

# Conserving Soil & Water In Tama County

*Melody K. B.*

**1997 Annual Report of the  
Tama County Soil & Water Conservation District**



## **Conservation In Action**

Owner, Virginia Schmidt, and tenant, Dale Zhorne, were recognized for their soil and water conservation achievements. The contour stripcropping is a highly successful erosion control practice. The farm is located in Richland Township. Photos within this tab are courtesy NRCS Director Jim Allen, unless otherwise designated.

**JANUARY 1998**

*A Special Supplement To The Tama News-Herald,  
The Traer Star Clipper and The Dysart Reporter*



**TAMA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

203 West High  
Toledo, Iowa 52342  
515-484-2702

**Dear District Cooperator:**

The Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District has been in operation for almost 53 years, helping you and hundreds of others in a wide variety of soil and water conservation work. We believe that the District has accomplished some very worthwhile things for our community.

Your District is a local organization, created by State law, and voted into existence by the farmers of your District. These farmers elected us, the Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, to manage the affairs of the District.

Managing our Soil and Water Conservation District takes a lot of time, but we, the Commissioners, are glad to be of service to our District and to make it a better place to live. Members of the Conservation District must approve applications for assistance, help plan contests for the youth, keep the Technicians available for your use, pay bills and dispose of many other administrative duties.

District Board members serve without salary. Soil and Water Conservation Districts have no taxing powers, nor do we want any. There are no Federal funds to finance District programs and activities. Your District needs money for educational activities which include the following: 5th Grade Outdoor Classroom, Arbor Day trees to 6th grade students, Scholarship contest, Poster Contest, Envirothon, State and National dues, small prizes for contests, awards for outstanding conservation farmers.

Consequently, we have decided to ask all landowners for a small contribution to help defray the expenses of our District for the 1998 fiscal year which began July 1. These contributions may be deducted for income tax purposes either as a business expense or a charitable contribution, depending on your tax status.

We do not know just what amount to suggest, and we are not selling a quota for anyone. Your contribution could well have some relation to the benefits you have received. Any amount, \$100.00, \$30.00, \$5.00, would be in order. The important thing as we see it is for everyone to help out, whether his contribution is large or small.

We feel sure that you appreciate the help you have received from the District and will want to contribute to the cost of running it. Will you please send us your check now for whatever amount you can?

Cordially yours,

District Soil and Water Commissioners

**Your financial support would assist us  
in providing similar soil & water conservation  
programs in 1998. Contributions may be forwarded  
to: TSWCD, 203 West High St., Toledo, IA 52342**

*Thank you for helping sustain your county's soil & water conservation program.*

# Soil and Water Conservation • Tama County

1997 Annual Report

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## Chairman's report by Dan Bruene

I want to thank the farmers of Tama County for all of their soil conservation efforts of the land. We have made to much progress over the years.

The farmers have always made use of all the cost share money that we can get to put permanent practices on the land.

While permanent practices have a significant impact on the land, no-till and conservation tillage have made the largest changes to the Tama County landscape.

Farmers and landowners are realizing that with soil loss there is a loss of productivity of the land.

Farmers have so many more tools available to them than they did 10 to 15 years ago.

Now the tools not only aid the farming methods of today, but help the farmer save as much soil as possible.

Soil conservation does not just happen; it does take effort. Now it is a win-win situation.

### SWCD Financial report

1M Account—July 1, 1996 to June 30, 1997

Beginning Balance 3660.00

#### Expenses

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Commissioner Mileage                | 2020.02        |
| Pamida (film processing)            | 57.09          |
| Ben Franklin (frames)               | 35.41          |
| Post Office (postage and bulk mail) | 654.12         |
| Chronicle Office (office supplies)  | 176.14         |
| Tama News Herald (election notices) | 19.48          |
| NACD dues                           | 250.00         |
| IASWCDC dues                        | 250.00         |
| NACD stewardship materials          | 235.00         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>               | <b>3698.06</b> |

#### REVOLVING FUND—CALENDAR YEAR 1997

#### Expenses:

|                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Post Office                | 654.12  |
| Dirks & Jacobson           | 150.00  |
| NACD                       | 878.15  |
| Gary Brandenburg           | 48.30   |
| Iowa Watershed             | 30.00   |
| Farmers Savings Bank       | 668.37  |
| State Forest Nursery       | 217.00  |
| Pamida                     | 78.87   |
| Our Family Foods           | 304.98  |
| Commissioner Expenses      | 1265.10 |
| Schamweber                 | 52.50   |
| Midwestern Culvert         | 751.88  |
| Staples                    | 222.98  |
| Northern Iowa Products     | 630.00  |
| IDALS                      | 25.00   |
| CDI dues                   | 500.00  |
| Awards Nite Banquet        | 794.65  |
| Chronicle Office Supply    | 303.99  |
| Madison County SWCD        | 42.24   |
| Post Contest Winner Awards | 100.00  |

#### Income:

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Treasurer State of Iowa       | 2910.03 |
| Contributions                 | 1757.00 |
| Fabric Sales                  | 752.00  |
| Plier Rental                  | 415.20  |
| Map Scales                    | 25.00   |
| Ditcher Rental                | 700.00  |
| Ditcher Sale                  | 5776.00 |
| Interest earned (NOW account) | 135.03  |

#### Voluntary Cost Share 97/98

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Allocation   | 51,294.00         |
| Supplemental | 52,988.00         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>104,282.00</b> |

#### Balance Remaining

|                 |                   |           |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| REAP-P          | Beginning balance | 38,692.15 |
|                 | Ending balance    | 8,015.00  |
| REAP-F          | Beginning balance | 6,265.78  |
|                 | Ending balance    | 1,808.50  |
| 96-97 Voluntary | Beginning balance | 1,108.50  |
|                 | Supplemental      | 51,294.00 |
|                 | Ending balance    | 27,000.00 |
| 95-96 Voluntary | Beginning balance | 4,492.85  |
|                 | Ending balance    | 50,950.00 |
|                 | Ending balance    | 1,900.00  |

### Cost Share Projects Completed In FY 97 July 1, 1996 to June 30, 1997

|                          |                                |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 13                       | Grade Stabilization Structures | \$18,541.69        |
| 27.4 ac                  | Waterways                      | \$22,717.84        |
| 28,400 ft.               | Terraces                       | \$40,730.75        |
| 15 acres                 | Timber stand improvement       | \$ 787.50          |
| 2.75 acres               | Conservation Cover             | \$ 643.50          |
| 3.5 acres (7 windbreaks) | Farm Windbreaks                | \$ 2,894.17        |
|                          | <b>Total Cost Share</b>        | <b>\$86,315.45</b> |



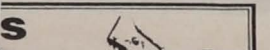
photo provided

### Contour Buffer

Contour buffer strips protect the steeper crop land on the Paul and Paulette Wobeter farm in Carroll township. Otter Creek Lake is in the upper left. A water quality project is just beginning in the 1040 acre watershed above the lake.

**Protect your valuable surface residue.**

**Stop in and let Southard Implement show you how.**



### Home sweet home

by Rick Trine

District Wildlife Biologist

Imagine you were walking across your yard and you stepped into a nest of bees. What's the first thing you do? Unless you enjoy pain, you'll tuck your tail and run for cover towards the house where you're protected.

Would wildlife do the same? If a pheasant was trying to escape a sneaky red fox or a bobwhite quail was trying to get away from a neighbor's tom cat, you can bet they are going to head for home, too.

Our houses keep us warm while a white pine thicket blocks the wind and keeps many wildlife species warm.

Our house usually contains food, so when we're hungry, we simply go to the kitchen and get something to eat.

Thickets of wild plum, crabapples, dogwoods or other shrubby mast producing species that produce high quality food should be available.

Having the proper types of vegetation in close proximity to each other not only provides needed thermal and protective cover, but it also reduces predation by eliminating the need to search for food in open areas.

For more information, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources can provide valuable technical assistance to get you started. Give them a call at 515-752-5521.

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# Soil and Water Conservation • Tama County

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## TAMA COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT 1998 Tree Seedling Order Form

All plants sold in bundles of 25 trees unless stated otherwise. All items are bare root stock. Payment must accompany order. No guarantee is offered on stock sold at these prices. You will be notified by mail when and where to pick up your trees. All orders not picked up will be forfeited.

| EVERGREENS                                        | SIZE   | PRICE/BUNDLE | # of Bundles | DOLLAR AMOUNT |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Techny Arborvitae-dense, stands crowding          | 12-18" | \$45.00      |              |               |
| Red Cedar-dense, grows anywhere                   | 18-24" | 45.00        |              |               |
| Concolor Fir-beautiful landscape or windbreak     | 12-18" | 45.00        |              |               |
| White Pine-excellent for windbreak or Christmas   | 12-18" | 30.00        |              |               |
| Black Hills Spruce-good windbreak or landscape    | 12-18" | 30.00        |              |               |
| Colorado Blue Spruce-good windbreak or landscape  | 12-18" | 30.00        |              |               |
| Norway Spruce-fast growing spruce, good windbreak | 12-18" | 30.00        |              |               |

| LE | # OF BUNDLES | DOLLAR AMOUNT |
|----|--------------|---------------|
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |
|    |              |               |

| E | # OF BUNDLES | DOLLAR AMOUNT |
|---|--------------|---------------|
|   |              |               |
|   |              |               |
|   |              |               |
|   |              |               |
|   |              |               |

# of Pkg \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Pkg \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Pkg \_\_\_\_\_

Sub Total \_\_\_\_\_  
5% IA Sales Tax \_\_\_\_\_  
(subtotal X .05)+ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_



NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ IA ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Place Your Order Early! Quantities are Limited! No Orders After March 1, 1998  
Mail Order Forms to Tama SWCD, 203 W High St, Toledo, IA 52342

## Trees: the living snowfence

The Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District will be selling trees this spring. Look for the order form that is included in this report.

Trees will be bare root and need to be ordered with a deadline date of March 1, 1998.

A well planned windbreak will save on your heating costs and provide an added beauty to your home plus food and shelter for wildlife.

We have additional information about windbreaks at the district office and would be happy to assist you with anything you need. We

have funds available through the REAP program for windbreak establishment and restoration. Start planning for your windbreak today.

Consider the possibilities of planting a windbreak on the north and west sides of your house.



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*We Salute  
the  
Tama County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
and  
the conservation  
efforts of the landowner in  
Tama County*

## Poweshiek Water Association

Brooklyn Office - 515-522-7416  
Tama Treatment Plant - 515-484-3234

# Soil and Water Conservation • Tama County

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## The new Conservation Reserve Program

by Chester Worden  
Conservation Technician

Nearly everything is new with the Conservation Reserve Program now except the old standby name of CRP.

One of the main objectives of the CRP in the 80's was to idle land to cut down on an over supply of commodities. It certainly helped with soil erosion and wildlife also.

Now the emphasis is being placed on keeping our water sources like streams, rivers and below ground aquifers clean.

By targeting certain land areas and conservation practices, pollutants like soil, fertilizers, and chemicals can best be kept out of our water.

Keeping grass, shrubs, or trees on these special land areas will help with soil erosion and wildlife too.

The Continuous CRP is one of the major changes that has taken place. It is called continuous because you can continually sign-up at your USDA Service Center and farmers don't have to wait for special sign-up times.

This Continuous CRP is also set up with only specific practices and land areas in mind.

The four most common practices in Tama County have been 1) Grassed Waterways 2) Grass Filter Strips (along streams & ponds) 3) Contour Buffer Strips and 4) Riparian Tree Buffers (also along streams).

One of the good items about the Riparian Forest Buffers is that they can be put on land that has never been in crop production.

Old pasture land up to 150 ft wide along each side of streams can be planted to strips of trees, shrubs and grass.

The plant roots will use up any excess nitrates coming off the crop ground before it gets to the stream water.

Grass Filter Strips are 30 to 100 ft strips of crop ground planted to tall grasses along sides of streams and ponds.

Contour Buffer Strips are strips of grass 30 to 60 ft wide going around a hill on a contour where you crop the land in between each strip.

They form the first line of defense by helping keep soil and pollutants on the hills where they will be properly used by the crops before they start getting into water supplies.

Four hundred and forty continuous contracts were finalized in 1997 for a total of 3870 acres and another 257 applications are pending.

Waterways and grass filters have been the most popular with 226 contracts each; Contour Buffers have 194 and Riparian Forest Buffers are at 12.

So if you see "GREEN STRIPS" taking shape around the county in next few years, they

could be the NEW CRP.

Check with our office for more detailed information as land eligibility, rental prices, and contract lengths vary for each practice.

Another major change in CRP is that all land rental prices are now based on the soil types you have instead of everyone getting the same rate.

There have also been two of the old style CRP sign-up periods with 40 contracts totaling 2318 acres enrolled in the spring 97 sign-up and 256 applications have been forwarded to Washington for possible acceptance for the fall sign-up.

Even this whole field CRP has a major change as each application is given ranking points on how they will benefit the environment.

This EBI, Environmental Benefits Index, is scored on benefits for Water Quality, Soil Erosion, Wildlife, Air Quality, and Enduring Effects.

The more a CRP helps the environment, the better the chance it has of being accepted.

If you have CRP expiring in the next few years, or crop land you think might qualify, this NEW CRP might be for you.



photo provided

### Contour Buffer

Contour buffer strips protect the steeper crop land on the Paul and Paulette Wobeter farm in Carroll Township. Otter Creek Lake is in the upper left. A water quality project is just beginning in the 1040 acre watershed above the lake.

### HARRAH'S Field Tiling

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As your full-service bank, we specialize in tailoring an integrated finance package that fits both your business and personal needs.

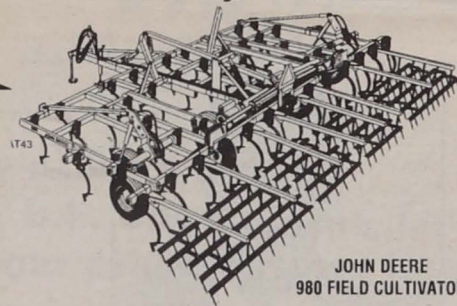
Stop into any one of our four locations and let us show you how we can help with a financial package that will benefit you now and long into the future.

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|

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MARSHALLTOWN  
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**GOOD DEALS...AND A GOOD DEAL MORE**

# Soil and Water Conservation • Tama County

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1997 Annual Report

## District Activity for 1997

### January:

Officers were elected as follows: D. Bruene, Chairman, Mel Bro, Vice-chairman; Treasurer/Secretary, N. Havran; Legislation Committee, D. Bruene, D. Wieben, and Russell Lyon; Communication, M. Bro, C. Wieck, N. Havran; Education, C. Wieck, S. Dostal, D. Emke and M. Bro; Audit, M. Bro and D. Wieben.

Goodyear Cooperator of the year awarded to Stan Dostal.

Intern Andrea Hennings was introduced to the commissioners and it was noted that she would be an intern for the month of January. District Conservationist Jim Allen and District Secretary N. Havran attended ISOIL training.

### February:

Pliers for gabion were purchased. Annual Report was printed by the Tama News-Herald.

The spring Regional meeting is to be held March 5.

Envirothon will be held February 7 at Hawkeye Community College.

### March:

Awards Banquet date was set for November 18. Scholarship applications were reviewed.

### April:

Nominees for Conservation Award Winners were named. District Secretary position was

reclassified to a Secretary II.

Poster contest winners were announced.

CRP sign-up was held and approximately 17,000 acres were bid in Tama County. District Audit was held by Bro and Lyon.

Outdoor Classroom will be held May 21, 1997.

### May:

Hurricane Ditcher rental rate was reviewed. State cost share allocation point system was reviewed.



Outdoor Classroom Day

### June:

Rental rate for gabion basket pliers was reviewed. Ditcher final payment due in July.

Intern Emily Hagedorn was introduced.

Conservation Award winners were chosen and named as follows: Greg Gates, Overall Winner; Landlord/Tenant, Virginia Schmidt and Dale Zhorne; Owner/Operator, Paul Wobeter; New Cooperator, Greg Gates; Woodland - Award Winner, Milo Dale Fisher; Wildlife, Monte Ireland and Richard Alderman; Conservation Tillage, Chuck Hill; Friend of Conservation, Pat Kadrmas; Izaak Walton League, Stan Dostal.

### July:

Commissioners voted to sell the Hurricane Ditcher.

A new Plan of Operations was reviewed and accepted. Allen will take aerial shots of Award winners. Twenty-one EQIP applications have been submitted.

### August:

Commissioners voted to approve the purchase of a printer to accompany the computer that the Division of Soil Conservation awarded the District. Fifteen EQIP applications were approved for a total of \$86,000.

Dan Bruene is regional award winner for outstanding commissioner. Emily Hagedorn, summer intern, completed her tenure.

Mary Ann Gregory, District Conservation Teacher Award Winner has also won the state award.

### September:

Hurricane Ditcher was sold. Trees were selected for Arbor Day distribution to the sixth graders in



Mary Ann Gregory

Tama County.

### October:

Commissioners vote to purchase a six month CD with Ditcher money and will award the interest to a Conservation District scholarship contest winner.

District approves to conduct a tree sales campaign. Three hundred nineteen applications have been approved.

Outdoor classroom date has been set for May 20. Envirothon will be held March 25 at Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo.

### November:

Final arrangements for Awards Banquet were discussed. Commissioners vote to sell old computer equipment.

Annual Report will be printed by Tama County newspapers.

### December:

Commissioners voted to give \$100 to Helen Wieben and Myrna Dostal for preparing the meal for the Awards Banquet.

Commissioners also voted to donate \$100 to the Otter Creek Nature Center for use of the building.

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Assistant Vice President  
& Ag Representative

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your  
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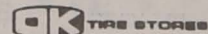


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# Soil and Water Conservation • Tama County

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## Tama County Envirothon Draws Active Participation

by Cathy Wieck

Assistant SWCD Commissioner

Tama County SWCD took an active part in the Iowa Envirothon program in 1997.

The Envirothon is an environmental problem-solving program for students in grades nine through twelve.

Teams must be made up of five high school students. They may be from FFA groups, 4-H Clubs, scouting groups, ecology or science clubs, etc.

The Envirothon is sponsored by soil and water conservation districts the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Farm Bureau, DAR, and other related groups.

The students engage in learning activities which will increase their knowledge about natural resources and the environmental issues facing society today.

The 1997 regional Envirothon

competition was held on February 7 at Hawkeye Community College. The event was coordinated by Assistant Commissioner Catharine Wieck and Hawkeye environmental instructor Terri Rogers.

Other Tama County commissioners who assisted were Dan Bruene, Melody Bro, and Dennis Wieben.

Others from Tama County who helped included Joe Coffey and Paul Wieck.

Those who helped from Black Hawk County included LeAnn Craft, Robert Cline, and Janice Brown.

In addition, Don Sievers and Bill Bennett from the state Envirothon committee were on hand to help out.

The students from Louisa-Muscatine were the winners in the regional meet.

The Iowa Envirothon was held at Springbrook State Park near

Guthrie Center on April 28. Those from Tama County who helped were Melody Bro, Catharine and Paul Wieck. The winning team from Earlham represented Iowa at the National Envirothon in Pennsylvania during the summer.

The 1998 regional Envirothon will be held at Hawkeye Community College on March 25, and the Iowa Envirothon will be held at the Iowa 4-H Camp near Luther on April 27.

If any high school group in Tama County would like to participate, their sponsor should contact the local NRCS office as soon as possible.

Registrations are due by February 2.



### Envirothon

Area youth participate in activities at the State Envirothon held at Springbrook. The day long event offered youth an opportunity to gain hands on experience in implementing and studying environmental projects. Tama County Assistant Commissioner Cathy Wiecks of Union Schools in Dysart helped coordinate participation in the program.

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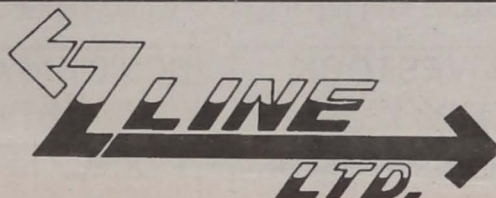
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# Congratulations

## To our Tama County Farmers on their conservation practices

Iowa leads the nation in soil conservation – and Tama County ranks in the top ten counties in Iowa. Iowa was the first state to provide financial assistance for soil conservation and Tama County also provides funds. There are 1,400,000 lineal feet of terracing in the county, 6,000 acres of grass waterways and other soil conservation practices are rapidly being adopted. But we still have a long way to go. So we urge you, our farm friends, to keep up the good work. THE FUTURE OF THE SOIL IS IN YOUR HANDS.

### TAMA LIVESTOCK

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### DON'S NAPA AUTO PARTS

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### MEDICAP PHARMACY

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Toledo - 484-6015

### BIG T MAID-RITE

Hwy. 63 & 30, Toledo - 484-3720

### TAMA CO. ABSTRACT CO.

123 High St., Toledo - 484-4386

### CHRONICLE OFFICE SUPPLY

120 N. Broadway, Toledo - 484-5013

### RICHARDS REALTY

Nancy Mitchell, Broker

308 McClellan, Tama - 484-4240

### MUSGRAVE MOTORS • MICHELLE'S

484-3358 - Hwy. 63, Toledo - 484-5214

### FERREL GAS, INC.

Tama - 484-2021

### YOUNGMAN TOWING & WRECKER SERVICE

Tama - 484-3215

### MANNATT'S SAND, GRAVEL & CONCRETE

Tama - 484-4022

### WILCOX REPAIR & EQUIPMENT

Tama - 484-3657

### TAMA CO. PUBLISHING

220 W. Third St., Tama - 484-2841

### TAMA COUNTY MUTUAL INS. ASSN.

Traer - 319-478-2710

### DICK DAHMS - STATE FARM INS.

Traer - 319-478-2794

### WRIGHT PHARMACY

Traer - 319-478-8711

### FARMERS MUTUAL INSURANCE ASSN.

Gary Dierks - Traer - Ervin Tomlinson

### ERNIE'S PLUMBING & HEATING

Traer - 319-478-2512

### LINCOLN COOPERATIVE

Lincoln - Traer

### BUCKINGHAM CO-OPERATIVE

Buckingham - 319-478-2331

### PIEPER INSURANCE

123 W. 13th, Tama - 484-2906

### DIRKS & JACOBSON INSURANCE

Hwy. 63, Toledo - 484-2140