the position of District Conservationist in Northwood. It was there he met his future wife, Jerri (Jerri) and family, and in 1963 they were married.

In 1966, Walt Weiss offered Lyle a promotion and the job of



After June 30, Lyle Peterson will no longer sit at this desk and reflect about a phone call, such as the one he had just received from a cooperator when this photo was taken. His 40-years of serving in official capacity will be ended.

District Conservationist in Logan, which he accepted. He remained at Logan until 1981, then became Area Resource Conservationist, based at the Area office in Council Bluffs. In 1989, he transferred to the Council Bluffs field office as DC, serving in that capacity until the present.

Lyle's "official" retirement date will be June 30, 1998 -- forty years to the day since he began his career with SCS/NRCS.

When asked to comment about some of the changes he has witnessed, Lyle said: "We've seen 'peaks and valleys' personnel-wise for years. I feel this is going to happen again. We are going to have to bend a little so we can accomplish our overall objective, which is conservation. Somewhere along the line, I feel some of our people have lost the realization of the value of one-on-one contacts with those we serve. This has led to declining 'sales' of our 'product', so to speak, which is and always has been conservation."

After contemplating for a moment, Lyle added, "I have no real bricks to throw. I feel that NRCS has been good to me, and I have met many great and good conservationists, both in the service and as practitioners on the land. I am leaving with a sense of pride in what we have done, and faith in those who will carry on."

Lyle and Jerri enjoy travel, and plan to do more of that. Lyle is a sports enthusiast and especially

enjoys the sports in which his grandchildren (four grandsons) or friend's children participate.

Their children are Rhonda Mechaelsen of Kamrar, Brian Field of Atlanta, GA and Kimberley Hinkel of Logan, all with their respective families.

Lyle said he will probably keep busy with volunteer work, and both he and Jerri will continue being active in Our Saviors' Lutheran Church affairs. Lyle is a member of Trees Forever, and the Agricultural Committee of the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce. Jerri is a fifteen-year displayer for Home Interiors and Gifts.

Comment: I want to thank Lyle Peterson for first giving me the opportunity to write about and photograph conservation projects. That was over twenty years ago, when I was with the Woodbine Twiner newspaper. I knew very little about the whys and wherefores of conservation at that time. Lyle and other staff members at what was

then the Soil Conservation Service district office had to "educate" me so I could help educate the public.

I grew up on a hill farm, but as a child always took the ever-deepening gulleys and creek water brown with washed-away soil for granted. I well remember the drought years, however, and the red soil which blew in all the way from Oklahoma. As an adult, I knew "something" was being done to prevent these things, but very few particulars about what that something was. Now I do.

Thanks to Lyle with whom it began, I have become an avid proponent of conservation. I believe in what I write, and I write what I believe. By example he also taught me that, whether or not he realizes it.

If I know Lyle, he'll still be involved with some phase of what he spent forty years promoting. I'll miss him, but I certainly wish him the best of the rest of his years. God speed and God bless.

Lou Waite

Clifford Johnson

Continued from Page 14

first brome grass to the county. (His account of this appeared in a letter to the editor in the summer, 1997, issue of the Newsletter). And through the years, he observed more benefits of soil conservation, such as increased production per acre, better quality products, etc. He said that it was customary in the forties rake the stalks left in the fields into windrows and burn them each fall. "The equipment they had was not capable of getting rid of them otherwise," Cliff commented. "They created potash doing this, but never realized how much organic matter they destroyed. The greatest revolution in my time has been from that (burning stalks) to no-till and good residue management. Of course, years ago we hauled manure out onto the fields for fertilizer, and didn't use chemicals. That has been another big change. But for every change brought about, we had to actually demonstrate the process to prove it. Nowadays you can convince by just talking, or showing it (whatever is being promoted) on the Internet.

Those first commissioners and SCS office staff deserve a lot of credit, for they had to convince farmers to change a way of life that had gone on for generations!

"The quality of these people has always been outstanding in Pottawattamie County. From the beginning to the present day, they have always been concerned about not only their own interests, but

the good of the entire community. This is the reason the county has been a leader in conservation and all-around progress."

Cliff also said he had appreciated the "great cooperation" between SCS/NRCS personnel and his own office when with the Extension Service.

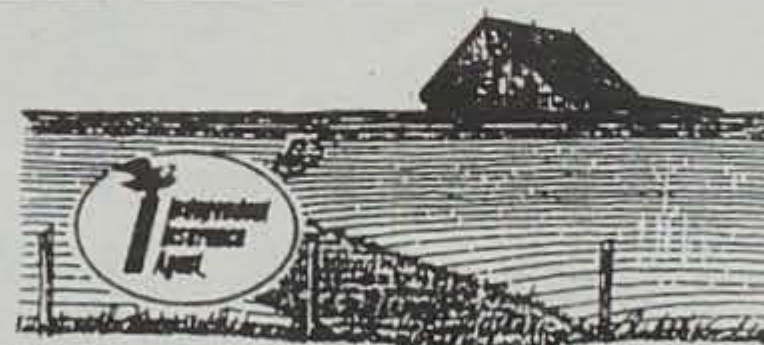
Since retirement, Cliff has "kept busy" caring for his 15-acre homestead. He has lots of flowers, and mowing the lawn is a constant chore. He once had a large vegetable garden, but no longer indulges in that activity. "I like to travel when I can," he said with a grin, "and not have to worry that the tomatoes need to be picked."

Another reason might be that 8 of his 10 granddaughters are dance instructors. They have studios in Council Bluffs, Harlan, Vinton and Clarinda, with 1400 students enrolled. Cliff serves as Master of Ceremonies for all the dance recitals, which leaves him little time for hoeing weeds out of the turnips!

Cliff's late wife Genevieve was a dance instructor, and they owned J & J Dance Studio in Council Bluffs, later operated by a daughter and granddaughter. The Johnson siblings are James of Council Bluffs, Joyce Talty of Council Bluffs and Janice Tiarks of Harlan. There are 15 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

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Foundation board an eclectic but effective group

Board member Cliff Rahel is dedicated to the cause

by Lou Walte

Readers of the Newsletter may have noted mention of the Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation in a recent issue. We know some have, for they have inquired of us "What is it, and what exactly does it do?" All we had was the information gained in the interview which resulted in the article in question. So, as any good news media representative should do, we set out to find the answers. This is a part of what we learned.

The Mission Statement of the Foundation is: To encourage conservation of natural resources through public education and provide funding for acquisition and preservation of land for habitat and public enjoyment.

Organized in January 1993, the foundation is a non-profit corporation. Its purpose is to provide financial support for programs administered by the Pottawattamie County Conservation Board and any affiliated organizations or agencies. Since a government entity is not eligible for most grants from other non-profit organizations (and the foundation is) it fulfills a vital need.

Its long-range goals are declared to be, "Acquire land for habitat preservation and public use, support environmental education activities within the county, expand upon the membership base and utilize

partnerships to attain our goals".

The foundation is led by a volunteer board of directors. These include Brad Asay, President; Richard Gibson, Vice President; Cindy Thompson, Sec./Treas; Ed Foss; Scott Doll, Ron Tekippe, John Myers, W. Curtis Hewitt; Kelly Summy; Lynn Ford; Mark Shoemaker, all of Council Bluffs; Gene Olsen, Hancock; Greg Mathis, Oakland; Cliff Rahel, Honey Creek. Among these are an educator, two ex-law enforcement officers; a journalist, business owners, insurance agents, farm managers, a lawyer, conservationists, farmers and other professionals.

Their bios are impressive, indicating that all of them have been leaders and achievers in one capacity or another. A number of them are members of Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Fish and Game groups, The Wild Turkey Federation, Conservation Clubs, etc. There is also a ten-member "Advisory Board", all of them professionals in various fields.

All in all, it is an "eclectic" group, or as one might say using the vernacular, "a mixed bag!" But it must be an effective mix, for what they have accomplished thus far is also impressive.

Conversation with foundation member Cliff Rahel revealed that he is an avid promoter of conservation, as well as critters and creatures of

field and forest. "I love all wildlife", he declared emphatically.

Rahel is currently president of Rahel Corporation in Omaha, and has served as president of several other companies in the past. (We note that one of these was Lehar Valley Farms -- a reverse spelling of his name). He is a former director for Nebraska Investment Banking Association, Printing Industries of the Midlands and Spencer Packing Company. He currently serves as director of Omaha botanical Gardens. He is an active member of the Downtown Rotary Club and former commissioner for Boy Scouts of America. He works closely with the Hitchcock Nature Center and is involved in many of their projects.

He describes his 350 acres of land near Honey Creek as a "natural wildlife habitat", although 110 to 120 acres each year are farmed by tenant Randy Witt.

For the last three years, Cliff has attempted to raise Canadian geese on his farm. He noted that geese mate for life, and he usually has five or six mated pairs returning each year. As a rule there are two nesting pairs, and from the five or so eggs in the nest the average hatch is 3. "When the goslings get older, though, some disappear," Cliff said, with obvious disappointment. "Something does away with them, and I have thought it might be the big catfish in the lake. I am certain that some of them fall prey to snapping turtles."

The 17-acre lake has four nests positioned at intervals, placed atop posts drilled into the lake bottom. The nests are three feet above the water level, and according to Cliff, "really attract the geese." He said that the female sits on the nest, but her mate will take her place when she needs to feed, or have



some respite. "They are very faithful," he affirmed.

Faithful foundation members such as Rahel have helped raise almost \$210,000, via grants and contributions through the ensuing years. They continue to seek funding, and more monies are promised for future projects. The funds have basically been used for improvement, maintenance, restoration, etc., of and in seven recreation or habitat areas/parks in Pottawattamie County.

Quoting just one example, improvement to the Hitchcock Nature Area between Crescent and Honey Creek included: a 1600-foot equal access trail to allow those using wheelchairs or baby strollers access to a portion of the park; lodge renovation including a new air conditioning system and new energy efficient windows, allowing use of the lodge throughout the year; asphaltting of the gravel road in the park; seal-coating the road from Highway 183 to the park entrance.

The most recent foundation accomplishment was a partnership formed with Harold and Ronald Young, Pheasants Forever and Quail Unlimited. A public hunting preserve will be established east of Carson in Pottawattamie County as a

result. This is but one of the ongoing projects which will enhance and improve recreational facilities in the area.

In their most recent report, future goals for the Pottawattamie Conservation Foundation included the following:

- *increase of public access to high quality outdoor recreation activities, including public hunting areas

- *increase of public understanding and appreciation of plant, animal, geologic, historic, archeological and scenic resources

- *preserve and protect rare, unique and representative plant and animal species as well as the geologic, historic, archeological and scenic resources

- *provide refuge and manage habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species found in the Loess Hills and other parts of the county.

Other goals had to do with continued improvement of park and recreation areas and support of established partnership projects.

But their main goal is and has been to "make a difference". There can be no doubt that they have, and will continue to do so.



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Leanne Durick

Scholarship winner

The Conservation Districts of Iowa and its Auxiliary are co-sponsoring the 1998 Scholarship Awards. The scholarship is limited to those who will be pursuing an agriculturally-related field or any of the natural resources fields of study. Each district in the state can submit one scholarship application to their regional director, who then selects one application to be forwarded to the CDI Auxiliary president who makes the final decision. The scholarships awarded at the state level are in the amounts of \$800, \$400 and \$200.

The West Pottawattamie District Commissioners selected applicant Leanne Durick to represent the district. The basis of the award included (1) need, 25 points (2) leadership, 30 pts. (3) scholastic achievement, 25 pts. The leadership category includes character, service, and self-motivation.

Leanne attended Underwood High School and was involved in numerous school activities. She was FFA treasurer, inducted into the National Honor Society and was a member of the Spanish and Library Clubs. She was captain of volleyball and basketball teams, and participated in cross country. In addition to school activities, Leanne was an active member of 4-H and held numerous offices. In her free time, she enjoys showing

livestock at Westfair and AkSarBen, freestyle wrestling and USA volleyball.

In the fall, Leanne plans to attend Iowa State University, where she will major in Ag Business.

"I think a combination of living on a farm and being around agriculture constantly made me interested in pursuing this career," she said. "I've been wanting to make this my career ever since my freshman year when I got involved with FFA".

Leanne works with livestock and machinery on her family farm. She is the daughter of Tim and Linda Durick of rural Council Bluffs.

Linda was presented an attache case and a plaque by the commissioners at their monthly meeting in April. The commissioners also wished her the best in her future plans.

Two commissioners to be elected

The terms of two West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will expire at noon on January 2, 1999. They are Mark Schnepel of Carson, Silver Creek Township; and Dan McGinn of Council Bluffs, Garner

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A free, 28-page, color Backyard Conservation booklet from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Association of Conservation Districts and Wildlife Habitat Council will show you and your family how to make your backyard a friendlier place for nature. Stop at the West Pottawattamie SWCD office at 305 McKenzie Avenue or call 1-800-LANDCARE for a free copy.

Also, if you would like to

Township.

Successors will be elected at the general election on November 3, 1998.

Any qualified elector residing in the soil and water conservation district, which is all of West Pottawattamie County, including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner. Exceptions are that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any one township.

Incumbent commissioners are Randy Williams of Crescent, Crescent Township; J. Mike Dea of Minden, Minden Township and Robert F. Young of Council Bluffs, East Lewis Township. Residents of these townships, therefore, are ineligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office must file nomination

purchase a Backyard Conservation Starter Kit which includes the booklet, 10 tip sheets on practices and a fun pack for the family, call the office at 712-328-2489. You can also visit the Backyard Conservation website at www.nrcs.usda.gov

Children and parents alike will learn how to use smaller-scale conservation practices which have been used on American farms for decades. These include terracing, tree planting, composting,

mulching, wildlife habitat, wetlands, ponds, water conservation, nutrient management and pest management.

By using these practices, you and your family can provide important wildlife habitat while saving our previous natural resources. It is a great way to teach today's youth to "think globally, but act locally" in their own backyard.

Cost share for summer terraces

West Pottawattamie local option sales tax funds can be used for summer construction for terraces. This money will be used to guarantee cost-share for those arranging to have land available for summer construction.

The time frame for summer construction is between June 1 and September 15. These are the dates in which contractors have to begin earthwork.

Individuals interested are requested to sign an application at

the NRCS/SWCD office. The deadline for signing is July 15. For further information, call 712-328-2489.

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water conservation District commissioners stated they hope the guarantee of cost-share allotted for summer construction will help producers decide to set land aside in oats or other short-term crops. This will provide a place for contractors to work during the summer months.

petition(s) in the same manner as for other elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petition(s) and Affidavit of Candidate forms may be obtained from the County Auditor or the West Pottawattamie SWCD office.

The petition(s) signed by 25 eligible electors and affidavit must be filed with the County Auditor at the Pottawattamie County Courthouse in Council Bluffs no later than August 26, 1998.

Individuals elected in November 1998 will serve a term of four years, beginning January 2, 1999. Soil and water conservation district commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county. For further information pertaining to the responsibilities of a commissioner, contact Tracy Bruun at West Pottawattamie SWCD, 305 McKenzie Avenue, Suite 1, Council Bluffs, IA 51503-1017, 712-328-2489.

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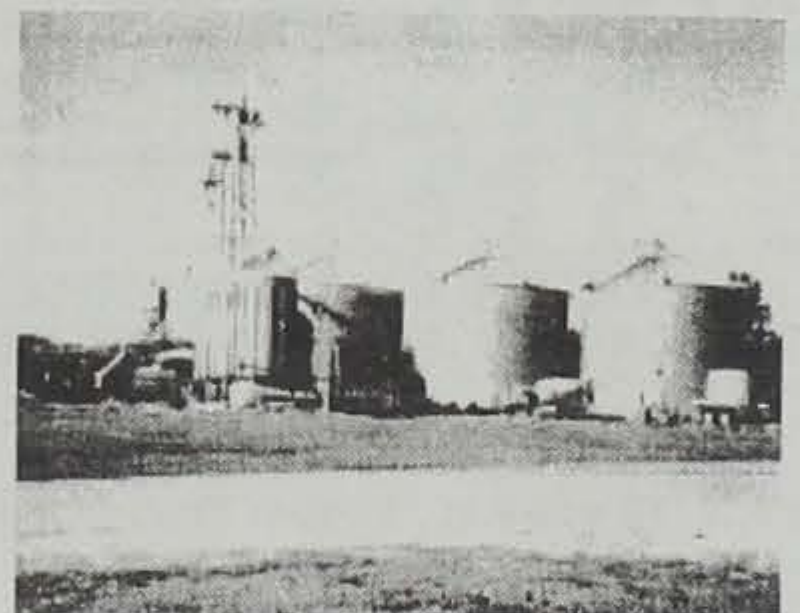
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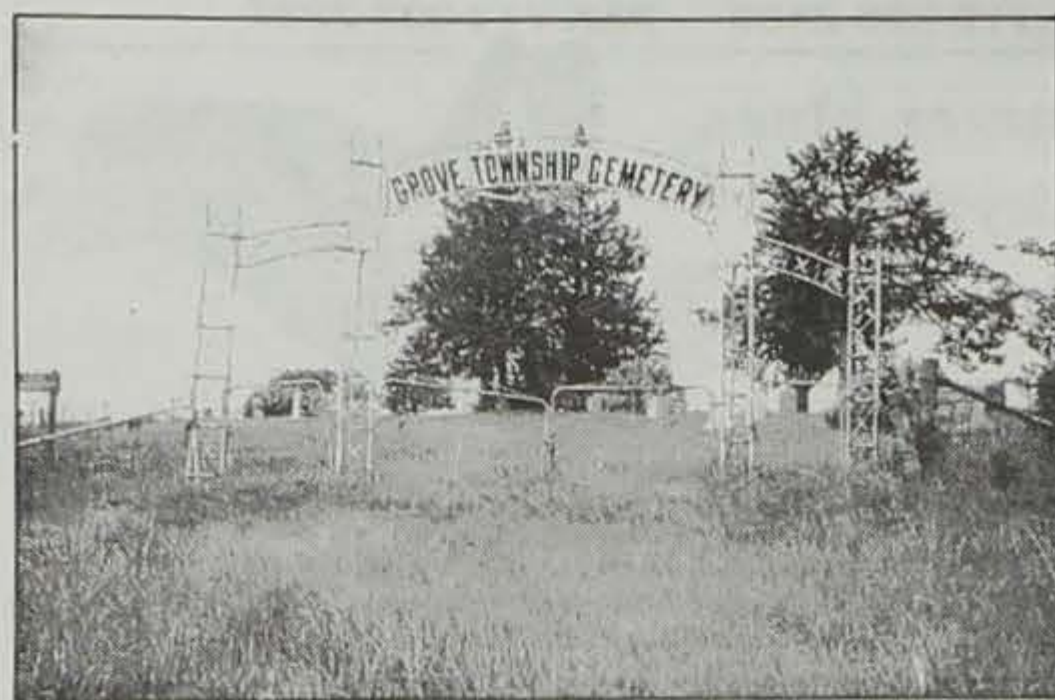
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Grove Township Cemetery near Dunlap



Washington Township Cemetery near Panama



Cass Township Cemetery near Portsmouth

by Lou Walte

A little known or little considered fact is that many of the small, isolated country cemeteries contain some of the last remnants of native prairie.

According to Darby Sanders, Shelby County Conservation Board Director, the original sod in these cemeteries has never been disturbed. It is the same as when the Indians roamed the plains, and buffalo herds grazed on Indian grass, little bluestem, big bluestem, cord grass (wild hay) and other native species.

Many of the cemeteries were established back when towns were far apart or there were no towns nearby. Settlers therefore selected their own sites for interment of the deceased. Not all the plots are filled with stones or markers, for in almost every case more land was set aside than was ever used. The native grasses and wildflowers therefore had space to grow and thrive and try to survive.

Several years ago, Darby and his peers decided to identify some of these cemeteries, and attempt to protect the rare species contained therein.

"We contacted the township boards who oversee the cemeteries," he said, "and sought their permission and cooperation. They were more than happy to agree. So far in Shelby County we are working with three: Grove Township, Washington Township and Cass Township cemeteries, and have others in mind for the future."

Darby noted that controlled burning was done in the spring to help kill the brome grass and encourage other species to be more competitive. Attractive wooden signs were erected, denoting the site as a Native Prairie Restoration Project and a non-perpetual care cemetery. A complete inventory is kept on each, and all activities and/or progress noted.

"We have had good luck with the project thus far," Darby affirmed, "and many visitors enjoy the results. We have had 4-H tours, Iowa Western Community College and University of Nebraska at Omaha student tours, and many other groups and individuals."

In the fall, seed from some of the rare species is harvested and a portion of it planted along county roadsides. This helps establish a local ecological system, which promotes the best growth characteristics.

It is only reasonable that any species which has survived since time began deserves the chance to continue to do so. Both Mother Nature and Father Time would surely agree. So does Darby Sanders.



Signs such as these are placed in each of the cemeteries involved in the restoration project



Native prairie grasses and wildflowers flourish in this section of the Cass County Cemetery.

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3. Children should be seen and not heard.
4. No news is good news.
5. Where there's life, there's hope.
6. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
7. Beauty is only skin deep.
8. Good things come to those who wait.

Goodbye and good luck!



Lois Crawford of West Pottawattamie NRCS accepted the position of computer analyst with First National Bank in Omaha, effective June 20.

Lois began as a temporary district employee in Harlan in 1989. In November, 1991, she accepted full-time employment as Soil Conservation Technician at the Council Bluffs office.

During her tenure there, she was responsible for construction activities in the district, including approximately 40-50 miles of terraces annually.

Lois and her husband Jim have four children: Scott, Desiree (Mrs. Paul Wilwerding), Robby and Gina. They have one grandson, Eli.

Student trainee an apt pupil

by Lou Walte

Derrick Eckford, a Civil Engineering student at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is a student trainee with the Natural Resources Conservation Service this summer.

Eckford, a native of Kansas City, MO., is living in Council Bluffs and working with the engineering staff at the area 4 office there.

Ed Marshall, Civil Engineering Technician (CET) and Derrick's mentor, is as the trainee expressed it, "showing him the ropes".

"I became interested in conservation when I was employed at the nuclear power plant in Port Gibson, Mississippi", Derrick said. "Being in that small town was my first experience of 'country living'... being closer to the land and the people who care for it. So when this opportunity came up, I decided to take advantage of it."

Derrick is learning surveying procedures and techniques. These include the use of a Leitz electronic measuring unit; recording and implementation of data; designing dams and other structures, etc. He has also learned to test concrete used in many structures to be certain it passes rigid, predetermined standards.

"I enjoy what I am doing, and I am learning a lot," Derrick confirmed. "I will graduate from Southern University in May, 1999, then I plan to pursue a Master's degree in Ag Economics. After that, I guess I will just look for the right job and am interested



Ed Marshall, Civil Engineering Technician, and Derrick Eckford, Civil Engineering student intern.

in something to do with conservation."

Derrick's father, Harvey, is in banking and his mother, Betty is a loan officer. They reside in Kansas City.

Ed Marshall remarked, "Derrick is very interested in learning about surveying and conservation practices.

He is a good 'rod man', and using the rod is more important to surveying than it may appear. He has chosen a good profession, and I certainly wish him the best with it."

That sentiment is shared by everyone who has met this outgoing, charismatic young man.

Bing Cherry Soda Salad

1 large can crushed pineapple
1 pkg. strawberry jello
1 pkg. cherry jello
1 large can bing cherries
1 8-oz cream cheese
1 cup chopped nuts
2 cups Coke
Drain pineapple and cherries. Heat the combined juices and pour over the combined jello. Stir until

dissolved. Set aside to cool. Blend cream cheese with Coke. Add pineapple, cherries, nuts and cream cheese-cola mixture to gelatin and then stir. Pour into 2-quart mold and let set.

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EQIP 1998 at a glance

Beginning in 1998, local conservation projects are being funded through USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Local work groups made applications to be selected as local priority areas, with specific resource concerns.

Staff at the Natural Resources Conservation Service rated the applications based on criteria and direction from the State Technical Committee.

Iowa received \$5.49 million for technical, financial and educational assistance through EQIP in 1998.

While more than 75% of the funds are used in priority areas, 25% of the money is available to landowners outside those areas who are working on statewide resource concerns. For more information about this, contact a local USDA Service Center.

Approved for funding in the area covered by the Quad District Newsletter were the following:

Farm Creek Watershed, 10,470 acres

**East Pottawattamie County
Funding: \$250,000.**

The primary concerns in the watershed are soil erosion and stream degradation. Secondary concerns deal with water quality, livestock waste and wildlife habitat. Farm Creek has 9,550 acres of cropland, used primarily for corn/bean rotation. The project area contains a small amount of pasture for two cow-calf operators, one large cattle feedlot and one large swine confinement. Resource concerns will be addressed using pest and nutrient management, soil erosion control practices and waste management systems.

Mill-Picayune Creek Watershed, 3,400 acres Harrison County Funding: \$50,000

The problems and opportunities in this project are sheet and rill erosion on cropland, severe gully erosion and excess surface water runoff causing flooding and sediment damage. The project objectives are 1) apply erosion control practices which reduce sheet, rill and ephemeral gully erosion 2) improve quality of runoff water through the application of nutrient and pest management plans and 3) obtain at least 75% upland treatment on this PL-566 subwatershed so the construction of four planned grade control structures can be authorized.

Willow Creek Watershed, 90,000 acres Harrison, Monona, Crawford Counties Funding: \$100,000

In 1993, Willow Creek caused over \$2 million of flood damage. Some residents in Missouri Valley and landowners on the lower end of the watershed have suffered large economic losses in both 1993 and 1996. Sheet and rill erosion is above 5 tons/ac/year on 20,000 acres of cropland. The project will apply erosion control practices, improve the quality of runoff water through the application of nutrient and pest management plans and provide financial assistance to interested landowners. The Willow Creek Watershed Committee is also promoting additional upland treatment as a way to reduce damages to the land and infrastructure.

Save water with efficient systems and healthy plants

Wise use of water for garden and lawn waterings not only helps protect environment, but saves money and provides for optimum growing conditions. Simple ways of reducing the amount of water used include growing plants that are adapted to dry conditions, mulching, adding water-retaining organic matter to the soil and installing windbreaks and fences to slow winds and reduce evapotranspiration.

Watering in the early morning before the sun is intense helps reduce the water lost from evaporation. Installing rain gutters and collecting water from downspouts to use in gardens can also reduce water use.

Choosing plants for low water use

You are not limited to cacti, succulents, or narrow-leaved evergreens when selecting plants adapted to low moisture requirements. Many plants growing in a humid environment are well adapted to low levels of soil moisture. Plants for sunny, dry conditions are yucca, broom, yarrow, nasturtium, California poppy, blanket flower, Juniper, sage, iris and crocus. Plants which occur naturally in the local environment will likely need less

Management of interseedings important to establishment

by Brian Peterson
Grassland Specialist

Throughout Southern Iowa, farmers are busy interseeding legumes and other forages into existing CRP or pasture forage.

Will these new seedlings survive on their own without any help? Probably not!

While there are no guarantees that new seedlings will be successful, there are some things you can do to increase the chances for success.

The new seedlings should be out of the ground and growing 10 to 14 days after seeding. Since there is plenty of moisture, warm weather will make the existing

supplemental moisture than non-native species.

Efficient water methods

Trickle irrigation and drip irrigation systems help reduce water use and meet the needs of plants. With these methods, very small amounts of water are supplied to the base of the plants. Since the water is applied directly to the soil rather than on to the plant, evaporation from leaf surfaces is reduced. The water is also placed where it will do the most good, rather than sprayed over the entire garden.

Installing irrigation systems

An irrigation system can be easy to install. Numerous products are readily available for home use. The simplest system consists of a soaker hose that is laid out around the plants and connected to an outdoor spigot. No installation is required and the hose can be moved as needed to water the entire garden. A slightly more sophisticated system is a slotted pipe system.

If you would like more information on efficient watering methods or other water conservation methods, contact the West Pottawattamie SWCD for a tip sheet on this topic.



grasses "explode". In many situations, the existing grass will be a tall variety, such as Smooth Bromegrass. As it grows taller, it prevents sunlight from reaching the new seedlings. The growth of this existing grass needs to be controlled so that sunlight can reach the new seedlings and allow the plants to develop and become an integral part of the forage.

Two methods for controlling the growth of the existing grasses are livestock grazing, and mowing.

Grazing livestock is an excellent method which can be used to suppress grass growth in a pasture situation. It will be important to rotate the livestock during the growing season, because close or constant grazing of the new seedlings can severely damage them. If weeds become a problem, it might be necessary to mow the pasture.

If you have interseeded legumes into CRP, grazing livestock is *not* an option. In this situation, you need to mow the existing forage to replace the effects of grazing. Mowing may need to be done more than once during the year.

There is some confusion about when it is permissible to mow CRP land. While you are trying to establish the forage, you can mow the area at any time during the year. However, once NRCS staff members have certified the forage as being established, you *cannot* mow from May 15 to August 1.

Beginning about September 1, give the new seedlings a rest period. This will allow the plants the opportunity to build reserves which can help them survive over the winter.

There are no "fool-proof" methods for establishing legumes into grass sod through interseeding. There are, however, management practices you can use throughout the process to make the chances of success more attainable.

Quad-District Quarterly Conservation Newsletter

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Lou Waite, Editor

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FSA announces direct deposit to be initiated

Direct Deposit forms were mailed to all individuals receiving program payments from the Farm Service Agency in April for completion and return.

These forms must be returned before January 1, 1999 in order for the producer to receive 1999 advance Production Flexibility Contract (PFC) payments or Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments.

Anyone who did not receive a Direct Deposit form or who has misplaced it, should contact their FSA office.

REMEMBER: NO payments will be paid after January 1, 1999, unless the direct deposit form has been completed and returned to the FSA office.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all the programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at (202) 720-5881 (voice) or (202) 720-7808 (TDD).

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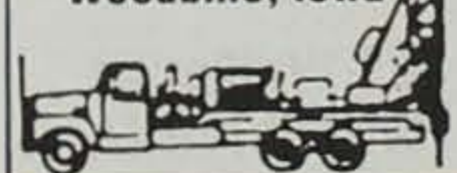
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