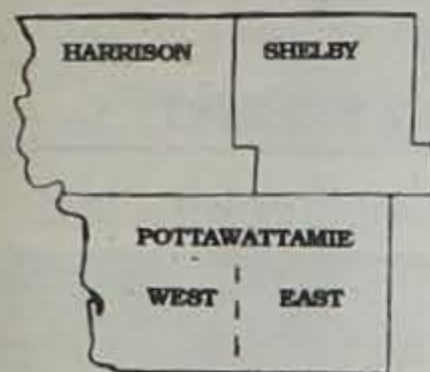




Quad-District Conservation News



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Cosby new District Conservationist at West Pott NRCS/SWCD



Linda Cosby is looking forward to learning more about the midwest and its people, and to a closer acquaintance with Area Four NRCS/SWCD personnel.

by Lou Waite

While she isn't related to the famous comedian, Linda Cosby has a sense of humor, which was evident throughout the interview. Her humor is more subtle, but sometimes revealed the sharp wit which belied her gentle demeanor.

A native of Coffeeville, Mississippi, Linda was valedictorian of her high school graduation class. At that time she received recognition for 12 years of perfect attendance!

She was awarded a cum laude degree in Agricultural Economics from Alcorn State University in Lorman, MS. Having been a ROTC cadet, she went on to serve as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army and spent four years in Bamberg, Germany.

During the interim, she was called to duty in Saudi Arabia, spending 5 1/2 months serving with the armed forces during the Persian Gulf conflict.

She became reflective when asked about that experience, and finally said, "It wasn't pretty. I remember when we first reached the desert, it was so barren. There were no necessities, so we had to dig trenches for latrines. We showered with water contained in bean and corn buckets --- which had been sterilized, of course. Later there were portable facilities installed, but it was still pretty bleak."

Linda noted that her unit processed the soldiers coming to the area, making certain they had ID and insurance cards, etc.

"After the war began, we also

had to make casualty reports," Linda said. "It was sad to see any names on the report, but I was always thankful when there was no listing of anyone I knew."

Following active duty, Linda remained a member of the Army Reserves, and has attained the rank of Captain.

While seeking employment, she made application for the position of Soil Conservationist at the LeMars NRCS office, and was accepted. She served there from September 1993 until June 1995, then transferred to the Sioux City office. On August 31 of this year, she became District Conservationist at West Pottawattamie NRCS/SWCD in Council Bluffs.

Linda said she had visited relatives in Council Bluffs in 1993, so the area was not totally strange to her. And having been in Iowa for some years, the "culture shock" had pretty well been absorbed.

Linda well knows the meaning of that term, however. The year she began the first grade in Coffeeville was the first year the schools were integrated. At that young age, she first became acquainted with, and really aware of, prejudice.

"I couldn't understand it," Linda said, with sadness in her voice, "and I still don't. I don't see why all of us --- black and white --- can't just try to get along with each other."

She recalled an incident when

as a small child, she deliberately drank from a fountain which was labeled "White", instead of the one reserved for the "Black" residents.

"A white man came over to me and snarled, 'Can't you read?!'", Linda recalled, "and I looked up at him and said, 'No!' Of course I could read, but he must have believed me, for he told me to go away and never do that again. I can laugh about it now." Then with a flash of her attractive smile Linda admitted, "I think afterward I laughed about it then!"

Linda also remembered a feeling of déjà vu when she visited her home-town as an adult. "In this big Co-op building, there had always been separate doors to the rest rooms," she mused. "I noticed that the same doors were still there. They had been painted over, but you could still read 'COLORED ONLY' and 'WHITE ONLY' underneath. I stood there, thinking how things have changed." Then after a long pause, she said, "In some ways they have changed, anyway. And you learn to live with it when they don't."

Happily Linda reported that she had been very well received in the Council Bluffs office, and was becoming better acquainted with the staff each day. At the time of the interview, she was looking forward to meeting the District Commissioners during their September meeting.

Meanwhile, she said she was planning to maintain the current routine while becoming more

familiar with it. "Why fix it if it isn't broken?", she quipped. She had been interested in the plugging of a well, which she observed for the first time. "In other areas, we just refer them to the public health department," she commented.

For recreation she likes to play basketball and softball, and hopes to join local teams to continue those activities. After being prodded, she finally admitted she had been an accomplished athlete in high school, excelled in track, and competed in the state meet two successive years.

Meanwhile, she travels to Fort Dodge for her Army Reserve activities, but hopes to transfer to a Des Moines unit. She said she is striving to attain the rank of Major. Then with a chuckle, she stated, "I plan to retire as a Four Star General!" (In this writer's opinion, that may not be a joke)

Linda's 13-year-old son, Simuel, attends Kim Junior High School in Council Bluffs. Her parents still reside in Coffeeville. She has one sister and three brothers, all still in the US military. In 1991 and 1992, they and Linda were all serving overseas at the same time.

Jeff Zimprich, Area Conservationist, commented:

"I would like to welcome Linda to southwest Iowa. I know her past experiences in her personal life, in the military, and with NRCS will be valuable to the conservation effort of West Pottawattamie SWCD."

"I hope that all conservation partners and ag producers concerned will also welcome Linda, and take the opportunity to work with her in all areas involved."

Cindy Jones new SCT at West Pott

Cindy Jones said she has wanted to "come home" for a number of years. That desire will be fulfilled on October 11, when she joins the West Pottawattamie office staff as a Soil Conservation Technician (SCT).

At her new location, Cindy will be responsible for terrace layout and design, structure design, surveying, and other duties relating to soil conservation.

A native of Osceola, Cindy received an associate degree from Southwestern Community College in Creston. She formerly served two years with the NRCS AmeriCorps program in Sentinel, Oklahoma, and later received in-service training as an

SCT at Clinton, OK. In August, 1997, she began her duties as an SCT at the Warsaw, Indiana NRCS field office.

"I met Jeff Zimprich at an orientation/training session for new employees in June," Cindy recalled, "and in our conversation, I mentioned that I would like to get back to Iowa, since the rest of my family is still there. So when he contacted me and said there was an opening in Council Bluffs, I didn't waste any time in saying I would take it!"

Cindy said her favorite activities are "anything to do with the outdoors" --- ie, hiking, canoeing, fishing, etc. --- and country western dancing. She is an avid reader, and serves as "technical aide" for her fiancé, Walter Gatlin, who provides karaoke music for various events. She also said she "loves to bowl."

Cindy will be closer to her parents in Osceola, and she has two sisters and a brother there. She also has a sister in Lamoni and two brothers in Des Moines and Creston, respectively.

After their marriage, Cindy and Walt's family will include her son Benjamin 14; and his three sons: Walter, Jr. 15, Jared 13, and Aaron, 12. "With sons 12, 13, 14 and 15", Cindy said with a chuckle, "we will probably have to concentrate on our 'coping with teenager skills'."

Linda Cosby, West Pottawattamie District Conservationist, said, "We are looking forward to working with Cindy", and Tracy Bruun, District Secretary, added with a chuckle, "Actually, we can't wait until she gets here, because we are swamped!"



Cindy Jones

Peterson's career spanned 40 years



Lyle Peterson

by Julia Gubbels

On June 30, 1998, Lyle Peterson's 40-year career with SCS/NRCS ended. His retirement was to the date of when he began his career.

In 1989 he assumed the position of District Conservationist at the Council Bluffs field office. While working there, Lyle had the opportunity to associate with and serve numerous individuals and organizations to promote conservation.

A dinner/reception was held July 2 at the Fox Run Clubhouse in Council Bluffs with 80 persons in attendance. Gathered to honor Lyle for his conservation efforts of the past four decades were family

members, friends, co-workers, former employees, current and past commissioners and his peers from NRCS offices in the area.

Following a dinner, a program of skits and numerous stories from various individuals was presented. Lyle was recipient of a monetary gift, as well as a few of humorous variety.

"Thanks, Lyle, for your dedication to conservation over the past forty years!"

Start planning for windbreaks

by Julia Gubbels

Are you thinking about planting a windbreak next spring? If so, now is the time to start planning. You might think you have plenty of time, but due to the increased demand for trees in recent years, availability of species has been limited. Plan ahead to have a windbreak that you'll enjoy for years to come.

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District has cost-share available for farmstead and field windbreaks. In order to receive cost-share, certain guidelines need to be followed. In order to be eligible, you must be an owner of at least 10 acres in Pottawattamie County and produce an agriculture commodity. If you are an eligible landowner, the windbreak needs to consist of at least three rows in order to receive

Team loses two, gains one, one still to come

In June of this year, the Council Bluffs NRCS office lost two valued members of its conservation team.

Lois Crawford accepted a computer programmer position at First National Bank after serving as a Soil Conservation Technician since 1991.

Two weeks later on June 30, Lyle Peterson retired after forty years with SCS/NRCS.

In addition, Tracy Bruun, District Secretary began maternity leave on May 27, following the birth of a daughter to she and her husband, Tom. Shelby Taylor Bruun joined brother Derek, who is two. Tracy returned to work on July 24.

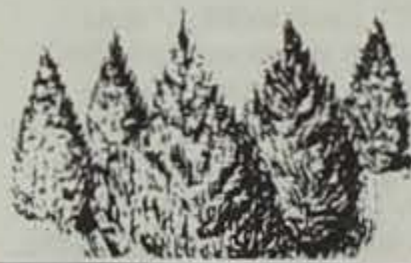
The district would like to apologize for any inconveniences experienced by its cooperators during this time of transition, and thank them for understanding.

On August 31, Linda Cosby assumed the position of District Conservationist. Prior to accepting this position, Linda served as a Soil Conservationist in the Sioux City NRCS office. The "team" looks forward to having Linda as its leader.

To date, a vacancy announcement has been posted for the Soil Conservation Technician position. Plans are that this position will be filled some time in the future.

cost-share from the district.

Those wishing additional information or a windbreak plan for a proposed site may call West Pott SWCD at 712-328-2489 and ask for Julia.



"Farewell" to a fine technician

by W. Pott Commissioners and Staff

The alarm clock pierces the eardrums. Once again, it is a Monday morning and the start of another work week. Upon arriving at the office, the telephone rings continuously for about an hour or longer, and the madness has only begun. This was a typical start of the day for Lois Crawford while she was a Soil Conservation Technician.

During "peak" layout, there were few eight-hour-days. Very rarely did Lois wear a watch to know what time it was. Her day ended with designing terraces in the computer and occasionally delivering notes to contractors.

Lois has left her mark on many hillsides in Pottawattamie County. She especially looked forward to terracing an unterraced hill. Given any situation in the field, Lois would work with the farmer and contractor to see what the best option would be for practicality and cost. Unlike other conservation districts, West Pott utilizes the laser level and has the landowner and/or contractor present at the time of surveying. "We're going to miss her. She'll be hard to replace," commented numerous contractors.

Julia Gubbels commented, "Prior to working with Lois, I had heard of her technical knowledge and great working relations with farmers and contractors. When I first started, I would go along with Lois to learn and help. She made the comment that she 'wasn't a good teacher of the trade'. Those who had the opportunity to work with her, however, knew that she was thorough in explanation."

Lois started with SCS/NRCS in 1989 as a temporary district employee in Harlan. Her primary duties were data entry and other computer work, and assisting with terrace layout and checkout. In November 1991, she accepted full-time employment as a soil



Lois Crawford

conservation technician in Council Bluffs. As a SCT, her primary duty switched to terrace layout and other structures. During her tenure at the Council Bluffs field office, she was responsible for construction activities in the district, which included 40 to 50 miles of terraces annually.

In the fall of 1997, Lois enrolled at Iowa Western Community College (IWCC) for computer programming classes, and continued to work full time. With her busy schedule, she was still able to maintain her high quality of work, and also excel in the classroom. In May, 1998, Lois graduated from IWCC with a degree in computer programming. In June, she accepted the position of Programmer/Analyst at First National Bank in Omaha.

The commissioners and staff hosted an open house for Lois on June 18. Those in attendance included family members, contractors, farmers, district commissioners and NRCS staff from offices around the area.

"We would like to thank Lois for her years of dedication and her work promoting soil conservation in the district," a spokesman for her peers declared. "It was a pleasure working with her."

"Thank you Lois! Best wishes in your new career!"

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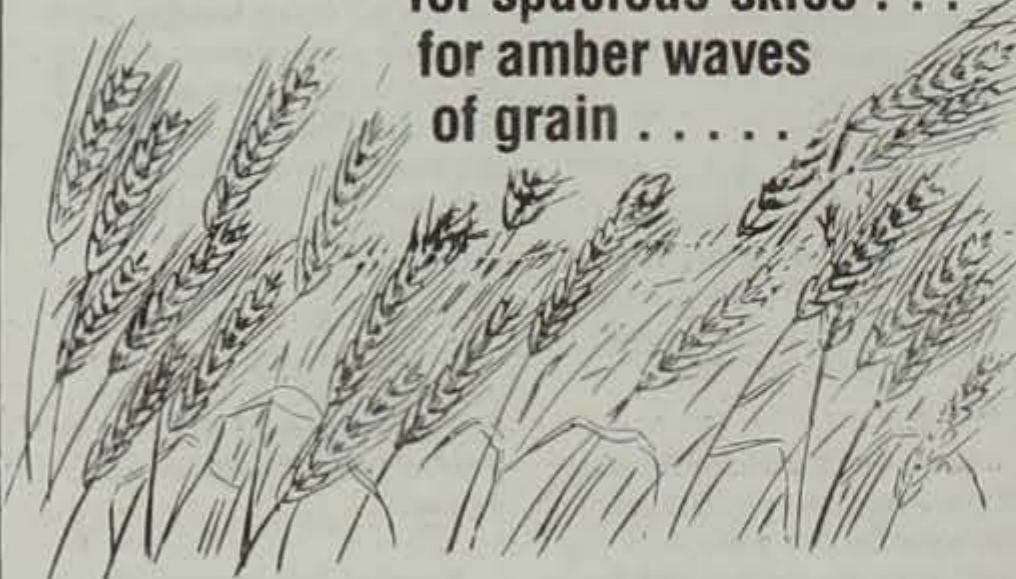
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Loess Hills Scenic Byway is the first in Iowa



by Julia Gubbels

The Loess Hills scenic byway is the first scenic byway in Iowa. This byway passes through a unique land formation which is only fifteen miles wide and about 200 miles long from near Sioux City, Iowa to St. Joseph, Missouri. Although deposits of

loess, which are windblown soils, are found across the world, nowhere but in the Yellow River Valley of China and this area are they deposited in such depths.

The Byway enters Pottawattamie County on County Road L34, continues south and meets Highway 191, then follows Highway 6 toward Council Bluffs.

The route goes through the city via Highway 192 and intersects Highway 92. The Byway then turns east to meet US Highway 275 which leads to the south. Included in this area is the Hitchcock Loop located near Beebeetown.

Located centrally in the Loess Hills, Council Bluffs was called Kanesville when the Mormons

paused there on their way west. In the early 1850's the town was renamed Council Bluffs in honor of the title given the region by explorers Lewis & Clark. The trail pioneers made the city a crossroads to the west. Local attractions include the Hitchcock Nature Area, the History, Squirrel Cage Jail, the General Dodge House, Western Historical Trails Center, RailsWest Railroad Museum and the Wabash Trace Nature Trail Center.

During the early years, the hills were mostly prairie. Since then the creation of farms, communities and roads have halted the wildfires

which once swept the hills. Woodland plants and trees have taken over many of the hills. If prairie plant life still exists, it is usually on the south and west slopes. Some prairie plants and animals found nowhere else in Iowa endure in the Loess Hills.

Today, debate exists as to whether the hills should be preserved and some returned to their prairie origins, or if they should be developed for agricultural, residential and commercial uses.

Those unfamiliar with the Loess Hills Scenic Byway and the beautiful scenery are invited to spend some time taking in the sights.

West Pottawattamie SWCD cost-share for CRP seeding

To promote the upcoming Conservation Reserve Program 18th sign-up, the West Pottawattamie SWCD will be providing cost-share for the sign-up, which begins October 16 and ends December 11, 1998. Cost-share assistance will be on seed only, and will not include fertilizer or machine-hire.

At this time, the cover practices will be the same as the previous general sign-up. The cost-share rates are divided by the cover practice as follows (all cost share rates are flat rates):

CP-1 includes permanent introduced cool season grasses and legumes at a cost-share rate of \$15

per acre.

CP-2 is establishment of permanent native grasses:

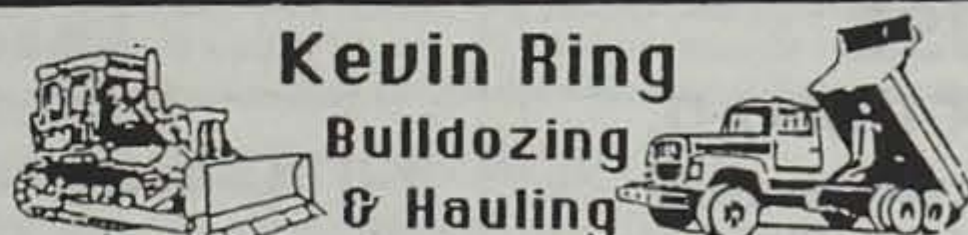
- a) switchgrass (solid stand), cost share \$25 per acre
- b) big bluestem and Indian grass, cost-share \$70 per acre
- c) combination (all three), cost-share \$90 per acre

CP-3 and CP3A are pine or hardwood tree plantings, at a cost-share rate of \$250 per acre.

CP-4D is the establishment of permanent wildlife habitat. This

practice contains mixtures which include legumes, cool season grasses, native grasses, forbs, shrubs and trees (dollar amounts listed are cost-share rates)

- 1) cool season grass, \$15 per acre
- 2) warm season native grasses
 - a - switchgrass, \$25 per acre
 - b - big bluestem & Indian grass, \$70 per acre
 - c - all three, \$90 per acre
- 3) tree/shrub planting, \$250 per



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Interpretive signs point out sites and sights in the Loess Hills



This interpretive panel tells of an "American Treasure", the Loess Hills, and includes a brief history of how they were formed, along with other pertinent information.



The old Preparation townsite is now a hiking and back-pack camping area, frequented often by the public.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources State Parks Bureau and Forestry Bureau has been working in conjunction with the Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) staff. Their joint project involves the installation of a series of interpretive signs along the Loess Hills Scenic Byway in western Iowa.

These interpretive signs include some "general information" signs concerning the formation of the hills and the native prairie which once covered them. There are also some "site specific" signs which highlight areas of unique interest or historical events of the past.

The signs are designed with a blue banner and the Loess Hills Scenic Byway logo to identify them as part of the byway system. They will be installed in various county parks, state parks and forest overlooks. Eventually, they will

be placed elsewhere on public lands, to provide information for visitors to the hills.

At Preparation Canyon State Park, three signs have been placed. One at the entrance to the park is a "prairie panel"; another is at the forest overlook in the park, and the third inside the park has information about the former Mormon settlement at the site.

An interpretive panel has also been installed on the observation platform of the Preparation

Canyon Forest overlook, and another at the Loess Hills Wildlife Area west of Castana.

The RC&D committee working on this project consists of representatives of Western Iowa Tourism and Iowa West Foundation, which receives funding from Iowa West Racing Association, the non-profit organization which owns and operates Bluffs Run Casino and sponsors the licenses for Ameristar Casino Hotel and Harvey's Casino Hotel. Also members of the committee are country conservation board staff personnel, Iowa state park staff and the Director of Golden Hills RC&D, Shirley Frederiksen.

Preparation Canyon State Park

The 344-acre Preparation Canyon State Park is a remote and lovely area still relatively untouched by humans. The park is located in the unique Loess Hills and is surrounded by dramatic ridges on the north, south and west. It provides a beautiful backdrop for hikers and family picnickers. The park lies at the very north end of the Loess Hills Pioneer State Forest, now under development.

Loess Hills State Forest

Iowa's newest state forest is currently 9,080 acres in size. When acquisition is completed, it will encompass approximately 20,000 acres.

Priorly, the area was a mixture of private ownerships. Average size of acquisitions through June, 1996, was 155 acres and ranged from 3 to 1,037 acres.

Land is purchased only from willing sellers. Three of the units are named for the towns in the vicinity: Mondamin, Pisgah and Little Sioux. The Preparation Canyon unit was named after a small settlement no longer in existence.

Preparation Townsite

In 1853, Charles B. Thompson parted from a Mormon wagon train destined for Utah, after receiving a message from what he termed "The Spirit". He became leader of a group of Mormons who traveled on to "Kanesville", which later



Vandals set fire to this information board and the brochures it once contained. Dealing with such senseless acts is one duty Brent says he does not enjoy.

became Council Bluffs. From there, he and some of the men in his party searched the surrounding countryside, and found the area called "Monona", an Indian word for "Peaceful Valley".

The group traveled to the site, and founded the town of Preparation. They built houses and schools and had the county's first newspaper, owned and published by Thompson.

The Mormons soon discovered they had the richest farming valley in the new territory. Realizing the wealth potential, the "Preparation News" printed this message from the spirit, which Thompson called "Beneemy":

"I appoint Charles B. Thompson chief steward of my house to receive, hold, manage and direct all the treasures of my house to him." Believing this, Thompson's followers turned over all their deeds and possessions to him, so that he eventually became very wealthy. He insisted his followers call him "Father Ephraim", after Ephraim in the holy scriptures.

But the people finally realized their error, and demanded the return of their money and belongings. "Father Ephraim" refused, which angered his followers so much that they decided to administer their own justice and hang him.

Warned by a young man, Thompson avoided the mob by hiding in a friend's attic in Onawa. From there he was successful in leaving the state. Many of the group were disillusioned (and broke) after the experience, and decided to leave Preparation and continue to Utah.

In 1856, the Iowa Supreme Court divided the land equally among the remaining families, and the town of Preparation began to grow again. At one time, there were 67 houses, a post office, skating rink and blacksmith shop. But by 1900, the town had dwindled to the point that the only thing left was a stockyard. By 1946, this too was gone, and Preparation, as such, was no more.

Martha and Walter Perrin, descendants of one of the original Mormon families, sold 82 acres of their land to the state of Iowa in 1934, and later the entire Perrin homestead became state property. Those acres of land once contained the town of Preparation, including the valley the Mormons had settled many years before.

Today, the area is used for hiking, backpacking and camping. Little remains to indicate that once a people dreamed of maintaining a place where they could abide in "Preparation for the life beyond". Only the dream remains, unfulfilled.



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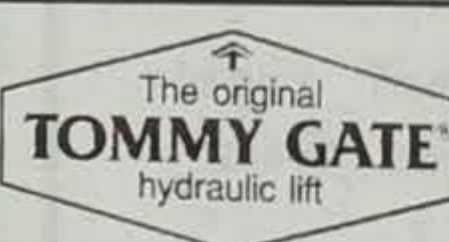


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Mann family history tied to the Loess Hills

by Lou Waite

Wilbur and Leone Mann have always been avid supporters of the movement to preserve and protect the Loess Hills. Both are actively involved in the Loess Hills Hospitality Association, as well as other civic and community affairs relating to the cause.

Wilbur has spent all of his life within sight of the hills, except for three years in the military during World War II. His ancestors came from England in 1630, settled in the Cambridge Massachusetts area, then worked their way westward. Evidence of this is a "Mann School" in River Falls, Wisconsin, and a "Mann Experimental Farm", operated by the University of Wisconsin there.

Wilbur's great grandfather, Richard Montgomery Mann, bought 80 acres of land in the Kanesville (now Council Bluffs) area in 1848. His main crop was hay, most of which he sold to the Mormons passing through. In winter, when the Missouri River was frozen over, he would visit the Mormon campsite, and it was there he met Harriet Taylor, a young widow, and "courted" her. In 1850, he joined a Mormon wagon train and traveled with it to Utah, where he and Harriet were married in 1851.

Later, desiring to leave Utah with their three children, the Manns were forced to travel at night. This was to avoid the "Destroying Angels", a vigilante group which tried to prevent anyone from leaving the Mormon establishment. But they reached Kanesville, later lived in Wisconsin, and in 1867 came to Monona County, Iowa, to a "beautiful valley" later to become known as "Mann Hollow". The valley, located just north of the Loess Hills Overlook, is still recognized by that name.

"According to family history, my great grandfather first lived in a dugout," Wilbur said. "He fished in the Little Sioux River, cut timber from the woods and farmed in the valley. But he was somewhat ostracized by the other four or five Mann families living in Wisconsin, because he had become a Mormon. It was a hundred years before the family descendants healed the breach and reunited. In fact, I met Floyd Buck then, who is a



Wilbur Mann is shown near the front entrance to the beautiful Victorian home he shares with wife Leone.

cousin I didn't even know existed. He lives in Battle Lake, Minnesota. We have since combined the history of his side of the family with the history of ours, making the entire story more complete."

Richard Orrin Mann was Wilbur's grandfather, whose wife was Martha Dinsmore Oliver of Onawa. They lived not far from the present day overlook near Preparation Canyon State Park. The couple had 2 daughters and 6 sons, one of which was Charles Bert Mann, Wilbur's father.

"When my dad was courting Ida Helen Holverson, who would later become my mother, he used to pick her up in his horse and buggy and take her to dances in Soldier", Wilbur said. "Then on the way home through all the loess hills and vales, he would tie the reins to the buggy, fall asleep and let the horse find the way home!"

Wilbur sadly related that he is the last surviving child of Charles and Ida Mann. "I was born on Thanksgiving Day, 1919," he said, then added with a smile, "I guess

that gives away my age, doesn't it?"

Wilbur became pensive when he spoke of his parents. "They were very much respected in the community," he said, "and were always willing to go out of their way to help others."

After attending Graceland College in Lamoni for one year, Wilbur found it necessary to come home and help his father with the farming. During his Navy tenure, he served as Telegrapher 2nd Class, then returned to the farm.

While in high school, Wilbur would pick up a neighbor girl, Leone Marie Frederickson, and give her a ride to school. They began dating in 1940 and were married in 1941. The couple lived in Moorhead, where Wilbur was employed at the L.D. Weldon "bee business". They later returned to farming and operated the Mann family farm near Moorhead, where they remained until 1985.

In 1988, Wilbur was elected as a Monona County Supervisor, and served four terms, or 16 years in

that office. Throughout the years, he also served on the Monona County Historical Society Board and the Rural Electric Board, of which he is a past-president. In 1987, he and Leone sold the farm and bought a beautiful turn-of-the-century home in Moorhead, where they still reside.

Reminiscing about the Loess Hills, Wilbur said,

"When I was very young, the hills were covered with prairie grasses, and there were very few trees. Then came the influx of red cedar, and various deciduous trees, and now there is very little prairie showing. I wonder what could have caused it? Climate changes perhaps? But it's uncanny how those hills were formed. It had to be tremendous winds which blew the silt, left after the glaciers had passed, into those huge mounds!"

With a far-away look, Wilbur continued, "I once rode in a Beechcraft Bonanza (airplane) over the hills, and I could see all the water pocketed in the basin terraces which have been constructed. That's one good thing the conservation service has promoted and the farmer's have done. The terraces keep the water from charging down those hills as it did in the past, creating deep gullies. We flew over Mann Hollow, and the Belvedere Cemetery, over Castana, Turin, Mapleton and Blue Lake (at Onawa). I had never seen the hills from the air before. I could see all the dog legs which gave shape to the hills. It was a sight I'll never forget."

Then with more emphasis, Wilbur continued, "But I could also see some of the desecration of the hills . . . the feed yards, and whole hills hauled away for one purpose and another. There's a site near Sgt. Bluff, and near Missouri Valley where this has been done, as well as other areas. That's really sad . . . it's really bad, and should not be allowed."

Wilbur said that while some means should be taken to protect the hills, he was "rather opposed" to the creation of a national park. "That's being promoted by some factions in Iowa," he said, "but I'm not certain it's the answer. I don't really know the answer, unless it is to try to make the people around here realize how unique these hills

are, and their historical value. If the people would raise more objections, or practice what they preach, it might help. These hills need to be protected and preserved, so that future generations will have the opportunity to enjoy them."

The Manns have "practiced what they preached", not only in reference to the hills, but also in their farming practices, with many conservation measures carried out.

Leone served many years as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) at Burgess Memorial Hospital in Onawa. Since retirement, she has become a "leader" in the effort to "bring the people of the world to the hills", according to her peers. Many tours arranged for that purpose have been carried out with positive results, Leone serving as coordinator, and Wilbur as guide.

The Mann siblings are Dennis, a guidance counselor in Hillsboro, Oregon; Paul, president of the Des Moines Education Association and teacher of talented and gifted (TAG) students; Marianne Petersen, a TAG teacher in Panora and Kathleen Tabat, involved in management of a Phoenix, Arizona hospital. The Manns have nine grandchildren, 2 step-grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Raising his arm and gesturing toward the spacious rooms of his beautifully decorated and appointed home, Wilbur quipped,

"That's why we have this big house. When the kids all come home, we need it!"

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Archeological excavation carried out at old Manteno townsite



An overall view of the recovery excavation carried out at the Manteno townsite in Shelby County.

by Lou Waite

The village of Manteno, in Grove Township, Shelby County, was one of the earliest townsites in western Iowa. Settled by Euro-Americans in the 1850's, Manteno at one time was an important stagecoach stop, connecting trails which led to Shelbyville, Denison, Kanesville (later renamed Council Bluffs) and other communities.

Manteno at one time extended from the still existing burial site, now known as the Grove Township Cemetery, all the way to Mill Creek. The creek, in fact, was named for the mill once located on its bank.

Manteno thrived until some

time in the early 1900's, but began to decline after it was bypassed by the railroad builders of the era. Eventually it was abandoned and a local farmer purchased the land, demolishing the buildings which remained.

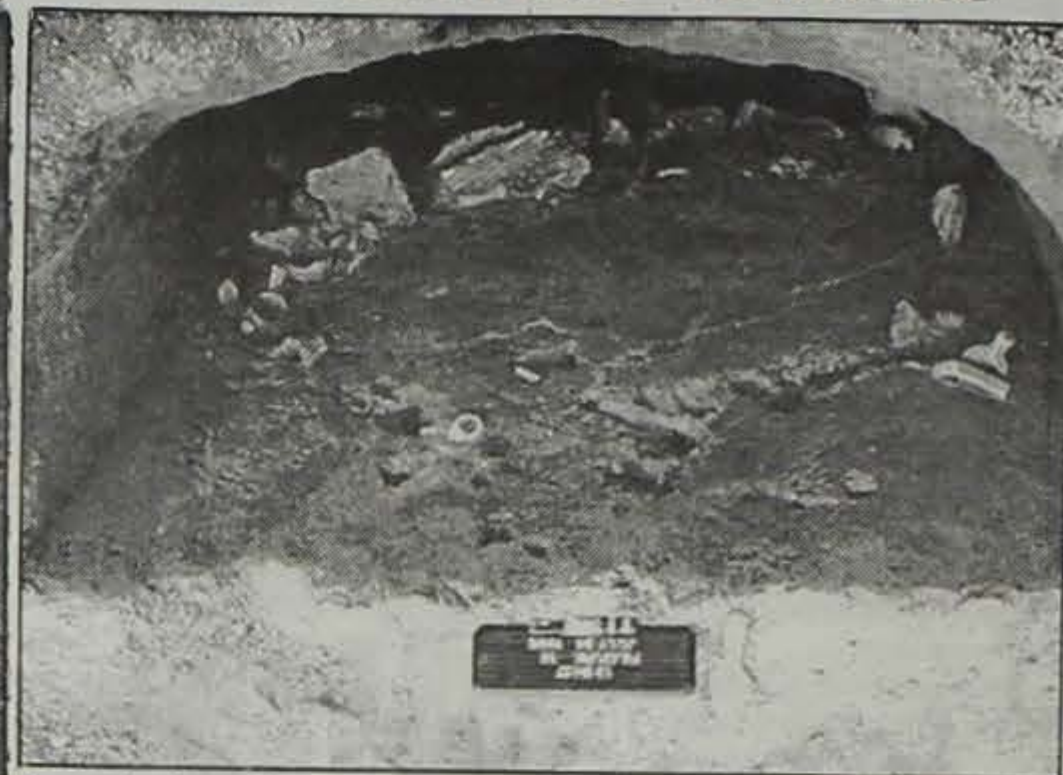
Meanwhile the prairie soils, their integrity destroyed by years of farming "up and down" the hills, continued to deposit colluvium (slope wash) on the site. Everything which remained of Manteno was covered by four or five feet of dirt.

The only indication that it had once existed, other than the cemetery, was the convolution of the county road, although only the "old-timers" of the area would

know that. Several sharp, right-angle turns which once took travelers past Manteno, remained. A number of accidents and mishaps involving these turns finally brought about the decision to eliminate them. Since the new road would cross the oldest sector of the former Manteno townsite, however, it was decided to first carry out an archeological exploration or "dig". This was necessary in order to gain clearance to construct the new road alignment.

The archeological investigations were undertaken by personnel from Consulting Archeological Services (CAS), a private firm from Creston, Iowa, with the assistance of Leah D. Rogers, an historic archeologist from Mt. Vernon, Iowa. The activities were funded by the office of the Shelby County Engineer and by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT).

According to Jonathan R. Sellars, archeologist and president



A vertical profile of one of the privies (outhouses) at Manteno. Visible are whisky and bitters bottles, kerosene lamp chimneys and corrugated metal fragments which were probably components of wash boards.

Photo by courtesy of Consulting Archeological Services (CAS)



An iron wheel which was recovered from the cellar of the general store/commercial building at the Manteno site.

Photo courtesy of CAS

of CAS, the archeological work began in the fall of 1996. "We noted the presence of historic artifacts in the general vicinity of the historically documented location of Manteno," Sellars said. "Archeological testing was undertaken at the site in the fall of 1997, with full-scale data recovery operations commencing in July of this year.

"The results identified a total of 47 features. The major features included two cisterns, two wells, a large brick-walled cellar, a small storm or root cellar, four privies or outhouse pits, and the brick foundations of a stable. In addition were several rows of postholes related to various fencelines and property boundaries, two possible mortar mixing pits, and two ruts of natural depressions which were filled with refuse during the occupation of the

townsite.

"One of the wells and all of the privy features were filled with artifacts such as whole bottles, kerosene lamp chimneys, dishes, shoes, clay pipes and other items which were discarded purposefully or by accident. The privies also contained dense seed and bone deposits that will provide good information about the subsistence patterns of the former occupants. A number of bottles were embossed medicine and bitters bottle from places in Iowa, Kansas and elsewhere in the United States. The ceramic tablewares were primarily manufactured at English potteries.

"The site has produced a rich and varied artifact assemblage that will help to illuminate the history

Manteno "dig"
Continued on Page 7



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Manteno was one of the earliest settlements in western Iowa



Metal objects recovered from a probable stable or similar outbuilding. Included are a plow blade, wire handle to a bucket and building architectural components.

Photo courtesy of CAS

Manteno "dig"

Continued from Page 6

of Manteno and its residents. In addition, the structural features also represent a good cross-section of both commercial and residential structures and will provide good comparative data."

Sellars said that many of the bottles found in the privies were whiskey bottles. "Maybe they hid their whiskey there or maybe they just hid the evidence there," he commented whimsically. He noted that many clay pipes were found, and numerous fine-tooth combs used to rid the hair of lice and nits. Powder flasks used to load old muzzle-loader rifles were also discovered. Many of the artifacts were "fairly intact", Sellars said, having been protected by the aforementioned layer of colluvium covering the site.

"We determined that the bricks used in the local construction were made on-site," Sellars informed, "but the limestone in some of the

foundations had to have come from elsewhere. There are no limestone outcrops in northwestern Shelby County. The closest were probably in Harrison County, so the limestone was possibly hauled from there by horse and wagon or ox-cart."

Sellars commented a bit ruefully that only a small portion of the old Manteno townsite was excavated. The rest remains buried and will hold its secrets until, as the archeologist said, "Next century -- maybe."

Once analyzed, most of the artifacts from the dig will be on display at the museum in Harlan. Sellars stated, rather than "curated then never seen again", as many times is the case. A booklet will also be printed with information about the Manteno project, and made available to the public.

"Everyone working on the project has been very excited about

it," Sellars said. "We also appreciated the fact that public attitude was so positive toward our efforts and everyone so supportive. It was a truly rewarding experience for all of us."

"I am grateful also for the interest expressed by NRCS personnel," Sellars emphasized. "Professional archeologists working in Iowa rely heavily upon soils, geomorphic and geologic data provided by NRCS personnel for all of our investigations. As a preliminary step for all archeological projects undertaken in Iowa (including the Manteno excavations) we visit NRCS offices to obtain information regarding local soils and geology. Soils and geologic deposits are the natural context for all archeological deposits. As such, accurate soils data is a fundamental starting point for all interpretations of Iowa's archeological record."

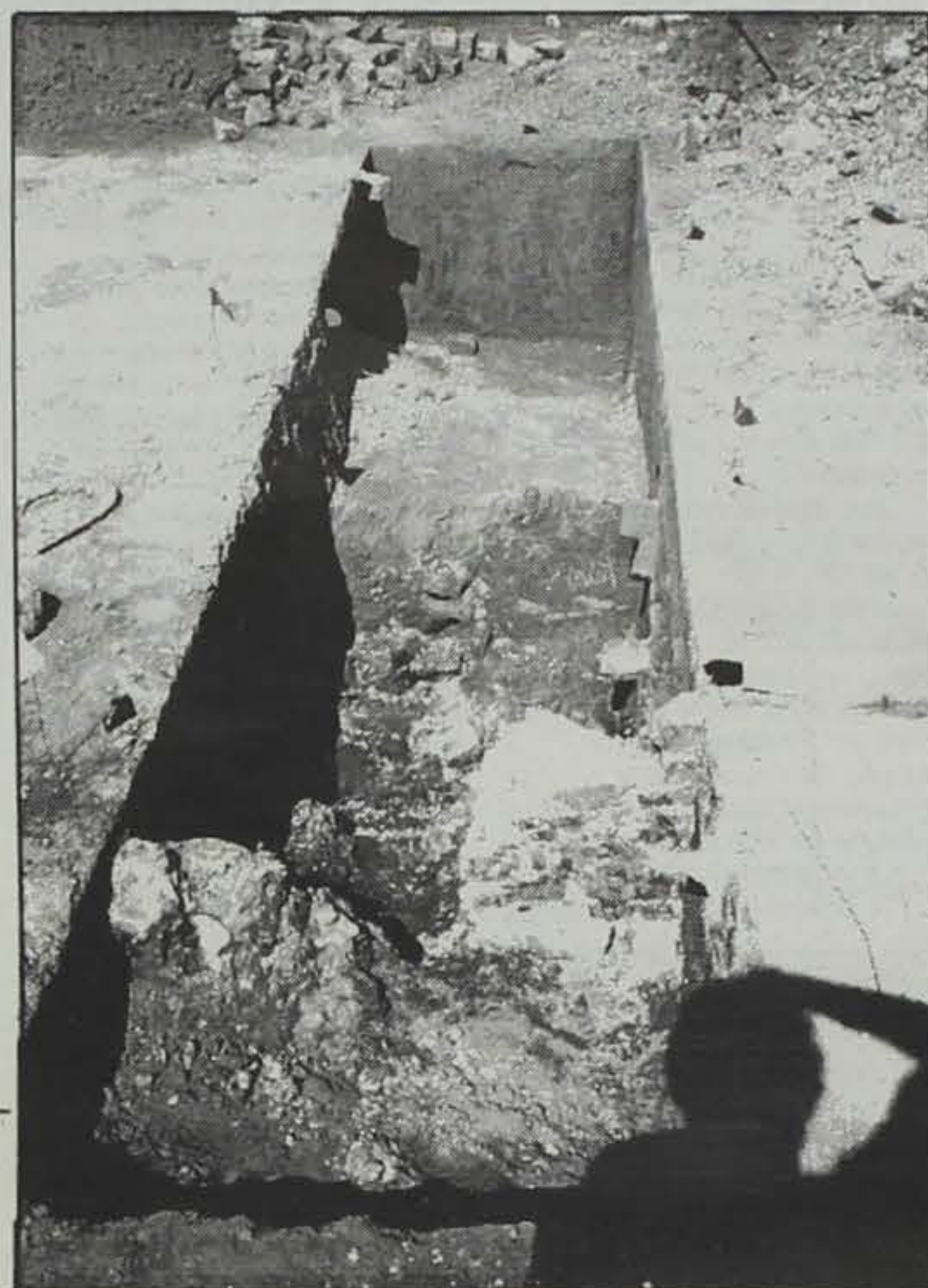
Sellars concluded by stating, "It would be very difficult and sometimes impossible to conduct our research without the background data provided by Iowa's soil scientists."

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

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A closeup of one of the "dig" areas, from which various artifacts were removed. Other items discovered in pits like this included a large two-person saw, a copper and wood crumb tray, metal pieces of horse harnesses, square nails and spikes, barrel staves, and much more.

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Cropping CRP land in 1999

by Bill Hammitt

Fall is the time to begin the 1999 cropping system on CRP land contracts which expire October 1.

CRP fields which will be cropped next year should have been mowed in August or Early September. In late September or early October, spray Roundup and 2 4-D or Banvel to kill all vegetation.

Soil samples can be taken and needed fertilizer and lime applied in the fall.

If the field is going to soybeans, consider using Roundup Ready soybeans and get the seed order in early. If it is going to corn, use Roundup Ready or Liberty corn for control of perennial grasses and weeds not killed in the fall. Again, it is best to get that seed order in early.

In the spring, apply pre-emerge



Did you know?

For those who have been wondering how to identify switchgrass, here is a helpful hint:

Switchgrass can be distinguished from other grasses, even when plants are young, by the white patch of hair where the leaf attaches to the stem. The stem is round and usually has a reddish tint.

herbicides in April and wait for soil conditions to be right before no-till planting. Be sure to plant deep enough, for there will be a lot of humus and organic matter to plant through. Use some type of banded or seed-box insect treatment for corn, and inoculate the soybean seed.

It will be amazing to see the transformation from sod to row crop from only one pass with a no-till planter.

New extension director plans to "broaden horizons"

by Lou Waite

Mary Clancy began her duties as Shelby County Extension Education Director on July 1. She was new to the area, but not to the job, having served in the same position in Calhoun County.

A native of Pomeroy, Mary grew up on the family farm, and at a young age learned about grain and livestock production. "We raised Charolais cattle," she said, "which I began as a 4-H project and it sort of grew from that. But Clancy Charolais helped pay my way through college."

She received her degree in animal science from Iowa State University, and later a master's degree in interdisciplinary graduate studies. She became a technician with the Carroll County Soil and Water Conservation District, then later served as ISU Extension Youth and 4-H leader in Warren County. "With the conservation service I learned all about the meaning of HEL," Mary said with a chuckle, "and conservation plans, practices and so forth. When upgraded to a Soil Conservationist, I worked even more closely with the farmers and landowners of the district. I became very interested in the wetland issues, which were of concern at that time. In fact, I still maintain the interest, and can certainly relate to what is happening within USDA and in the farm picture today."



Mary Clancy

No doubt such past experience is of benefit in Mary's present position, the duties of which she described as "very diverse". These include budget, personnel, public relations, community program planning, agriculture and natural resources concerns, families, youth and 4-H, continuing education, some business enterprises, and more. She is coordinator for an extension council, the members of which are elected from throughout

the county. The office staff consists of one full-time and two part-time employees, plus 2 field specialists. All activities are overseen by an area director, "My boss," Mary affirmed.

While admitting to the necessity of "wearing many hats", she said she enjoys the challenge. "Every day is different," she mused, "and I look forward to each new experience. I wasn't all that familiar with Shelby County, so I am meeting new people and learning about a different part of the state. I have found the people to be very friendly, and good supporters of extension activities. The volunteerism is outstanding, and I have a wonderful staff which has been of tremendous help."

Mary laughed when she recalled that her arrival barely preceded the Shelby County Fair, always a busy time for the office staff. "I think everyone expected me to be overwhelmed, but my staff had everything very well organized, so that didn't happen. Actually, it gave me a chance to observe the proceedings and meet the people." With an impish grin, she commented, "Sometimes you can learn a lot by simply watching and listening."

Mary is single, and the "proud aunt" of nine nieces and nephews. The youngest of four, she has two brothers and one sister, "scattered around the country". Her mother, Geraldine (Geri) still lives in Pomeroy.

She said she is looking forward to the future, but has not been here long enough to design a "concrete" agenda. "I would like to expand my horizons utilizing southwest Iowa programs with which I am not familiar," she emphasized, "and introduce some programs with which I am familiar that have not been used here. It should be a learning experience for myself and also the Shelby County clientele."

Then with a lift of the eyebrow and another quick grin, she added,

"A good one, I hope!"



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Roadside beautification project enhances County landscape



by Lou Waite
NRCS - AIS

A twelve mile section of Highway 59 in Shelby County has been both physically and aesthetically improved, through the auspices of the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT).

According to Mark Masteller, Chief Landscape Architect at the central DOT office in Ames, the project is one of many ongoing around the state. "We have a budget for this purpose," he said, "and we try to make the best use of it for the greatest benefit."

"The state is divided into 6 regions," Masteller explained, "and the field development engineers in each usually make recommendations as to which areas need improvement. Sometimes the recommendation comes from members of our staff, who then contact the engineers for their input."

There are many areas of consideration, Masteller pointed out, before a design is finalized for each project. "Sometimes the older highways do not have a wide enough roadside area to do the necessary plantings," he noted. "But for those we can do, there are a number of things to first analyze. For example, what is the function of the roadway? Does snow drifting occur? What is the distance from the traffic area or the sight distance from each intersection? Are there wet areas caused by poor drainage? Which areas are more quickly thawed by the winter sun? And many more."

Once all the information has been gathered, a plan is designed which will best suit the area. For example, if drifting is generally severe, shrubs specified are of a taller variety to serve as a snow fence. If there are wetland areas, plants which thrive under those conditions are selected, etc.

Once the design is finalized, invitations for bids are issued, and the successful bidder is awarded the contract. The contractor carries out



This patch of black-eyed Susan is thriving, and adding a touch of golden beauty to the project.

the specifications of the design, and maintains the area for a period of two years.

The roadside plantings are usually native Iowa species, and may include trees, shrubs and a mixture of prairie grasses and wildflowers. The shrubs, such as red twig dogwood, American and European cranberry, etc., not only are visually attractive, but beneficial to wildlife as well. The wildflower mix ascertains that some variety will be blooming all season, adding a colorful accent to the roadside spectrum.

"We try to select sites in each of

the six regions on an equal basis," Masteller emphasized. "This helps spread the word between contractors as well. But as noted, budget restrictions sometimes make it difficult. I think that in the long run, however, each region is equally benefited."

Mark is a native of Atlantic, Iowa and received his degree in Landscape Architecture from Iowa State University. "I came to Ames to attend ISU," he said with a chuckle, "and just never left!"

He and his wife Nancy are the parents of two sons, Michael 8 and Justin 5.

No-till update

by Bill Hammitt

No-till planted corn and soybeans are having a great year in Shelby County. After all the heavy rains in May, June and July, the no-till fields are going to really shine at harvest time with less erosion and gullyng. The side benefits are better stands, better moisture, conservation, easier harvesting and, as a result, higher yields.

Most people agree that Roundup Ready soybeans in a no-till system are some of the cleanest and best-looking fields around. A pre-emerge application

of soybeans herbicides on Roundup resistant beans, followed by a late post-emerge treatment of Roundup resulted in a cleanup of any weed escapes. This included volunteer corn and waterhemp. Most of these fields are nearly picture-perfect.

Roundup Ready and Liberty corn have also worked very well in no-till corn systems resulting in some very high yield prospects this year.

Make plans for 1999 by starting with a seed program matched to the farm's soils and weed pressure for a successful no-till system.

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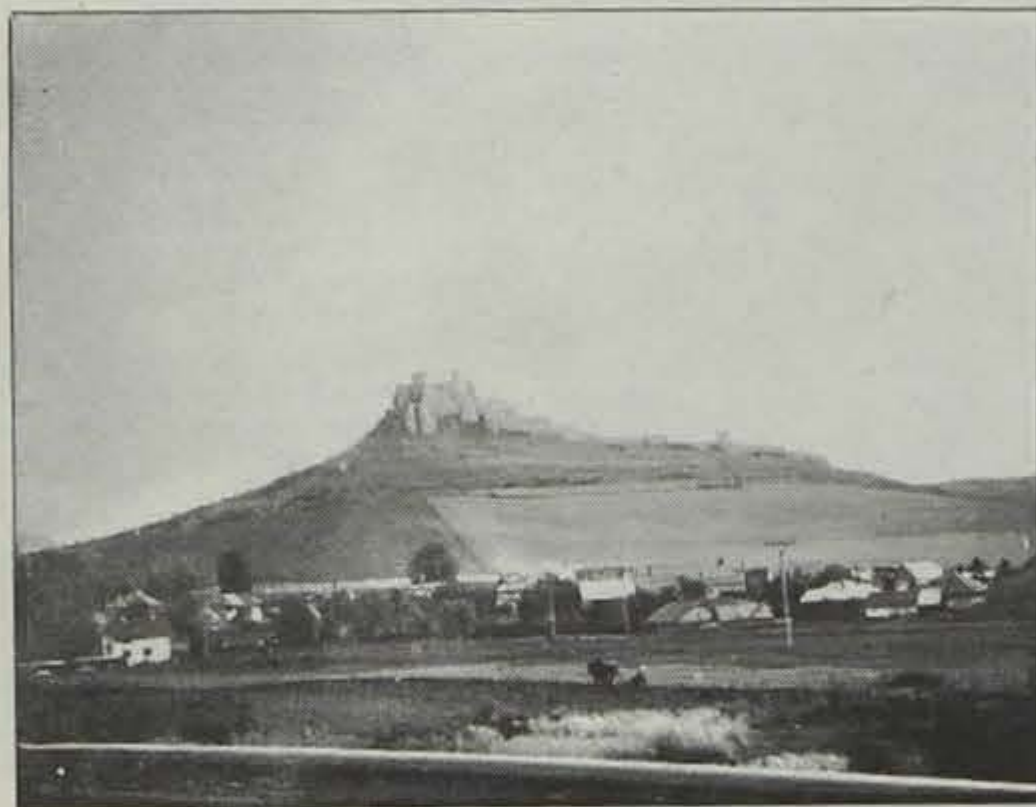
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Slovak Republic farmers struggle to survive in new regime



The ruins of an ancient castle overlook this Slovakian village in brooding solitude



Slovak laborers live in villages such as this and travel to the collective farms to work

(This is the second in a series of articles concerning the visits of Kelly Summy of Midwest Ag. Services, Inc. and Gary Thien of Thien Farm Management, Inc. to the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1994 and 1995.)

Excerpts from the Farm Management Team Report on Slovakia in 1994.

Monday, September 5:

Left Bratislava at 9:00 a.m. for the 6-hour drive to Bardejov. Arrived Hotel Mineral at 3:30 p.m. We were to meet our host Ing. Milan Biros at the hotel, but were late, so he had returned to his farm collective. Arrangements were made to meet the next day at his farm.

Our drive across northern Slovakia gave a broad view of the topography and crops raised in the country. There were many similarities to Iowa agriculture. The growing season and climate are similar. The topography varies from level Danube riverbottom land and rolling upland to the Tatas Mountains on the Polish border.

The hotel is located in the spa area known as Bardejov Kupele. People from all parts of Slovakia as well as residents of Poland and Russia come to Bardejov for medical treatment and to drink the mineral water. There were several motels, restaurants and small shops in Bardejov Kupele. The hotels and shops are now run by private businesses through privatization. The collective owns and operates its own ski slope with ski lift. This was utilized at holiday time by the old (Communist) regime.

Tuesday, September 6: (Toured Zborov Collective)

The Zborov Collective consists of approximately 3,500 hectares (ha) or 8,500 acres.

Approximately 1,200 ha is arable, or 3,250 acres. Crops include 150 ha beans, 300 ha rape, 40 ha potatoes and 700 ha in oats, rye, wheat and flax.

The collective has 160 employees vs 430 prior to the revolution. They have 700 cows vs 900 cows and 1,400 head of cattle vs 2,500 head in 1989. They have a small sheep herd, most of it having been sold due to poor profits. There are a few hogs which are processed at the collective slaughterhouse for the people's own use. The PD also has its own bakery.

The collective had lost money in 1992 and 1993. Gross revenues and expenses were posted on a bulletin board in the hallway leading into the office complex. The farm had a small profit in 1991.

Ing. Biros wants to concentrate on the dairy production. The dairy operation has not been profitable. The collective received a government subsidy of \$210,000 in 1993 to convert their dairy barn to a free-stall barn and to install a 32-head milking parlor. This is state of the art equipment which has helped reduce their dairy laborers by 4 to 5 people. The collective has been purchasing semen from the US since 1993. They are trying to improve the genetics of their dairy herd. The primary breed is the Red Spot, which is not known for its milk production.

Genetics of the herd have been improved since the calves are now 50% to 75% Holstein. The calves are fed in open-front sheds. This is a conversion of the old system of total confinement in stanchions. The bull calves are fed as beef cattle and sold at 1300 lbs.

The milk production is poor because of poor feed rations, poor genetics and mastitis, which infects a third of the herd. The cattle are fed in buildings in a confinement situation. The collective has hundreds of acres of available

pasture which is underutilized. There is a lack of fencing and the fences which exist are old and in poor condition. We learned they had tried electric fencing in the past, but that the gypsies stole the fence. The pasture is presently grazed on a limited basis (supervised by) shepherds with dogs. The benefits of rotational grazing and paddock grazing systems were explained to them.

We determined that the major problems at this collective are 1) excess labor, high labor expense (1.3 million sk or \$43,000 per month) 2) high fuel costs which are still rising. 3) theft by gypsies (1/3 of the residents in Zborov are gypsies, most unemployed, a social problem. They steal potatoes from the fields and the black plastic which covers the silage) 4) poor utilization of pastures and forages 5) many old, obsolete buildings in poor repair 6) mastitis in the dairy herds.

After inspection, we suggested making less trips across the fields, thus saving labor and fuel costs. They presently plow all of their arable land. We suggested experimenting with different tillage systems and planting crops in small tests plots to see what would work best.

Wednesday, September 7:

We visited with a private farmer in a small village north of Zborov. He was swathing hay by hand and placing it in his wooden wheelbarrow. He owned one milk cow, and his barn was attached to his home. He is typical of the older generation, private farmer who has a small garden (1 hectare) and 1 or 2 milk cows.

After lunch at the farm collective we met with the manager of the mechanization department. We inspected the machinery, storage and shop area. The facilities were filthy, with waste oil in the shop and on the ground around the yard. They have a real problem with environmental preservation. They are now trying to do a better job of this and have built a new storage area to handle their waste oil.

There was an abundance of equipment, most of which was in poor condition and expensive to maintain. Most was German made and purchased prior to 1989. Due to lack of capital, no new equipment has been purchased, and this is becoming a real problem. Parts for repair are difficult to obtain. The collective has its own parts department, but they must drive some distance to obtain parts. They also work with the neighboring collectives to secure parts if none can be found.

The collective has 30 Zetors (tractors), 4 combines and numerous other pieces of equipment. The manager said they needed more equipment, while we felt they had more than was necessary to handle the size of their operation. The equipment, however, was not well maintained and was dented and dirty. Prior to 1989 no one was concerned with maintaining the equipment (under the old regime). The workers didn't

Continued on Page 11

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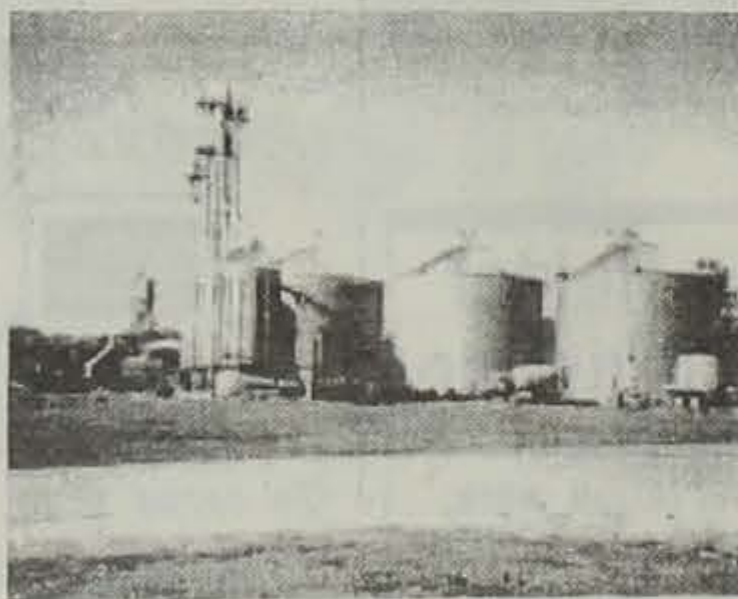
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Management team observations of the country and its people

Continued from Page 10

own the equipment, so therefore had no incentive to take care of it. But they now have a new concept. The tractor drivers are responsible for that piece of equipment and control (possession of) the key.

There are no machinery dealerships in Slovakia as we know them in the US. The often have to travel six hours to Bratislava to purchase parts. Combines such as they bought from East Germany for \$280,000 sk (\$9,300) five years ago now cost 8 million sk (\$93,000).

They haven't disposed of any excess or used equipment, so their mechanization area looks like a salvage yard with junked equipment parked everywhere. They never traded in the old equipment or tried to sell it on the open market. (The rationale behind this is) they may need to rob a part off the old machinery some day so are afraid to dispose of it.

They had 2 or 3 potato diggers but were only raising 40 ha of potatoes. We asked if they considered selling the diggers and using the capital to purchase other machinery needed for their operation. They said they didn't want to do that because they might need the potato diggers "some day". We suggested they sell their excess potato diggers and custom hire the neighboring collectives to dig their potatoes. They actually had enough potato diggers to dig all the potatoes in the country!

We were taken to a small village to view a church founded in 1414. It was a beautiful, old wooden church with painting on the wall dating back to the early 1600's. Ninety percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Religion in the country (repressed during the Communistic regime) appears to be flourishing. We saw several additions being built onto churches and one new church being constructed. At church services in the village, the crowds often overflow out the door.

We stopped at a cemetery where German soldiers were buried next to Slovak citizens. We learned that German soldiers were buried throughout Bardejov County during and after WWII. They were exhumed and laid to rest in the cemetery in 1990.

Thursday, September 8:

After an early breakfast we were picked up at the hotel by Ing. Jan Ilcko. Ilcko is chairman of the Osikov Collective south of Bardejov. This area is less rolling and more productive than the Zborov Collective. There are four villages within the collective, but no homes on the farms. Everyone lives in the villages and goes to the farm to work each day. All the roads are paved. We saw no gravel roads on any of the farm collectives we visited.

Ilcko is paid a salary of 100,000 sk (\$3,333) per year for managing the collective. He has a five-year college degree from the Ag College in Nitra. He served six months in the Communist army. He is well educated and a good thinker. He has

a management plan which he is trying to carry out, but is facing the adversity of trying to please 600 shareholders who were given land through privatization.

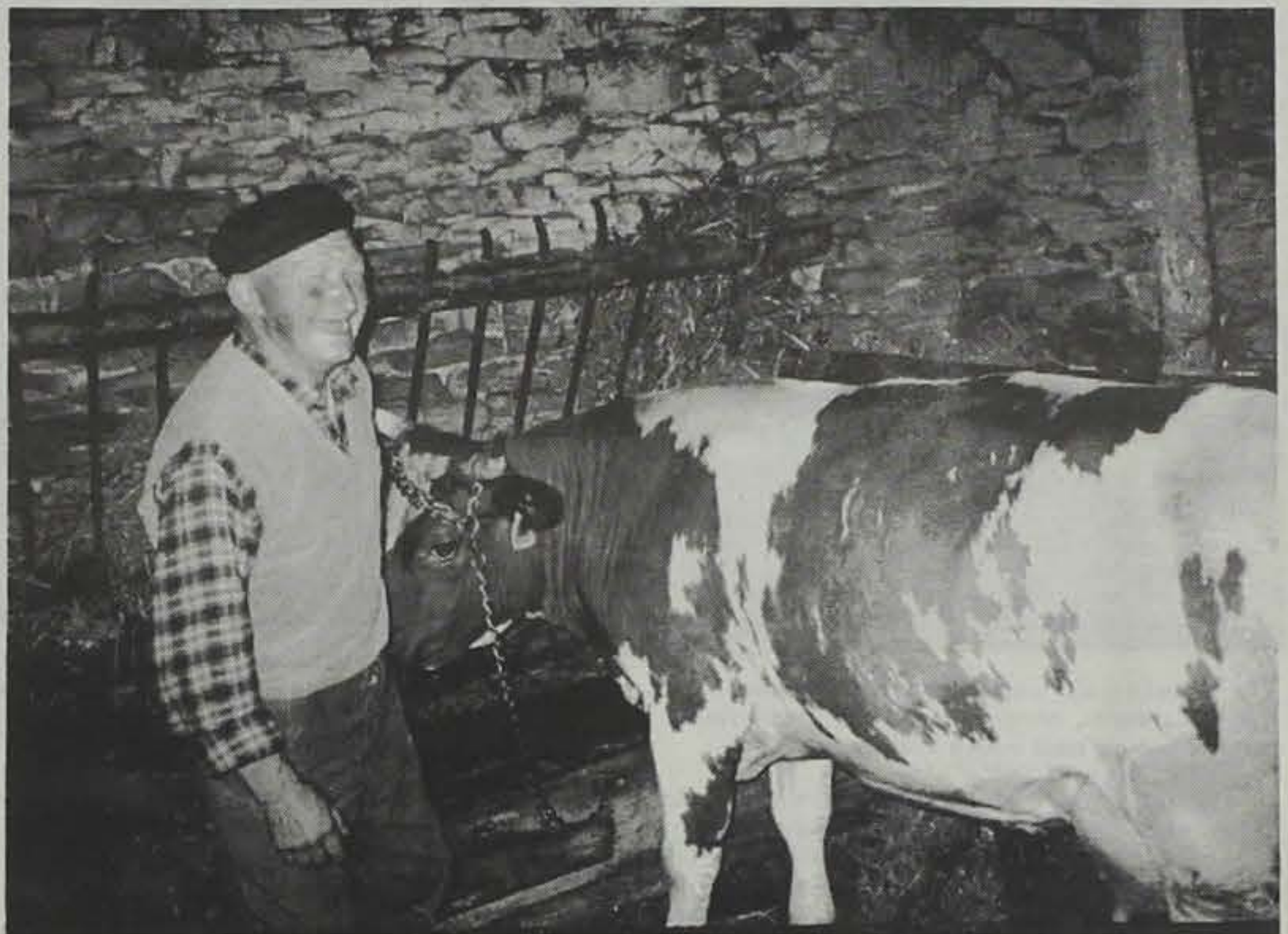
This collective has considerable debt. Ilcko fears it may have to file bankruptcy. He asked several questions about bankruptcy in the US.

The collective has 300 head of cattle, 150 of which are milk cows. They are operating at a loss despite selling Grade A milk for 8 sk or 26 cents per liter. They have difficulty collecting payment for the milk, with payments currently 6-months delinquent. We toured the dairy facility and milking parlor, which was a tie-stall setup... clean but extremely labor intensive. A conveyor feeding system was utilized with hand labor to feed the cow herd. The buildings are old and poorly maintained. No capital investments have been made in the last five years. There were several women working with the livestock. Many of the employees are also shareholders. Most of the shareholders own 2 to 5 hectares of land.

We inspected their hog operation. Overall, we were impressed with the appearance and quality of the hogs. They farrow 40 Landrace sows twice per year. They were buying premixed feed or protein for their hogs and mixing it with water. They hadn't experienced any disease problems at this collective, but several managers in the county had referred to the "black plague" which was killing hogs.

Ilcko stated that labor costs were their biggest expense, running 9 million sk per year, or \$300,000. Based on 190 employees, this would be an average annual salary of \$1,578 per worker.

The collective was tilling the ground in preparation of fall wheat seeding, and preparing for potato harvest. All the crop rows ran up and down the hill. None were planted on the contour. When asked if he had considered planting the



This farmer was very proud of his cow, the only one he owned, which in winter sometimes shared his living quarters.

crops on the contour, Ilcko said "If we did, all the potatoes would wash out." We saw moderate soil erosion from recent rains. The typical slopes were 9 to 14% (B slopes).

The waist-high corn, as in the Zborov Collective, was very poor quality. Corn is planted in narrow rows at a high population and chopped as silage. No corn is harvested for grain. There were a few small ears on the corn. The silage is poor quality with low protein content. This is affecting milk production and rate of gain.

We met with the department heads of the collective after lunch and discussed the many issues pertaining to their agricultural production. We discussed production costs and reviewed soil tests which had been taken recently. The soil pH ranged from 4.5 to 6.9,

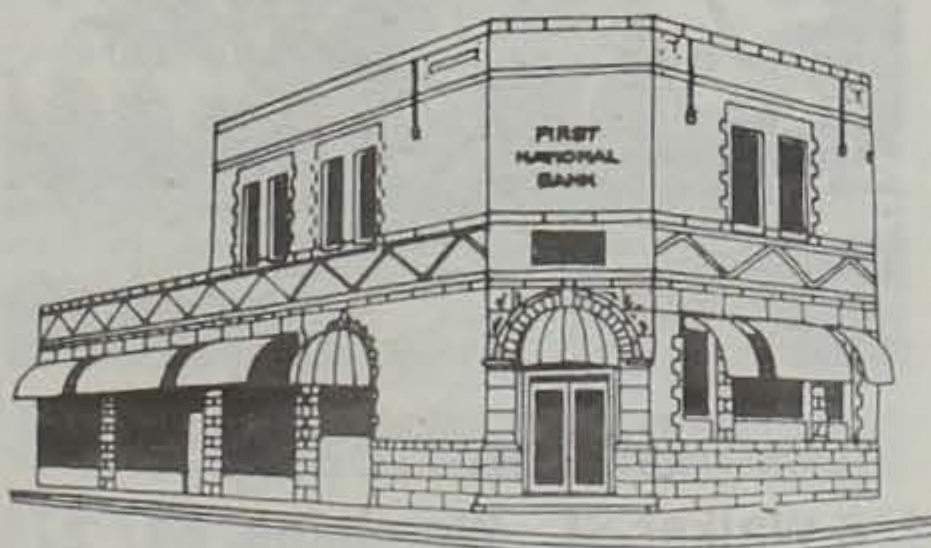
with many fields requiring lime application. Lime had not been applied for several years because it was so expensive and they lacked capital. We discussed the benefits of maintaining the soil pH and fertility levels to maximize grain production. They said they understood the need, but couldn't afford to apply the proper nutrients. They do a good job of utilizing manure for fertilizer, however.

Friday, September 9:
We were greeted at 8:00 a.m.

by Vladimir Pedorko, Chairman of the Bardejov Collective, the largest in the county. It has 4,800 ha or 11,500 acres, with 2,600 ha arable and the rest in forest or pasture. There are 2,300 owners through privatization, and two who took their land out of privatization and are farming it themselves. Each owner has 30 hectares. The collective has 300 employees, compared to 1,100 there in 1989

Slovakia
Continued on Page 18

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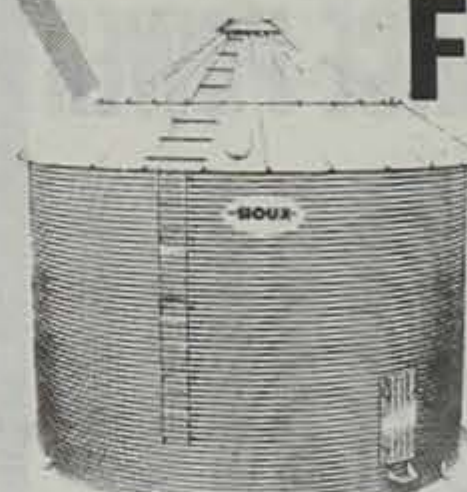


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Bostwicks utilize CRP as contour buffer strips



The Bostwicks confer with Gayland Hall, NRCS Soil Conservationist, about some of the conservation practices being carried out on land which they farm.

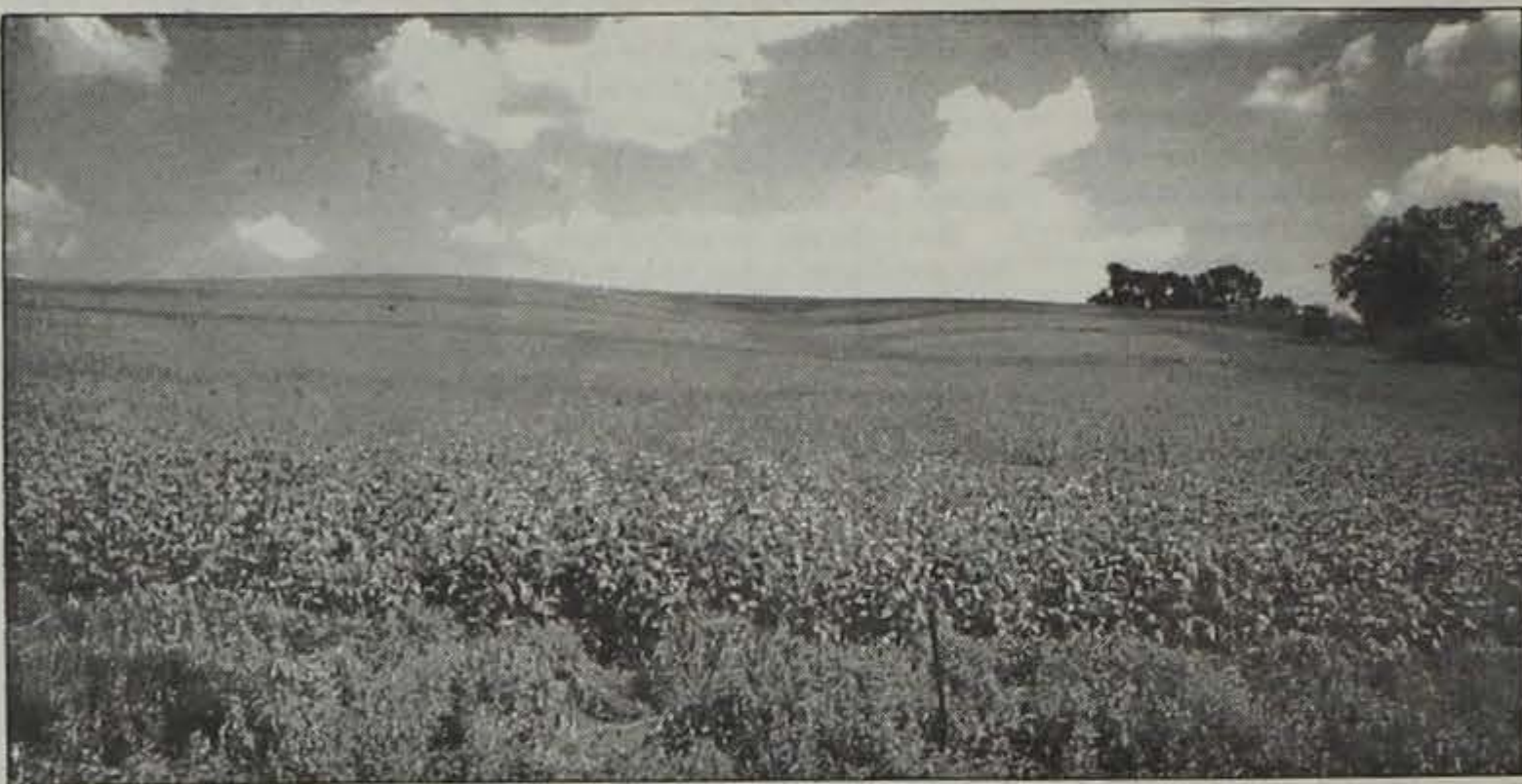
by Lou Waite

Gerald Bostwick is a fifth generation farmer, and his son Kevin is following family tradition as well. They farm 1200 acres, owned and leased, using a no-till and minimum-till residue management system to raise corn and soybeans.

Gerald began farming after graduation from high school on rented land. In 1977 he purchased his first farm, and has added land

periodically since then. Kevin also operates his own 80-acre farm.

When the Natural Resources recommended the continuous CRP program, Gerald said he found the idea favorable, both conservation wise, and economically. Since the land had been in CRP and was seeded to grass, he noted it was "easy to convert". He used Roundup to "burn-down" strips in the grass, and later planted soybeans in the dead residue. The remaining grassed areas now serve as buffer strips, field borders and waterways as part



This view on one of the Bostwick farms shows a grassed field border at the upper right, and the darker green of the CRP buffer strips which alternate with strips of golden-leaved soybeans throughout the field.

of the continuous CRP program.

"I'm very satisfied with the results," Gerald declared. "After the heavy rains in June and July of this year, I noticed the field hadn't washed like it did before. Those contour buffer strips are serving the same purpose as terraces, and are easier to maintain."

Kevin added, "That's right, they don't take as much land out of production as terraces, and are a lot easier to farm around."

The Bostwicks said they farm mostly "bottom land", but have done extensive terracing to control the steeper slopes, using cost-share funds from NRCS and FSA. They again expressed the opinion that using contour buffer strips in lieu of terracing will probably be "the way to go" in the future.

Kevin admitted the occupation he has chosen is a challenge for today's young farmer. His father added, "That hasn't changed. Many things have changed since I began farming. . . bigger machinery, the

use of no-till, etc., but it's still a gamble. It goes in cycles," to which Kevin nodded in agreement.

Gerald said, "You have good years, and you have bad years, but you have to stay with it. Right now it looks like it's going to be bad for a while, but you have to keep trying. The trend is toward bigger farms, bigger feed-yards, and so on, but there are fewer and fewer small farmers each year. This has been happening ever since I began farming."

Both men said, however, that it is important to preserve the land and natural resources. "There needs to be something left for future generations," Gerald said, "and it's up to us to do what we can while we can."

Gerald's wife Elaine is employed at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. Kevin is their only child. With a grin, he quipped, "They did so well with me, they didn't bother to try again!"

Gerald and Elaine enjoy

traveling, and he likes to hunt and fish when time allows. They are members of Iowa Corn Growers and Iowa Soybean Association, and he serves as a West Pottawattamie county committeeman. They are members of the First Lutheran Church in Missouri Valley, but since moving to Council Bluffs attend church there.

Kevin and his wife Brenda live in Missouri Valley with their children Brienna, Zach and Jarodd, all elementary students. Kevin said what he enjoys most is family activities, but also likes sports, hunting and fishing.

Russ Kurth, District Conservationist commented.

"We are happy that the Bostwicks are really pleased with their contour buffers. We laid out the system so that they have even-width crop strips. When we made adjustments in the contour line, we made the grass strips wider. This way, the point rows are in CRP as grass instead of crop. This greatly improved the farmability of the system."

"Land that has been in CRP, or has had crops on it two of the past five years, is eligible to enter into the CRP program. Livestock producers may glean the cropland and CRP for two months during the winter if they agree to take a 25% reduction in the CRP rental rate for the years that livestock glean the field."

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Plowing to no-till: Benedickt's generation made the transition

by Lou Waite

Millard Benedickt smiled as he noted that his grandfather Karl, born in Lesgau Bohemia in 1853, married Josephine Benedickt of Honan, Bohemia. The couple shared the same surname, but there is no record of whether or not they were distantly related. At least Josephine didn't have to embroider new initials on the linen in her hope chest!

But it is known that Karl served as a "bandmaster" with the German army, probably conscripted to do so. After he returned home, times were hard, and Karl wanted to leave Bohemia and come to America. The Bohemian government, however, had other ideas, and they would not give him permission (visa or passport) to leave the country.

"There was a Jewish man, however, who told Karl he could get him out of the country," Millard said. "The Jew sold him the steamship tickets and somehow helped sneak him out! He arrived in Neola, Iowa in 1884. He found a job, worked very hard, and in two years had saved enough money to bring his wife, four children and an aunt to America!"

But that isn't the end of that part of the story, Millard pointed out. It appears that Josephine gave the money Karl had sent to a man who said he would buy the steamship tickets for the family. "He took the money, all right," Millard said ruefully, "but never came back with the tickets." So Karl had to keep on working hard and saving his money. After he sent funds the second time, the family finally arrived to join him.

"My grandfather worked for a farmer in the Neola area," Millard said, "and he earned extra money playing the violin for country dances and other events. He also became involved with a successful cattle-raising business. This continued after he bought his own farm near Dunlap and moved the family there in 1891.

Millard's father, John, was born in 1890. He was married to Mary Millard in 1910, and they became the parents of three children. Millard, born in 1911, was the eldest, followed by Martin



Millard Benedickt and daughter Jackie Dollen share a bit of humor while perusing a copy of the Quad District Conservation News.

in 1913 and Delores in 1914.

John Benedickt continued as a farmer, expanded and improved the cattle-raising, and became known for the Hereford breed in which he specialized. He later became affiliated with another breeder, and cattle from the "Benedickt & Steadman" herds were in great demand. (See reproduction of "Breeder's Day Sale" brochure held in 1906 in Dunlap).

"When I was growing up, we would round up the cattle, and drive them to town, herding them along on horseback," Millard recalled. "Then they were loaded

onto railroad cars and shipped to Chicago. Usually, my dad and others rode along in the caboose, to supervise the sale of the cattle. That was quite an experience for me, when I got to go along.

"I well remember one year, probably 1936, when it was so cold we almost froze getting the cattle to the railroad yards," Millard continued. "When we got back to Iowa, the snowdrifts were so deep that the tracks were drifted shut. We couldn't get home until they were cleared!"

Millard and Norma Shafer were married on January 22, 1936.

They farmed in the Dunlap area until moving to the Logan vicinity in 1939. Millard explained the reason for that relocation.

"One day my mother called and told me that I should go sign up at Logan," he said with a chuckle. "She said government loan money was available for those who had enough machinery to farm. So I applied, and later bought the Morris Kennedy 160-acre farm in Magnolia township. I was one of the first five farmers to buy a farm under the Bankhead-Jones Act. Only 13 farms in Harrison County were purchased under this bill. We all got a 40-year loan at 3%. I paid my loan off in five years!"

Millard still lives on that farm, and while he no longer actively farms it, he retains a keen interest in the operation. Norma passed away in October, 1996.

Following tradition, Millard also raised cattle, and remains an avid supporter of conservation and preservation of natural resources. In the past, he served for 25 years as an Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) County Community Committeeman. Fifteen of those years were spent measuring grain bins, land areas, etc., and ten in various duties carried out from the office.

Daughter Jacqueline "Jackie" Dollen of Persia carries out her farming heritage. Her late husband, Duane, served as a Harrison Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner. Of their six children, only Scott follows tradition as a tiller of the soil. His siblings are Jonette Fischer of Minden; Lynette Dollen of Gilbert, AZ; Paulette Barrier of Atchinson, KS; Danette Lodes of

Omaha and Steven of Persia. Jackie attends St. Patrick's Church in Neola, of which her great-grandfather John was a member and where he was baptized.

Millard's daughter Joanne Collins and family reside in Arkansas. Son John, his wife Sue and their children live near Logan. John operates the family farm, as well as his own. He too served with ASCS as part-time office employee and field assistant; also with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) as it has now been renamed.

Millard Benedickt is probably one of the last of the generation of farmers who have seen the transition from the plow to no-till; from gully-ridden hillsides to slopes terraced for erosion control.

Only in the West do they still ride horses to herd cattle, and the stock markets of Chicago and Omaha are ghosts of the major enterprises of the past. Interest rates at 3% are a pipedream, and so is paying off a mortgage in only five years!

One of a hardworking, tough and hardy breed, Millard and those like him deserve to be highly commended. They should be commended not only for their stewardship of the land, but also for establishing a tradition which their descendants may follow with integrity and pride.

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Saylorville area tour provided by CDI

Among those attending the Conservation Districts of Iowa annual meeting September 2 and 3 in Des Moines was Cass County Commissioner Greg Zellmer, left. Others from East Pottawattamie were Commissioners Darrell Stamp and Marilyn Von Weihe. Secretary Becky Lockwood, District Conservationist Greg Mathis and Commissioner Terry Gleaves. The photo was snapped during a tour of the Saylorville Gorge and Dam area.

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SWCD offers terrace repair cost-share

For producers who have too few terrace breaks to qualify for emergency funding through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), administered through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the East Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District has established a 50% cost-share program, for this year only.

Per landowner, there must be a minimum of two breaks, with a maximum of 16 breaks. Cost share will be 50% of the total cost up to the maximum, at \$100 per break. Therefore, a landowner with 16 terrace breaks to repair would receive \$800 in cost-share.

Contractors will be required to designate the number of breaks on their bill, and mark the locations on an attached aerial photo.

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Envirothon full of surprises

by Michelle Zimmerman

The 1998 National Envirothon competition proved to be one full of surprises. The first-place team was University High School from Tucson, Arizona, which was also the Rookie Team of the Year. Yes, a team representing a state new to the competition won the top prize.

In addition to a rookie team winning the top honor, two other states broke into the top five positions for the first time -- Kansas and Virginia.

Winners for first through third places won Canon National Envirothon Scholarships in the amounts of \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000 per team member, respectively.

Students placing fourth or fifth were awarded Canon binoculars, and those placing sixth through tenth were given a medallion. Each team received a plaque,

sponsored by Monsanto. Teams winning in the individual stations were also awarded plaques and medallions, courtesy of Monsanto.

The Rookie Team of the Year NAD Extra Mile Award was sponsored by the National Association of Conservation District's Auxiliary. Each team received a cash award of \$100, plus a plaque.

Terrill High School represented Iowa at the event, held in Lansing, Michigan. "It was a real eye-opener," said Marc Benedict, coach of the team. "We did not realize the level of competition," he admitted. In spite of the low placing, however, Marc said it was a "great experience", and he was determined to have a team compete again. "I am already planning a strategy for the coming year," he confided.

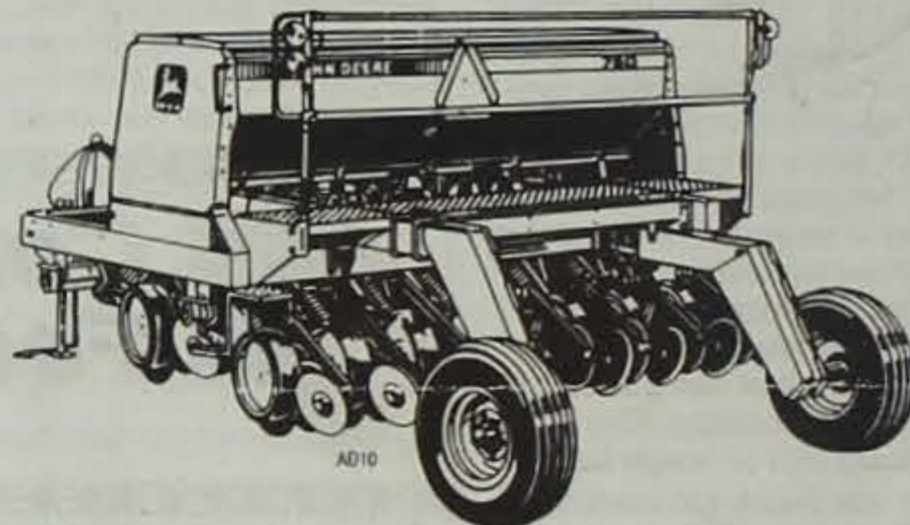
The 1999 national competition will take place in northern California.

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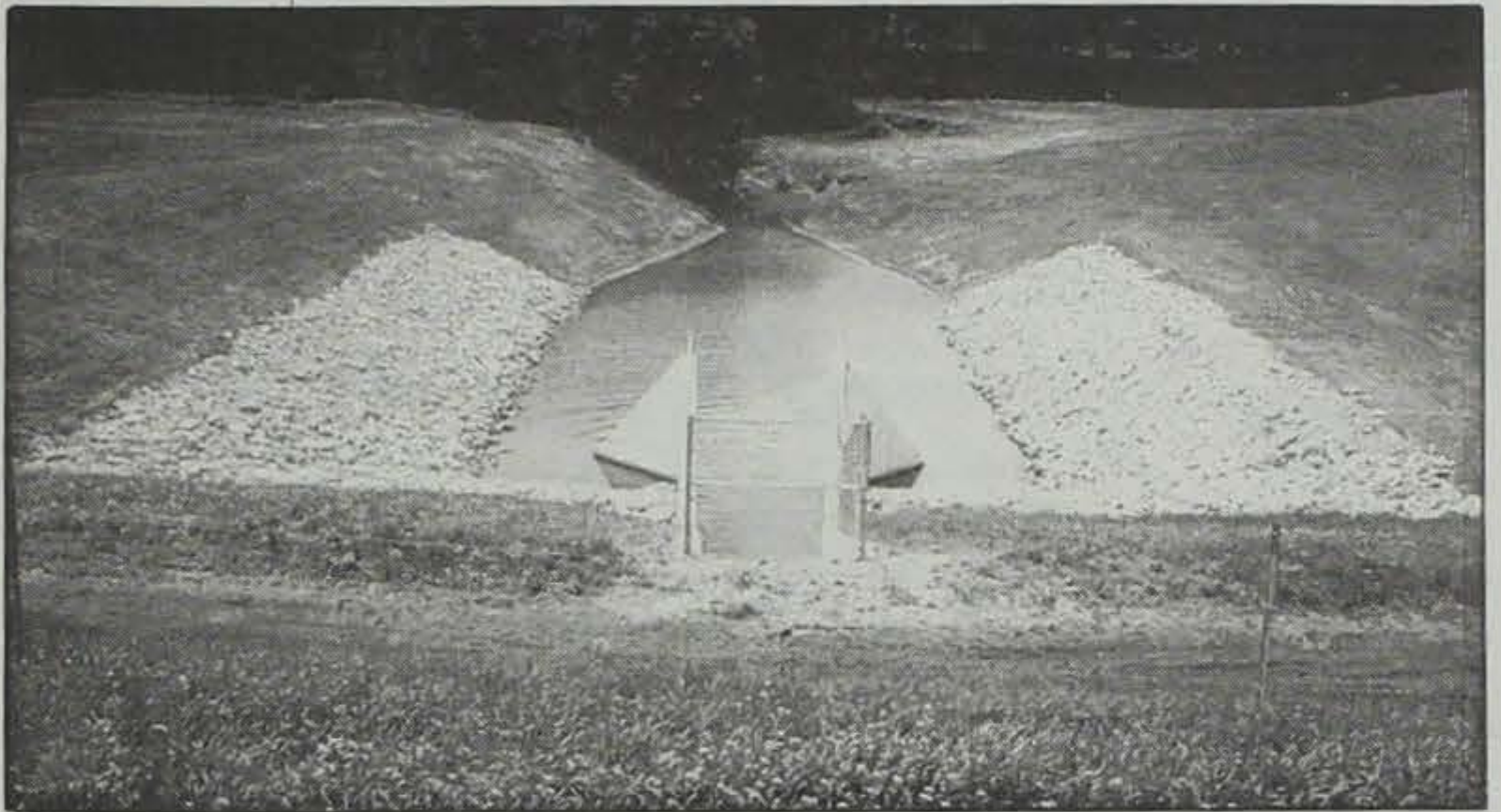


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Pictures speak louder than words



A drop inlet installed at this site in Section 30 of Wright Twp., East Pottawattamie County now controls the damage evident in this picture, taken on the day the area was being surveyed.



The excellent example of how erosion can be controlled was constructed in Section 8 of Grove Township, Shelby County, and is similar to the East Pottawattamie project.

"Iowa soil conservationists have long sought ways to drive home the point of what is happening to the land resource, and how it has been whittled down by erosion to about half of its original fertility."

We are losing 230 bushels of topsoil on each acre of unprotected sloping land in Iowa each year. That's twice as much soil loss as the average corn production on those soils. This loss is one inch every twelve years. At that rate, our topsoil will be gone in 100 years."

From a U.S.D.A. Brochure, printed in 1976

Where do we stand today?



The survey team at the East Pott site consisted of David Schneider, SCT, Ed Marshall, CET and Clair Acker CT. The Leitz instrument is shown at the left.

The only difference between stepping stones and stumbling blocks is the way you use them.

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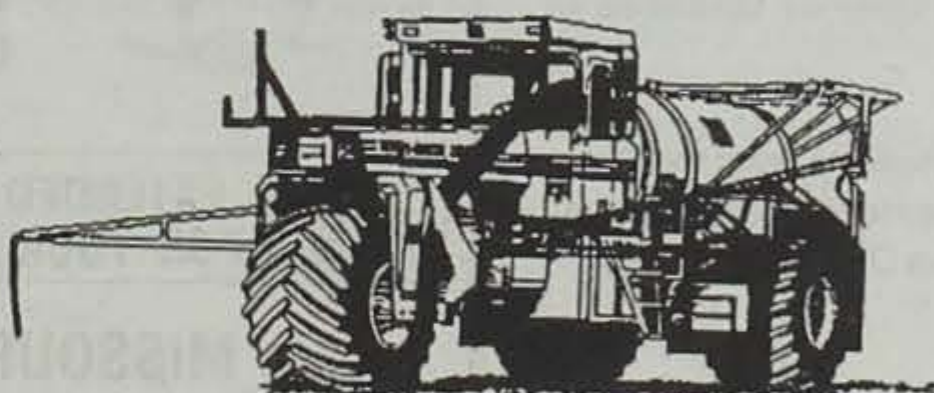
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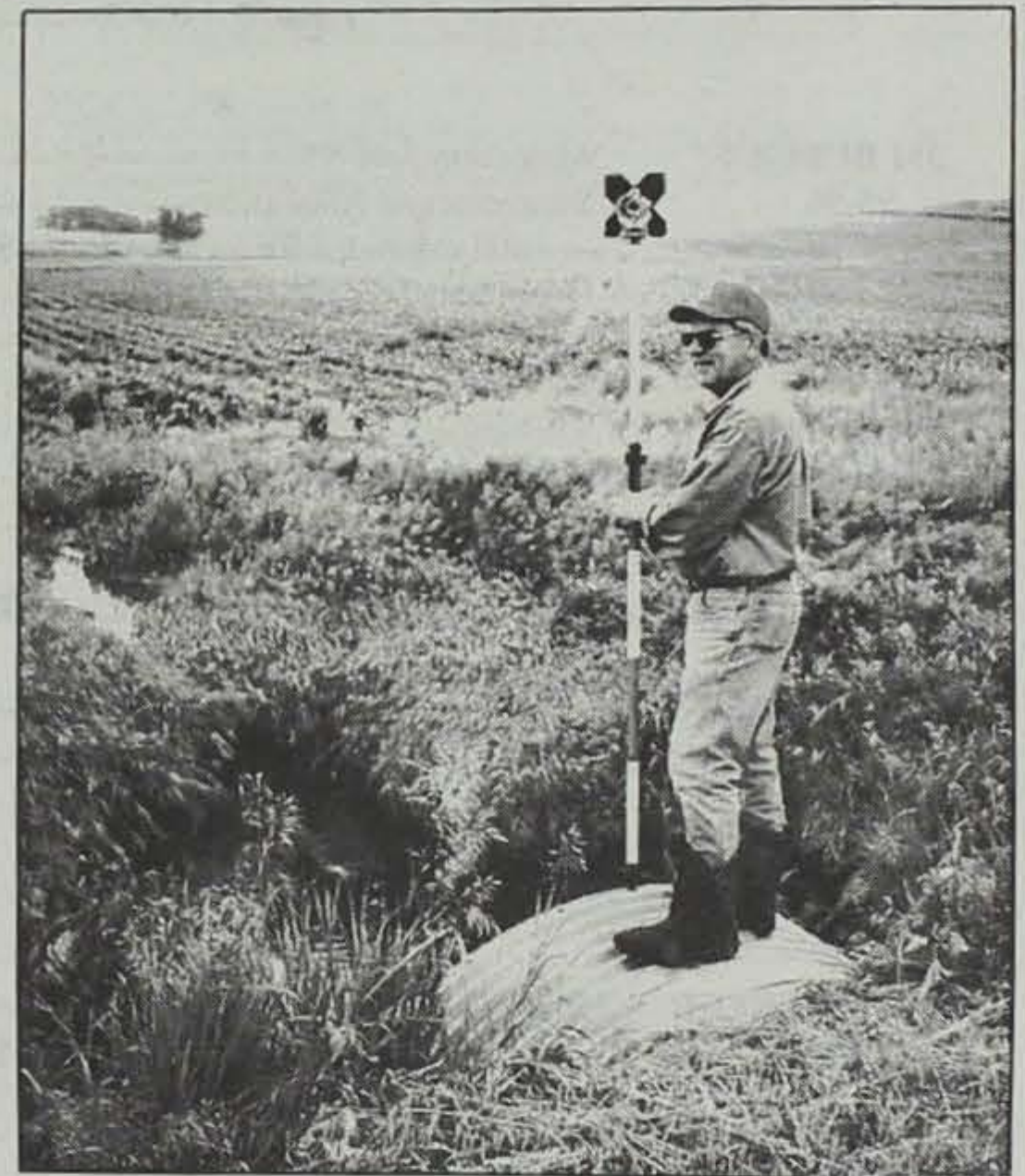
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Clair Acker of East Pott NRCS positions a prism rod which sends readings to the Leitz electronic measuring unit being used to complete the survey of the Wright Township site.

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FINANCIAL REPORT

1M BUDGET	Allocation, July 1, 97 - June 30, '98-----	\$ 2,500.00
	Supplemental Allocations-----	3,659.33
	Commissioners' Travel-----	\$ 2,523.31
	Office Supplies, Expenses, Dues-----	3,636.02
	Total expended as of 6-30-98-----	\$ 6,159.33
3M BUDGET 97-98	Allocation 7-01-97-----	\$ 47,875.00
	Supplemental Allocations-----	52,112.50
	Total expended for terraces-----	\$ 28,099.87
	Unobligated balance on hand June 30, 1998-----	\$ 71,887.63
3M BUDGET 96-97	Allocation 7-01-96-----	\$ 47,875.00
	Supplemental Allocations-----	76,593.13
	Total expended for terraces-----	\$ 124,468.13
	Unobligated balance on hand June 30, 1998-----	\$.00
3M BUDGET 95-96	Allocation 7-01-95-----	\$ 47,554.00
	Supplemental Allocations-----	120,992.08
	Total expended for terraces-----	\$ 164,552.11
	Unobligated balance on hand January 30, 1998-----	\$ 3,993.97
REAP PRACTICES '98	Allocation 8-01-97-----	\$ 8,015.00
	Total expended for practices-----	\$ 7,461.88
	Total recalled by state-----	553.12
	Unobligated balance on hand June 30, 1998-----	\$ 0.00
REAP FORESTRY/ NATIVE GRASSES '98	Allocation 8-01-97-----	\$ 1,808.50
	Total expended for practices-----	\$ 747.50
	Total recalled by state-----	1,061.20
	Unobligated balance on hand June 30, 1998-----	\$ 0.00
NO-INTEREST LOAN PROGRAM	Balance on Hand 1/01/98-----	\$ 29,991.00
	Total recalled by state-----	\$ 19,991.00
	Terraces Completed-----	10,000.00
	Obligated balance on hand June 30, 1998-----	\$.00

The East Pottawattamie Soil & Water Conservation District thanks the Division of Soil Conservation and the Iowa Legislature for making these funds available. We always attempt to use the money most effectively, and hope you agree we have done so again this year.

The District also has a revolving fund made up of contributions from those who want to assist in conserving our soil. These funds are used for conservation education activities, dues to State and National Association of Conservation Districts and a few incidental expenses.

POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX FUND

Balance as of January 1, 1998	\$ 183,217.03
1998 Monthly Payments	\$ 49,412.61
Total expended for practices	\$ 20,825.51
Balance as of June 30, 1998	\$ 211,804.13

In Appreciation

The East Pottawattamie Soil & Water Conservation District wishes to thank the following individuals and businesses for the overwhelming response to its request for donations. Because of the generosity displayed, the district now has additional funds for educational and district project use.

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WHERE THE WISE ECONOMIZE

Trudy Weaver new adviser to County Committee



Phil and Trudy Weaver

by Michelle Zimmerman
County Resource Planner

With constant change in agricultural these days, women are generating the move toward managerial decisions. Many women manage the family business whether on their own or in a partnership or corporation. Trudy Weaver is one of those women!

Trudy and her husband, Phil, are in partnership with her father, Don Johnk. For the last twenty years, Trudy has been actively involved with the day-to-day decisions on the farm. Whether it has been with the cows and calves,

hogs, corn, soybeans, hay/pasture operations -- Trudy is there!

The Weavers farm 900 acres: 380 corn, 380 soybeans and the remaining in hay and pasture.

Their commercial crossbred herd consists of 320 cows. They calve 120 calves in the spring, starting February 20, and 200 calves in the fall, starting August 20. The Weavers sell their feeder calves.

Trudy's favorite part of farming is the cattle industry. Prior to assisting with the family business, she was an office assistant for five years.

Trudy was approached by Tim White to see if she would like to

become the first advisor to the East Pottawattamie County Committee. With three widows in the neighborhood, Trudy thought these women might feel more at ease and comfortable talking to her about government programs regarding their farms.

She began her duties in May. Her responsibilities include increasing awareness and participation of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs and activities and helping develop an interest and incentive for minorities considering FSA as a career.

I asked Trudy what she has learned by being an advisor to the County Committee. Her reply was, "Understanding the farm programs better, along with the agency's viewpoints -- NOT just looking through the eyes of the farmer." When asked if she would seek another term, her response was yes!

Trudy and Phil live south of Walnut on 500th Street. Some of the conservation practices implemented by the Weavers and Don are terracing, contoured grass bufferstrips, no-till and minimum-till, along with waterways and field borders. The Weavers work side-by-side every day and they also enjoy fishing and water-skiing together on vacation. Every year for the last twenty-five years, Trudy, Phil, and the rest of her family gather in Canada for a reunion and fishing. Trudy's only hobby is reading.

As you can see, Trudy is one of those women who takes an active role in the managerial decisions in the farming operation. She is also very knowledgeable regarding agriculture. She will be a great asset to the County Committee.

Save Crop Residues this fall!



Leaving crop residues alone after harvest will help you:

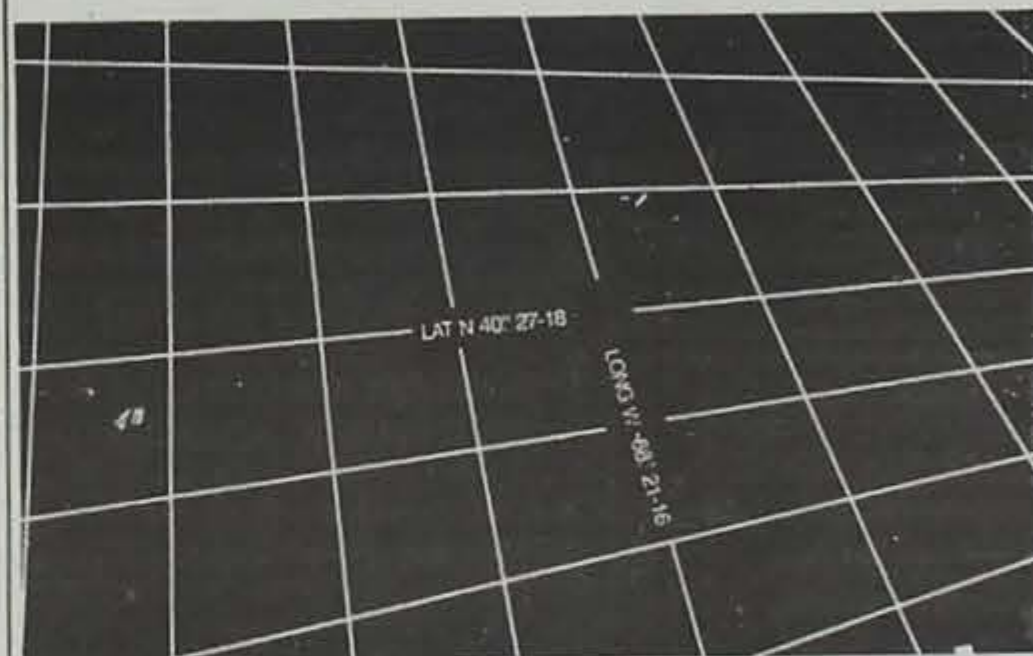
- **Leave options open for next spring**
If you have residues to work with, you can decide how much tillage to do in the spring, but you can't put back residue you have buried.
- **Stay in compliance**
Conservation compliance is still in effect. Your plan likely shows a level of residue you will maintain.
- **Avoid erosion like many farms had this year**
In many parts of the state, erosion occurred, even on no-till fields. But the most severe erosion was found on fields with little or no residue cover. Heavy residues can cut soil erosion by as much as 90%.
- **Save time, energy and money**
No-till can take a third of the time to plant a field that conventional preparation and planting takes; no-till can save more than 3 gallons of fuel an acre, and MAX data show no-till and other conservation tillage systems are more economical than low-residue farming systems.
- **Produce cleaner water and healthier soil**
Crop residues hold soil particles in place as well as herbicides. Herbicide runoff can be cut by as much as half from low residue systems.

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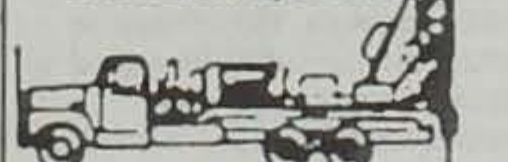
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Slovakia

Continued from Page 11

under the Communistic regime. Crops raised are wheat, barley, oats, rye, rape, corn, flax, potatoes and peas.

Pedorko was a soft-spoken, intelligent individual and a gracious host. He has a college degree as an economist from the University of Nitra.

This collective has 500 head of sheep and 2,000 head of hogs which we could not inspect because they were suffering from the black plague. There is an excellent demand for pork in the country, with the current market price 40 sk per kilogram (kg). Bred York gilts were purchased from Canada.

Pedorko said they were not happy with the purchase since they paid a lot for the hogs and were losing many of the newborn pigs. When asked if a veterinarian had inspected the herd, the reply was "yes, but he was unable to diagnose the disease".

Due to drought conditions, the collective was going to be short of forage for their cattle, and would need to buy additional feed. They have 1,600 head of cattle and 570 milk cows. As typical in other areas, the dairy operation was not profitable due to poor production and low market prices. The government does provide various subsidies for milk and livestock producers, however.

This collective was leasing office space to a large shoe factory in Bardejov for shoe storage. At one time they had 30 employees

working outside the collective, maintaining the lawns and grounds for the Bardejov Kupele. They no

longer provide this service.

We met with the department heads and toured the livestock facilities. These have not been maintained and (many buildings) should be torn down or removed as they are no longer being utilized. There were sixteen 90-ton silos for 1,600 head of cattle, and only two silos in use.

Depreciation is a cash expense in Slovakia. Buildings have an accounting value, so destroying ones not utilized is no simple process. As with the land, each shareholder owns an interest in the improvements and livestock. Any decisions made regarding facilities and land must be approved by the 17-member board of directors and 2,300 shareholders. This makes management decisions very cumbersome.

The machinery was in better condition than at Zborov, but they also had excess equipment for the acres they were operating. Their equipment was also mostly East German, and they had a new grain drill. There were also 40 tractors, 10 combines, 5 potato diggers and 25 cars. Their parts department, however, was extensive and very well organized. They too are having difficulties finding parts for repairs.

We viewed their potato processing facility, which was very extensive. Here again, this facility could sort and handle all of the potato production in the entire county. They were at a loss on what to do with the excess equipment and facilities. Evidently there is no market for it.

Next issue: Remainder of the report; further comments from Thien and Summy.



Mike Eisele was guest of honor at a "farewell but not goodbye" party, prior to his leaving for the Sgt. Bluff appointment.

Mike Eisele transferred to Sgt. Bluff

Michael (Mike) Eisele, State Technician at Harrison County NRCS/SWCD, was recently transferred to the Sgt. Bluff field office. He began his duties at Woodbury County NRCS/SWCD on August 24.

A "farewell" reception was held in his honor at the Logan office, with NRCS staff and commissioners present, as well as personnel from Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Rural Development (RD).

During his nine-year-tenure at Logan, Mike was responsible for developing conservation compliance plans, laying out contour strips and terraces lines, conducting status reviews and field follow-ups, etc. He also assisted with surveys for structures, conservation tillage, etc. and aided farmers in determining CRP factors and values. For a number of years, he participated in the Outdoor Classroom activities for elementary students. He was also the resident

"computer expert", according to some of his peers.

Mike was a graduate of the University of Iowa, where he received a degree in General Science. Prior to becoming involved with conservation, he was a construction foreman, operated his own wholesale business, and was employed with another wholesale firm.

He served as an intermittent Soil Conservationist at the Monona County field office in Onawa prior to coming to Logan.

Mike enjoys photography, fishing, hiking and outdoor recreation. His wife, Elaine, is a third grade teacher in Onawa, and their two sons are Rory, a student at Iowa State University, and Ryan, a senior at West Monona High School.

Mike commented wryly that he and Elaine's major "hobby" at the present time, is "following the boy's activities".

A message to every Iowa farmer

Not known are the plans of every Iowa farmer for their corn and soybean fields this fall after harvest. But there is a consensus of opinion among a large group of non-till supporters that it is good business for every farmer to think through the reasons for actions taken on the farm. That is true this fall or at any time.

That includes the reasons that are usually given for tilling in the fall. It is very difficult to find good reasons — economic or otherwise — to till soybean ground, for instance. And studies show crop systems that make use of heavy residues to hold soil (and also chemicals and fertilizer) in place are among the most profitable as well.

If this fall happens to be an open one and farmers have the opportunity to till their land, they are asked to take a minute and think it through. They should be certain they are tilling for a good reason. There are very good reasons for NOT tilling this fall,

such as keeping options open for next spring, and protecting soil and water resources.

Any of the thousands of Iowa farmers who are using a sound crop residue management system would, it is certain, encourage others to adopt similar practices. They would surely recommend, "Before considering doing any tillage this fall, first stop and consider soil conservation and economics as part of that decision."

The following sponsors of this message agree:

Dan Bruene, Conservation Districts of Iowa; Doug Lindgren and Roy Bardole, American Soybean Association; Larry Kay, Iowa Corn Growers Association; Ed Weiderstein, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation; Leroy Brown, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Jim Gulliford, Division of Soil Conservation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; Diane Thompson, State Soil Conservation Committee; Wendy Wintersteen, Extension Service, Iowa State University.

New CRP signup is announced

by Russ Kurth
District Conservationist

The next Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up will be held from October 26, 1998, through December 11, 1998 at each local USDA Service Center. During this seven-week period, producers may make offers to enter land into CRP for ten years.

The process for the 18th CRP sign-up will be similar to the 16th sign-up. Producers will be asked to designate the area to be offered. A bid cap will be figured for the offered area, based on the predominate 3 soils types in the area. Producers will need to select the cover-type they would like to seed.

USDA will continue to evaluate and rank CRP offers, using the Environmental Benefit Index (EBI), based on the potential environmental benefits to be gained from enrolling land into CRP. Things that landowners in western Iowa need to do to improve their EBI are

- 1) Select steeper fields or portions of fields which are more erodible.
- 2) Select seeding mixtures which have high wildlife benefits. Points assigned for seeding mixtures range from 10 to 50, depending upon what is in the mixture.
- 3) Planting trees or shrubs on offered areas will improve the EBI score.
- 4) Producers who include annual food plots as part of their offer will also have a higher EBI score.

USDA is authorized to maintain enrollment of up to 36.4 million acres. Approximately 30.5 million acres will be enrolled in CRP contracts as of October 1, 1998. The contracts awarded under sign-up 18 will become effective on October 1, 1999. Just over 3.5 million acres currently subject to CRP contracts will expire on September 30, 1999.

The CRP is designed to improve the nation's natural resource base. It protects millions of acres of American topsoil from erosion. It also protects groundwater and helps improve the condition of lakes, rivers, ponds and streams.

CRP is a highly competitive program, and all interested landowners are encouraged to find out about the EBI before the December 11 cutoff.

We will be glad to offer any advice on steps which can be taken to maximize EBI points and increase the likelihood that producer's land will be accepted. Stop by the office, or call 712-644-2210 to set up an appointment.

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The exterior of the house on the Spencer farm has changed very little, although the interior has undergone extensive remodeling. The house was built by a member of the family for which Beebeetown was named.

by Lou Waite

If diversity is the secret for maintaining sustainability of the American farmer, Ralph Edward III (Ed) and Ruth Spencer are a practicing example of that theory. The Spencers live on a farm which is a historical site, and own another farm which has been in the family for over a hundred years. They have an auctioneer service and a real estate firm, with three family members licensed as real estate agents. They also have a cow-calf herd, with son Luke as "ramrod" of that operation for the most part.

"My grandfather, Ralph Sr. was a cattle buyer for Keenan Commission Company in Omaha for many years," Ed noted. "He lived in Boomer Township, Pottawattamie County, and we still have people tell us they remember him. He was well known in the area."

Ed is a third generation farmer, and his father, Ralph Jr., was also a farmer, cattle producer and auctioneer. Ed attended Reisch Auctioneering College at Mason City, and then gained experience as a free-lancer before establishing his own auction service. He opened the Spencer Auction Company office in Logan in 1983, and his rapid sales-pattern has become a trademark around the area.

Ruth grew up on farm near Imogene, one of 11 children of Francis and Catherine Hughes. She is actively involved with real estate sales and other phases of the family operation.

The Spencers are avid conservationists and dedicated to the preservation of natural resources. While their farmland is now leased to tenants, they maintain an interest, and promote terracing, no-till and/or mini-till, and the providing of wildlife habitat. Large windbreaks on their farms protect homesteads and feedlots from the winds, but also provide shelter for "little critters" of the wildlife environment.

A recent Spencer project is the establishment of a new housing development, "Eagle Ridge Acres", located north of Missouri Valley.

Ed and Ruth are avid "history buffs", and live on a farm which

has a long and interesting history itself. The farmhouse, once occupied by the Arthur Beebee family, still stands with very few external structural changes.

The book "The Farmer's Daughter," written by Lois Beebee Chandler, provided the following information (not in context):

Originally from England, the Beebees established quite a dynasty in America. One became co-founder of the Wells Fargo Express system; another was a contractor who helped build the Erie Canal. James L. and Frederic Fargo Beebee came to Iowa in 1850 and 1870, respectively, and settled in LaGrange Township at the site later known as Beebeetown. Arthur was descended from Frederic Beebee, and the father of Lois Beebee Chandler.

In her book, Mrs. Chandler tells about loads of apples and potatoes stored in a half-basement under the house; the pantry which held dishes and a "fireless cooker", described as the "original slow cooker". She mentioned the huge kitchen range, fired with coal and cobs which were reduced to ashes which had to be carried out each day. Water bucketed from the cistern was heated in the reservoir of the stove and used for dish-washing. It also was dipped into buckets and carried to fill the round wooden tub for a Saturday night bath.

The author described uses of a treadle sewing machine, ice box and crumb tray. She said white damask tablecloths and linen napkins were "always" used on the dining table, centered with condiment castor and spoon holder. She told about the coal/cob shed, and a laundry shed, with its Woodrow washing machine operated by a gasoline engine. She mentioned the ice

house, filled with ice from the Boyer River and packed in sawdust. She recalled that milk was poured into gallon-sized crockery bowls so the cream would "raise" to be skimmed. She remembered the delightful taste of rich cream, flavored with nutmeg, poured over bread pudding.

The book told of life without electricity, running water, central heating or cooling, refrigerators or freezers. And of course, no bathrooms, as described by the writer:

"The last chore of the day was one's trip to the outdoor toilet. No one wanted to be first, each hoping the seat might possibly be left slightly warmed by his predecessor. A grey, woolen shawl with troublesome fringe hung behind the pantry door. That shawl went with each one to the outhouse, and as soon as it was back, it was the next one's turn. The winter trips were hasty, but in summer much loitering was done over the big Montgomery Ward catalog that furnished our toilet paper supply. It was very scary out there in the dark, and our imaginations went wild, so that we were often wakeful and still quaking when we finally got to bed."

Mrs. Chandler said that the family's first tractor was the sawed-off locomotive called the Avery. It was complete with smokestack boiler and whistle. The back wheels were huge, wide and of metal with lugs. It had a roof of sorts and a small "cabin" seat area. She wrote:

"Dad looked forward to the State Fair to see all the innovations in labor-saving farm equipment. He bought many, too. We were often called upon to lend whatever was seasonal, all around the neighborhood. Dad could not



Beebee Farmhouse 1900

say no to any request, which irked Mother more than a little.

"Then came the building of the corn crib. Dad decided a hollow tile corncrib would save his crop and pay for itself. It was a sensational structure, and visitors constantly came by to see it. It was circular, probably thirty or thirty-five feet in diameter. A roofed sort of porte-cochere projected on the access side under which the wagons would drive upon a set of rails. A winch run by engine power could raise them and thereby the front end of the wagon. With the tail-gate removed, the corn would slide into the buckets that moved on an endless chain to the center of the building, there to be dumped into an elevator and lifted to the top of the crib, up a shaft in an inside similar tile structure.

"It was a circle inside a circle, the area between receiving the tumbling ears from above. The top size of eight feet was floored and received the shelled corn. The system facilitated rotating by allowing the grain to be removed by wagon loads and sent back up the elevator to fall otherwise. Of course, wind and air blew through the hollow tile walls, continually ventilating and drying the contents.

"The crib was a wonder to all, but Mother -- still without electricity in the house (no power

lines existed to Beebeetown) and no water pressure or bathroom, resented the expenditure."

The Spencers still have people stopping by to photograph or learn the history of the crib. They plan to replace the shake-shingle roof and restore the cupola.

While space does not permit further excerpts from the book, the Spencers recommend it as a "fascinating trip back in time."

Ed said the quarter-line cement posts marking the corners of each 40-acre segment on the farm are still in place. The markers are a foot square and 10-feet tall, and inscribed on them are various predictions and/or information Arthur Beebee felt worthy of being recorded. One such message reads:

A.H.B.

10/11/18

Dry year

Kaiser Licked

The Spencer's daughter, Hannah, is a real estate agent, affiliated with her parent's firm. Luke, a recent LoMa graduate, is a 4-H member and shows cattle at various livestock events, county and state fairs, etc. He hopes to follow in the footsteps of his great-grandfather, grandfather and father, and also expand the cattle business in the future. Katie Beth, the youngest, is a freshman at LoMa high school.



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Editorial

The following article is reprinted with permission of *Wallace's Farmer*, wherein it originally appeared.

Where have all the waterways gone?

by Frank Holdmeyer

Heavy spring rains turned into torrential summer downpours that never seemed to end. The rains brought flooding which tested tillage practices, waterways and other erosion control measures. They were often found lacking.

Surveys in Iowa and other states indicate tillage has increased significantly from a year ago. More land is more exposed to the forces of wind and water.

No one seems to have the answer regarding the trend toward more tillage. Perhaps you can enlighten us.

On our summer travels, we've also noticed many Iowa fields where gullies have replaced once-existing waterways. We wonder why.

Some farmers tell us they put waterways into row crops for a couple years to make that land eligible for USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

The USDA rule is that land has to be farmed in two of the last five years for it to be eligible to enter the CRP. An established waterway does not meet that CRP eligibility rule.

Some folks argue that current CRP provisions actually penalize farmers with existing waterways. "Washington's" response is "we can't afford to enroll every waterway in the nation in CRP."

We can understand the temptation to try to pick up an extra few hundred dollars in CRP payments by taking waterways out so the land qualifies for CRP. But, come on folks, what about good

stewardship of the soil? Those few dollars can't outweigh the benefits of saving soil.

Some folks have been installing conservation practices such as waterways, filter and buffer strips. They should be commended. Others, as in our example, are taking out conservation structures for maybe the wrong reasons. It doesn't take many bad apples in any business to attract new legislation. We may not want that.

The 1985 Farm Bill ushered in conservation compliance. In many cases, waterways have to stay in place and farmers must meet conservation compliance to continue to receive USDA benefits.

The 1996 Farm Bill scaled back farm program benefits. The subsequent upsurge of tillage and disappearance of waterways causes us to wonder if conservation compliance has lost its teeth?

But, Uncle Sam is still looking over your shoulder. "The Farm Service Agency (FSA) does random spots checks," said Mike Musel, conservation compliance director at the state FSA office in des Moines. "A farmer who takes waterways out is at risk of being in violation of conservation compliance. He risks losing farm program benefits."

Duane Miller, state resource conservationist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Iowa, says waterways are still needed. "Some farmers have switched to no-till and think that is all they need to do. But this year's heavy rains which hit before the crop canopy formed, prove many fields need permanent structures such as waterways to keep excessive gullies from occurring," says Miller.

If there is waning interest in conservation, that raises tough questions about what will happen after farm bill payments expire in 2002. If we have a "no payments"

Small waterway or critical area plantings

by Jim Sharp
District Conservationist

This year we have had a lot of small gullies in our fields and will need to do some tillage on these areas.

Just doing tillage and filling in the small gullies is not the answer! We will need to establish some root structure in this area or it will just wash out again with a normal rain.

We are suggesting on the small gullies that a cover crop (such as rye) be planted this fall, or oats early in the spring. Then, either mow before heading or spray late and leave undisturbed. This will develop some root structure, and with no-till you can plant right through the temporarily planted gully. This is only for small gullies, not for those which need to be permanently seeded.

If you have any questions, stop by at the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Harlan, or give us a call at 712-755-2417.

farm program, what incentive will farmers have to comply with soil conservation? The issue may be how stiff to make penalties or fines for conservation violators to entice most farmers to comply.

We hope your conscience will be enough incentive. We believe conservation compliance or not, CRP or not, waterways are a must in many fields in Iowa -- and not just the steep slopes. It just makes good sense to keep the soil in the fields where it belongs. We see two alternatives -- neither attractive.

(1) Gullies that continue to get deeper and deeper -- which serve no useful purpose.

(2) More pressure from the outsiders on Congress to use a bigger stick and no carrot to enforce conservation compliance.

West Pott SWCD/NRCS W. Pottawattamie cost-share policy for terrace breaks

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District will be providing cost-share for terrace holes and sloughs. Eligible landowners will be those who do not qualify for ECP funds through FSA.

The cost-share rate is 75% of the contractor's bill or the estimate, whichever is the lesser amount, with a maximum cost-share of \$1,000. The cost estimate is based on \$75 per hole or slough.

At the time of application, eligible landowners need to fill out an information sheet and cost-share application, and mark the location where repair is needed on an aerial photo.

To ensure that all damaged areas are included, it is recommended the sign-up be made after harvest.

At the time of the sign-up, landowners will receive a copy of the aerial photo, which is to be given to the contractor. Prior to the contractor beginning repair, a

When it rains, it pours!

by Julia Gubbels

This spring and early summer provided our area with adequate and at times surplus rainfall. With the heavy and plentiful rains, erosion was accelerated and evident in numerous fields throughout Pottawattamie County.

Rills! Terrace breaks! Terrace sloughs! Gullies! These are just a few of the things that I noticed while on the road. This fall, many farmers will be spending time, labor and money to repair the damage caused by Mother Nature.

Some of you might be asking why the terraces broke or sloughed if they were built as designed. The reason for much of the terrace damage is not because they are

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NRCS technician will visit the site to verify damage. Upon completion of repair, a bill and proper documentation are to be submitted to the district office. At this time, a technician will inspect the repair site to certify completion.

The deadline for submitting an application is April 1, 1999. Repair work must be completed by June 1, 1999.

For further information regarding this program, those interested may contact the office by calling (712) 328-2489, or come to the office personally.

designed or built improperly, but because they were designed to handle a two-inch runoff. To maintain the storage capacity, it is suggested the terrace channels be cleaned out on a regular basis.

If ditches are a yearly problem, consider establishing a waterway in these areas. Already established waterways may need to be reshaped to function properly. To avoid ditches along the waterways, crop rows should be planted perpendicularly NOT on the parallel (up and down).

These are just a few things to keep in mind. For further information regarding conservation practices or structures, contact the SWCD district office.

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