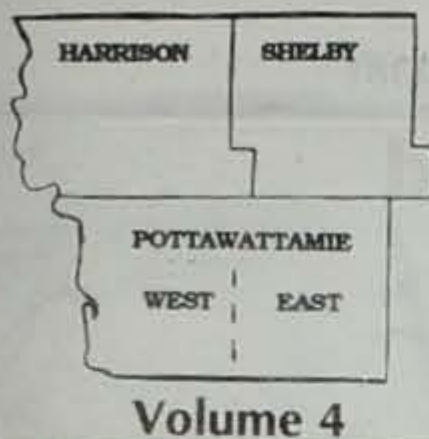




Quad-District Conservation News

Issue 1

Volume 4



"My Nest Greenhouse and Gardens" began as a hobby

by Lou Waite

Don and Patty Bogler once lived on *Patchwork Farm*, and they were farmers and hog producers. But like Old McDonald, on that farm you could find chickens, horses, ponies, a pig named "Grunt", cows, calves, cats, dogs and maybe a goat or two.

Also on that farm was Patty's small "hothouse", where she loved to grow her own vegetables and flowers. "I have lots of relatives," she said with a chuckle, "and they bought everything that we didn't use. Then the neighbors began to stop by, and word spread until we had others who wanted to buy hothouse plants."

"Yes," Don chimed in, "I added a 24 x 27 frame greenhouse to the barn, and she soon had that filled up! So then we constructed a 22 x 50 hoop-style greenhouse, and now are planning to add on to the one attached to the barn!"

The Boglers admitted that their expansion into a new enterprise was undoubtedly influenced by the present farm/ag economy. "We don't raise hogs any more," Don said, "and we sold all of the farm except 80 acres of pasture and hayland. We still have a cow-calf operation, but that isn't all that profitable right now."

Like many farmers, Don has a job in Harlan, working for Stowe Redi-Mix Company. And the Boglers have renamed their acreage. They and their horses, ponies, chickens, pig, etc., etc., now reside at *My Nest Greenhouse and Gardens*.

In this writer's opinion, it is a delightful place to visit. How often does one see chickens busily scratching about, while a tabby cat sits nearby, grooming herself in the sun? Where can you find a friendly, potbellied pig, who thinks he is a dog? And the dog doesn't mind sharing the limelight??

Where can you find a greenhouse, which is filled with



Patty Bogler's "hobby" has grown into a full-time occupation. She is shown with some of the plants allowed to reach above-average growth, "just for fun."

all the common flower and vegetable plants, but also spikes that are five feet tall? And vines that hang from a hook ten feet from the ground? "Just for fun", Patty keeps some plants from season to season, and lets them grow and thrive.

This winter, the Boglers "babysat" a planter which belongs to the St. Joseph Church in Earling. The three spikes in the planter grew to be five feet tall or more. That pot and another with plants equally towering, now enhance St. Boniface Church in Westphalia. (St. Joseph may have a struggle getting them back!)

Patty plants seeds in January, and keeps them under grow-lights in the basement. They are moved to the greenhouse when a certain size, and kept there until ready for

sale. Cuttings are also started in special potting soil early in the year. "The greenhouse takes a lot of heat," Don said, "but we have a woodburner which is kept going all day, then at night, an LP gas furnace is activated. Some plants, such as a number of perennials, need a cooler atmosphere, so they will stay 'stockier'. The new addition to the barn is planned to be a 'cool house'."

Patty began by growing house plants, because she liked them. But she discovered there was more demand for bedding plants, so she began raising them. "Patty was more practical, though," Don said with a grin, "and said 'people have to eat!' So we combined the operation. We have a nine-acre plot where we grow vegetables, which we sell at the farmer's markets in Harlan and Denison."

Patty noted that sweet corn is their biggest seller, with potatoes a close second. They also sell tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, etc., and this year will "experiment" with growing watermelon.

It has been seven years since they decided to diversify and expand. "It takes money, and what profit we have has gone back into the business," Don said. "But this year, for the first time, we should see that change!"

Patty, ever practical, dries the flowers which do not sell, and has found a ready market for these. She hangs them in the greenhouse, and lets the "air and mother nature" dry them. She also grows varieties specifically for this purpose. Some of her attractive dried

flower arrangements enhance their home decor.

The Boglers agreed that they get a lot of self-satisfaction from what they do, and they take pleasure in seeing others

benefit from it. Don also does landscaping, although "not on a professional basis."

They have four daughters; Anna, a sophomore at Harlan Community Schools; Katrina, an 8th grade student and Amy, a fifth grader, both at St. Josephs Parochial School in Earling; and Hallie, who is in the third grade at St. Mary's Parochial School in Panama. They are members of 4-H, carrying out projects involving their two quarter horses, and two Ponies of America breed ponies.

Patty plays guitar for Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) masses, and the family is active in church and community affairs.

The Boglers represent the farm families of today, who have the ambition and the courage to maintain the integrity of their chosen lifestyle.

As Don so aptly stated, "You have to keep trying. Sometimes it isn't what you choose to do, but you learn to live with it. We're happy with what we do, and that's something to be thankful for. Not everybody can say that."

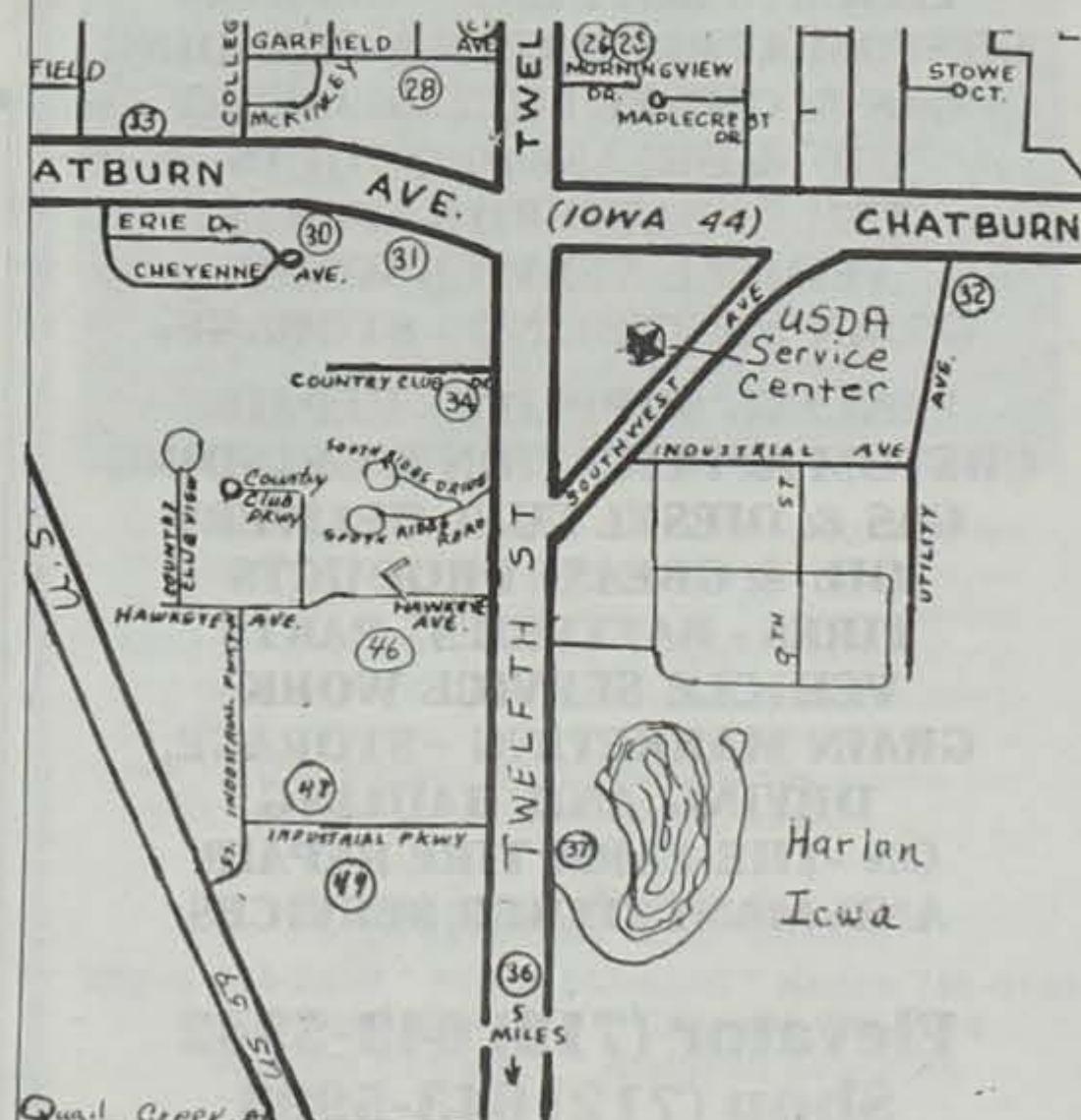
Not everybody, indeed!

My Nest Greenhouse is found at 1134 1600th Street, Harlan, Iowa, just off Highway 59. Watch for the sign.

Harlan USDA Service Center

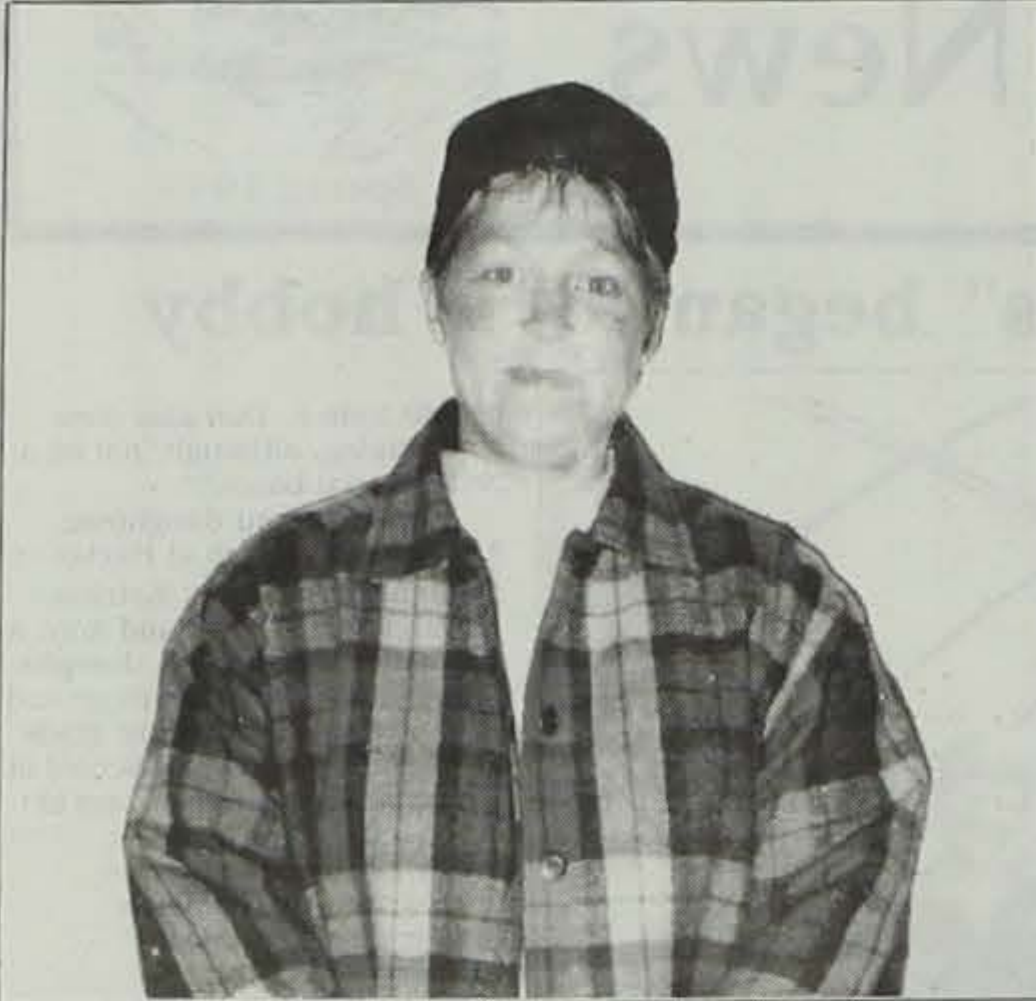
Has Moved!

The Natural Resources Conservation Service/Shelby County SWCD/Farm Service Agency has moved to its new location at 2519 Southwest Avenue in Harlan. See the map below for guidance.



Don and Patty Bogler in the area which will soon be enlarged so that a "cool room" may be added.

Enterprise, hard work to be rewarded



Christine Kloewer says "It's in the Ground, Inc." is a project which has brought her family closer together.

by Lou Waite

Christine (Wegner) Kloewer, a native of the Panama area, has a degree in landscape design from Temple University in Philadelphia. For eleven years, she was employed with an Omaha-based nursery firm. But two years ago, she decided to come back to the family farm and plant something other than the usual corn and soybeans. Four of the six Wegner siblings

established *It's in the Ground, Inc.*, a wholesale tree farm.

"We have had the idea since 1991," Christine said, "but it wasn't until 1997 that we really got it going. We planted 9,000 trees on 24 acres, and this year are adding 5500 on an additional 10 acres."

She noted that growing thus far are 25 varieties of shade (deciduous) trees, and 20 ornamental varieties. This year, for the first time, they are



14,000 trees like these had been planted on the farm when this photo was taken, with more to be added this year.

harvesting some of the larger trees, "ball and burlaping" them, and shipping them to distributors. Christine, who is also sales manager, contacted a number of firms and found 15 which agreed to purchase the trees on a wholesale basis. "It's been a really busy spring," she said, "with all the new planting and the harvesting." Indeed, the day of the interview, Christine was photographed in her "working clothes."

Much of the best advertising

is by "word of mouth", and also by setting up displays at trade shows, Christine said. "These annual shows are an excellent place to get new ideas, and also receive a lot of exposure as a producer."

The original trees were purchased in Oregon, Minnesota and Iowa. Christine's brothers, Robert and Steven Wegner, basically take care of the field work involved, with help from her husband, Denis. Other

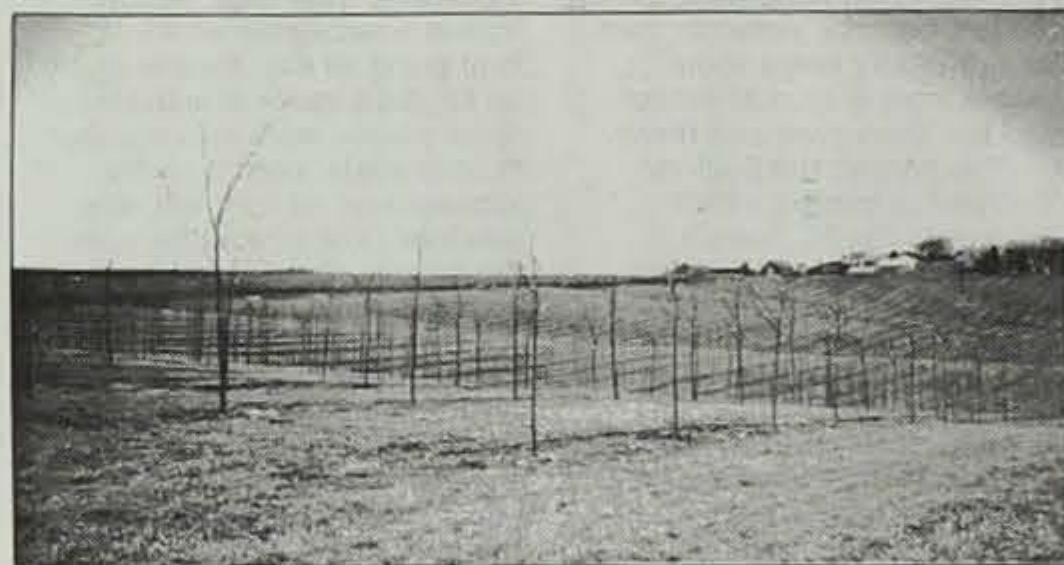
family members, such as sister Kathy and her husband Jay Frederickson, assist whenever the need arises. Their parents, Phil and Carol Wegner, are involved as well, on a daily basis.

"People don't realize how much work is involved, and how many hours we spend at this," Chris commented. "It couldn't be done without all the family cooperating. Actually, it's a good thing, for it brings the family together. We are very open with each other, and whenever there is an issue, we discuss it and resolve it. We voice our concerns, instead of harboring them, and hold a 'round table' discussion every two weeks."

"It's been a struggle, trying to get this operation on its feet," Chris said, then added with a chuckle, "There's been no money coming in, so no paycheck. But this year we should start to come full circle, and begin to see the business as a true business, not only a dream. Like the pebble in the pool, the ripple effect should set in!"

After a moment of reflection, Chris summed it all up: "Yes, it's been a lot of really hard work, but when you see the benefit of that effort, it's better than collecting a paycheck every two weeks!" With a smile, she added, "I try to tell myself that, anyway!"

Denis and Christine live in Panama, where he is a private contractor, and owns *One Ton Welding*, a mobile service. Denis attended Northwestern Iowa Community College in Sheldon, and farmed for a number of years. The Kloewers are members of the Western Nursery and Landscape Association, and the Iowa and also Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association. They attend St. Mary's Catholic Church in Panama.



Some of the smaller trees

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The trees are wired to stakes which can be imbedded in the lake to add stability to the submerged trees, providing fish habitat.

by Joe Schwartz
DNR Regional
Fisheries Supervisor

Anyone who has driven through Prairie Rose State Park in Shelby County this winter probably noticed the size of the lake has changed drastically. Last fall, the lake's water level was lowered ten feet to allow fish habitat to be placed on the bottom. Over the years, the DNR and local fishermen had sunk Christmas trees in the lake to provide needed places for fish to live. These improvements are short-lived, however. Christmas trees just don't last more than a year or two before they decompose and their value is lost. Fisheries personnel of the DNR have lowered other lakes in southwest Iowa the past two years to improve fish habitat. This type of work was completed at Lake Icaria, Big Creek, Meadow, Viking, Anita, and several smaller lakes with which the public may be familiar.

A frequent question park visitors have asked about the project is, "Why did the lake have to be lowered to add

Changes may be seen at Prairie Rose Lake, as fish habitats have been added and several fishing jetties constructed

February, to take advantage of a frozen lake bed. Earlier or later in the season, the bottom is a gooey quagmire of black mud. Most of the work was completed by DNR Parks and Fisheries personnel, with some help from volunteers and prisoners from the Clarinda Correctional Facility. Other type of materials were also used to create fish habitat in Prairie Rose Lake. Stake beds, made from oak 1x2's and driven into the bottom, were placed adjacent to the camping area. Forty wooden spools and over 100 recycled fiberglass trash containers were used to make places preferred by fish seeking a cave-like habitat. Additional stake beds, using recycled plastic pipe, were added by the Harlan Hookers, a local fishing club.

Probably the most noticeable change at the lake after it fills will be the new fishing jetties. Six jetties, costing \$83,000, were constructed around the lake,

habitat to the lake, and why not just do it from boats? The answer is that it comes down to a matter of quantity. We are able to cut, drag down and stake in place, more trees in one day on a dry lake bed than we could from a boat in one month. Every additional submerged tree will provide places for fish to live and feed, and for insects and other fishfood organisms to grow. Also, submerged trees and brush make excellent places to fish for bass, bluegill and crappie. Cedars are the best choice for this type of work, but Prairie Rose Park did not have many, so elms and other hardwoods were used in their place. Trees were cut primarily in areas that will be managed for prairie grasses.

Most of the work was completed in January and early



A fishing jetty at Prairie Rose Lake, one of six newly installed around the water.

These were built by pushing up soil from the dry lake bed and armoring with rip-rap. Several are accessible for handicapped persons, and all will provide excellent places to fish. All end in ten feet of water, and should be heavily used by fishermen.

The question most asked during the whole project was, "When will the lake fill back up?" I can't answer that, because I don't know how much it will rain this spring. I expect it to fill this year IF we receive normal rainfall. None of the fish were lost when the water level was lowered, so fishing should be as good or better than it has been in the past. All habitat was placed on the 10-foot contour, so it will be easy to find by

anyone in a boat with a fish-finder. Fish your favorite bait or lure in and around the flooded brush, and you will have good luck.



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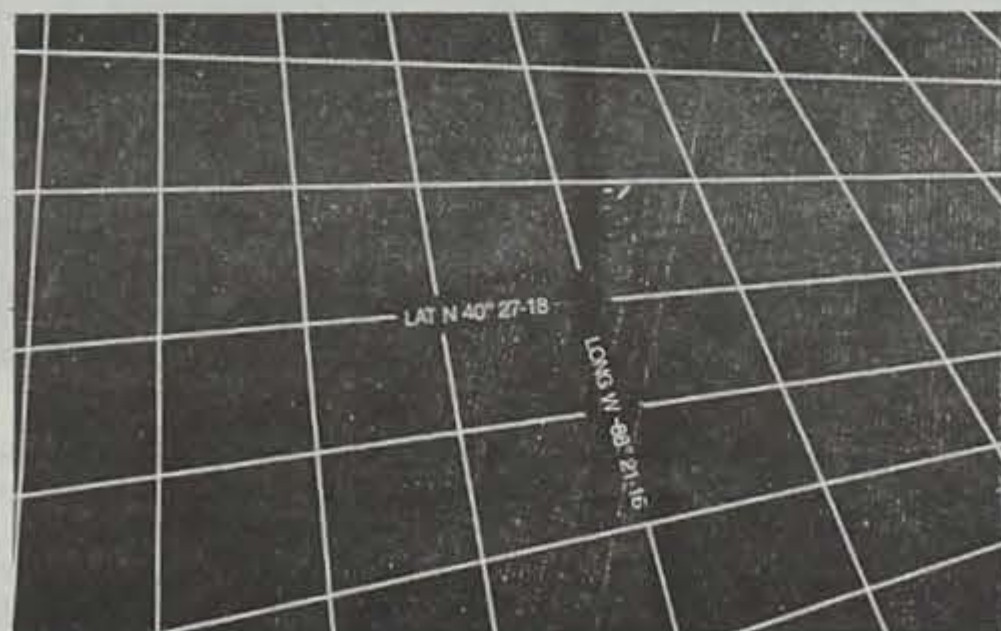
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Wetlands more than a wildlife habitat

by Marlyn Von Weihe
SWCD Commissioner

Wetlands may be more than an area for cattails to grow, and redwing blackbirds to nest. They may just be a very important part of the agricultural/ecological system.

While on a recent trip to Nevada, I visited the Ethel M Chocolate Factory, situated in a light industrial area of Henderson, Nevada. What caught my attention was not the candy factory, but its waste water treatment plant, and more specifically, a wetland.

This wastewater treatment plant consisted of several large, oval open tanks, approximately fifty feet long, and some smaller, round tanks. The large oval tanks had a variety of plants growing in them, as well as snails, algae and bacteria (i.e., different plants and organisms for different degrees of pollution). The tanks were located in an enclosed area where a moveable roof can cover them if freezing temperatures are expected. The plants growing in the tanks are susceptible to frost, and frost damage would reduce the capacity of the system. The tanks, wetland, pond and



These large tanks are part of the wastewater treatment system at the Ethel M. Chocolate Factory. Growing plants have transformed the site into a thing of beauty.

surrounding walkways are located on a one acre tract of land.

The industrial wastewater from the chocolate factory moves slowly through the tanks, allowing the various organisms to utilize specific contaminants in the wastewater. After the water has moved through the tanks, it is pumped into a

shallow wetland, where it eventually seeps into a small pond -- home to a large number of goldfish. The water from the pond is used to irrigate a three-acre botanical garden. This man-made process, known as the *Living Machine*™, removes nearly all of the biochemicals, suspended solids, oils and grease from the water. This system can treat up to 32,000 gallons of wastewater from the factory, daily.

While looking at this *Living Machine*, I couldn't help but draw parallels to naturally occurring, as well as reconstructed, wetlands in

Iowa. The water moving slowly through the tank and growing plants is very similar to water as it moves into and through a wetland from a farm field or small stream. The water in wetlands sometimes stops, as it did in the small open tanks, allowing the plants and organisms to utilize the nutrients for their own growth. Eventually, the water in the wetland will filter into the groundwater or a flowing stream.

The vegetation which grows in our natural wetlands seems to be tolerant of our agricultural pesticides and fertilizers. If you

have ever tried to spray wetland plants that were infringing on cropland, you know what I mean.

Is it possible that filter strips and wetlands may be a way to clean our agricultural wastewater just as the *Living Machine* is a way to clean industrial and municipal wastewater? It is my hope that we, as farmers and conservationists, can make a positive impact on water quality through the preservation of wetlands, and the development of new wetlands and filter strips.

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Small hobby becomes big business, and Canoyer's learn about "diversity"

by Lou Waite

Kathy Canoyer loved to garden and grow flowers, so in 1986, husband Craig built a 10 x 20 greenhouse, so she could expand her "hobby". At first, the contents of the greenhouse were for family consumption or enjoyment.

"But then," Kathy recalled, "people passing by would stop to see if we had anything for sale. We began selling extra plants, and soon we had more demand for them than we had space to provide."

"Yes," Craig said, "so we added a second greenhouse, about the size of a double garage. In 1988, we began retailing. We learned that 'word of mouth' is the best way to advertise, because we did very little of it otherwise. In 1992, we added a 2500 square-foot structure, and decided to get serious. We had to find a market for our expanded operation, then begin wholesaling and retailing."

The Canoyers' business became successful enough that they made the decision to construct an even larger greenhouse in another location. Anyone driving along

Highway 92, heading toward Griswold, will see their attractive new facility, *Canoyer Country Greenhouse*, perched on the crest of a hill. The large, double-bay structure has 7100 square-feet in the growing area alone. A display/office area, break room, and large transplant room are also included. The larger of the previously built greenhouses was moved to the site, with plans to include another in the future.

At the time of the interview, the Canoyers were planning an opening date of April 19, with a Grand Opening to be held April 23, 24 and 25.

Craig also still farms with his father, James, using a corn-bean rotation, all "100% no-tilled." They maintain a cow-calf herd of 50 to 100 head. Craig admits however that the current ag economy was probably one of the reasons he decided to diversify.

"This is 'indoor farming' to me," Craig said. "I work with soils, chemicals, seeds, plants... just the same as on the farm. As this business expanded, I had to get more education about soil nutrients, etc. We



Shown is one section of the greenhouse, filled with thousands of plants. The hanging plants are moistened by an elevated system which "seeps" the water into each pot.

send soil, water and plant-tissue specimens to a lab weekly, to be analyzed. We get the pH nutrient level, for example, plus other information which helps us be more efficient and cost-effective in our operation."

Kathy is very much a part of the operation, putting to good use the experience and expertise she developed since beginning as a "hobbyist". Plus, as she phrased it, "A lot more hard work... but I love it!"

The Canoyers begin planting in mid-December, using cuttings from a supplier, or "vegetative propagative" cuttings from their own stock. They also grow some plants from seeds. They produce annual and perennial flowers, as well as a number of vegetable varieties.

"Many of our plants are *Proven Winner* crop," Craig said. "They originated in Australia, were imported to the United States, improved and now available here. The plants are protected by a patent, and especially grown so as to be healthy and disease-free. It is against the law to reproduce them, so we can't take cuttings."

Keeping the facility clean and disease-free is very important, the Canoyers emphasized. The new greenhouse has a cement floor, because dirt floors can be "a breeding ground for diseases."

They use a ground pine tree bark mixture, which is shipped from Georgia, as a plant medium. It is a by-product of the lumber mills in that area, with the pH adjusted and micro-nutrients added. The

Canoyers use "about two semi-loads" each year.

"The plants are fertilized every time they are watered", Craig informed. "You know, the biggest problem with consumers is this: they eat every day, but they forget to feed their plants. The more a plant is watered, the more nutrients are leached from the soil. If these nutrients aren't replaced... you know what happens! Then the consumer can't understand why the flowers aren't doing well!" (Craig recommended "Green Care", which is manufactured by a company in Chicago) "The Extension Service will always test the water which will be used for the plants. Then fertilizing should be done according to the pH level. Rainwater is great to use, but don't use water softened chemically."

With a chuckle, he added,

"Think of it like milking cows. When the cows need milked, they need to be milked. You don't wait until you get around to it! It's the same with plants. When they need water, they need water right then!" With a wry grin and a lift of an eyebrow, Craig quipped, "Of course there are those who drown their plants, but that's another story."

The Canoyers presently have 10 employees, all part time, who work alternately as the need arises. Some are retired persons who work simply because they enjoy it. In the winter, the only help they have is for potting poinsettias. The cuttings for this popular holiday plant come from a California ranch. "The first poinsettias were brought from Mexico in 1918," Craig said, "and the ranch originated

See "Canoyer... ", Page 6



Craig and Kathy Canoyer, with son Kyle (center), who was on "break" from his studies at UNL.

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Canoyer . . .

Continued from Page 5

growing them in the States. We get cuttings from Denver and also Germany, which has a large number of flower companies."

The poinsettia cuttings are received in mid-August, then planted in a special soil. They are kept in natural light day and night, with no artificial light allowed. About the time of the Autumn Equinox, they begin budding, and gain full color by the Christmas season. "They are light sensitive," Craig warned. "They won't come into color in anything but natural light."

The new greenhouse is a Nexus Building, manufactured in Denver, and designed specifically for northern regions. It will sustain heavy snow loads, and withstand winds of 80 miles-per-hour. The framework of the plant room is covered with a polycarbonate material (like a hard plastic) although the front expanse is glass. The polycarbonate has an R value with a dead-air space between. It lets in no ultra-violet light. An insulated shade system helps with the temperature control, and can be closed when outside temperatures are extremely hot or cold. Two miles of wire was strung for support of the shade system.

Computers will automatically activate the heating or cooling systems when built-in sensors send the signal that one or the other is needed. Heat, light and

humidity are monitored, and the computer-controlled system will keep the greenhouse at the required temperature at all times.

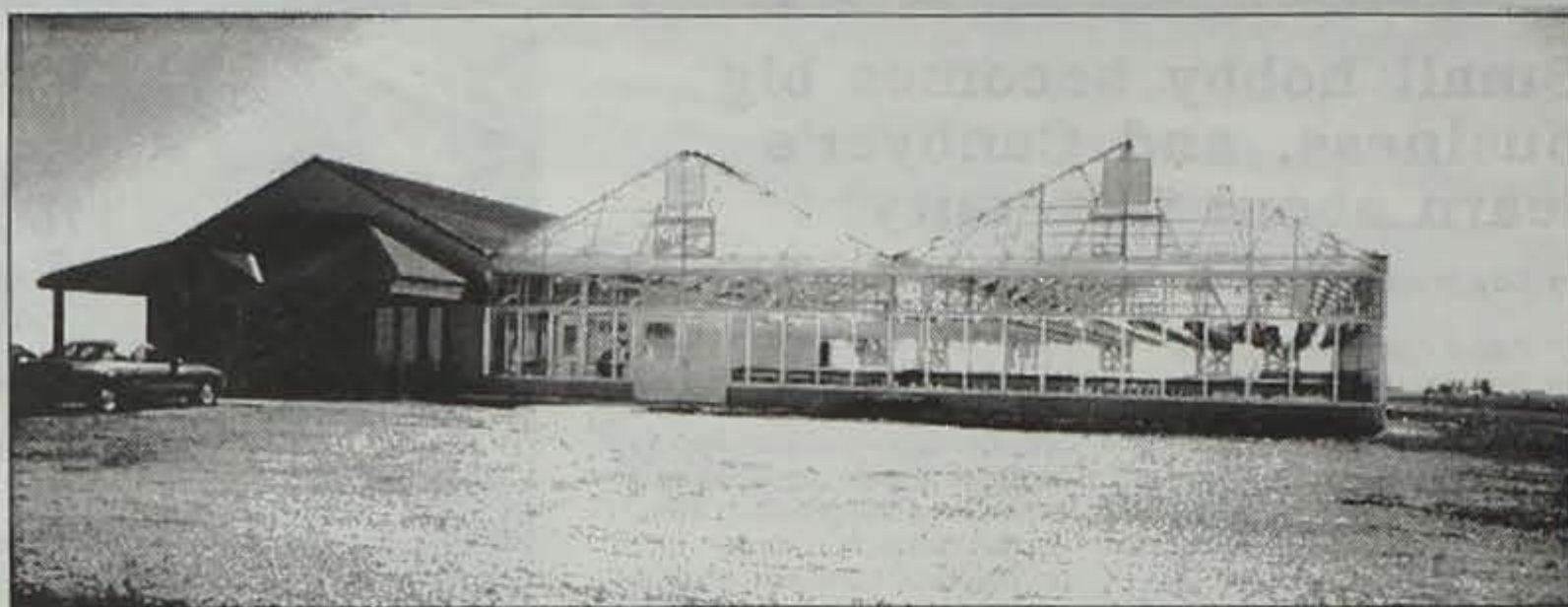
All of the construction was done "in the heat of the summer", by Craig and his sons. Kyle, who was present at the interview, grinned at his dad and commented, "The pay wasn't worth a darn, either!" Craig retorted, patting Kyle on the back, "You got fed and a place to sleep, didn't you?"

Glancing around him at the auspicious result of determination, planning and hard work, Craig said, "I know we could take all this to the city, and probably make a lot more money." Then he quickly added, "Not that we've seen any profit yet!" After musing for a moment, he continued, "But we feel a loyalty to the local people, who have supported us this far. We try to keep the prices reasonable. We set them in the spring, and from the first person to the last, they remain the same. Everyone is treated equally."

The Canoyers have three children. Daughter Amy is married to Marty Wyman, and they have a son Tyler, 2 1/2, and daughter Alyssa, born March 13.

Bradley lives in Iowa City, where he is employed as production manager for Novartis Seed Company. He and Geri Dierking were married on April 17.

Kyle is a sophomore at the



Canoyer Country Greenhouse is located on Highway 92, between Carson and Griswold. The large, three-bay building is filled with plants which will delight every flower and garden lover.

University of Nebraska, Lincoln. He is studying Ag Economics, but also "keeping his options open."

The family attends the Methodist Church in Carson, where Kathy has served as Sunday School teacher. The Canoyers are supportive of community affairs, and participate when time allows.

"People look at what we have done, and probably say, 'Boy, they must really be making money,'" Craig commented, a bit ruefully. "That simply isn't so! The new structure and expansion of our business has been hard on the budget. We felt it important to make it

handicap accessible, and welcome anyone who wants to come take a tour of our facility. We had 91 first and second graders here recently, and nursing home residents and others have also visited. It actually is good therapy for some."

After pausing in reflection, Craig said, "The heart of all farmers is the satisfaction of watching plants grow and develop. As I said, as an indoor farmer, I find it satisfying for the same reason. But it is even more rewarding to see people's pleasure in the results of what we do. The greenhouse

business has seen a steady growth in past years. People find flower or vegetable gardening a way to relax."

With a wave of his hand at the thousands of plants inside the greenhouse, Craig philosophized: "When the economy gets bad, instead of taking a vacation, people buy flowers and do gardening." With his quick grin, he continued, "When the economy is good, they take that vacation, and hire someone to care for the flowers!"

"Either way, come see us! We will do our best to please!"

How to improve water quality using trees

by Michael Tidman
MTidman@Treesforever.org

A statewide conservation initiative has been underway for the past year that aims to increase awareness of water quality issues. Trees Forever has been using trees, shrubs and grasses in demonstration projects along streams and rivers to improve water quality. The system is called a "riparian buffer", and has been researched and developed by the Agroecology Issue Team of the Leopold Center of Sustainable Agriculture in Ames.

The Agroecology Issue Team found that certain plants growing along streams can trap and hold waterborne sediments, acting as "living filters" for both surface and subsurface water. They also

found that the plants were modifying waterborne chemicals and pollutants before they entered the waterway. Buffers can also stabilize stream banks -- reducing stream bank erosion -- and increase water-holding capacity of soil, controlling flooding and helping to recharge ground water supplies.

The goals of the Trees Forever Iowa Buffer Initiative are to

- 1) establish twenty demonstration sites that showcase buffer management techniques, each year for five years
- 2) create a network of technical assistance to support landowners
- 3) demonstrate the use of shelterbelts as buffers around

livestock confinement operations

4) implement a recognition program for landowners who protect streams and waterways with grass and tree buffers

5) conduct field days to increase awareness of the value of buffers.

The five-year initiative brings public and private sector interests together in a unique, first of its kind partnership and will serve as a national model. There are several key sponsoring partners of the work.

Those interested in learning more about buffers may watch for a field day announcement in their area, or e-mail Tidman at the above address.

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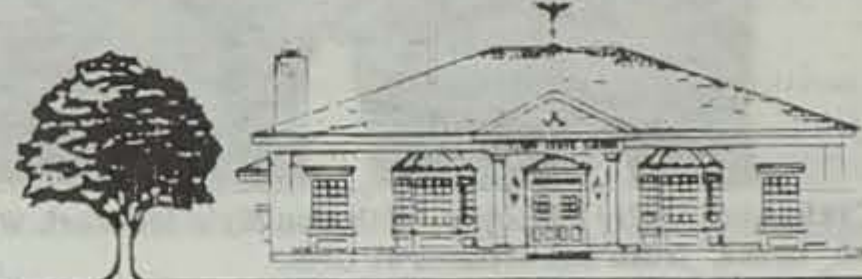


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"Little things" add up to good stewardship by the Bentleys

by Lou Waite

Lyle Bentley maintains that his family has been "farmers forever", and that and he and his wife Peggy live on the "inlaw-outlaw" farm. With a grin, he explained that his former in-laws, Les and Judy Fritz, own 1000 acres of the land, but Mitchell Anderson, who is married to Peggy's sister Penny, is also involved with the operation. Lyle's mother Lucille, who resides in Oakland, still owns the family farm, which Mitch rents. (We didn't ask who were the designated "outlaws", but it was obvious the comment was made in good humor).

Lyle and Mitch farm a total of 2,250 acres, with Les, although "semi-retired", lending a hand when needed. They raise corn and beans on a rotational basis, along with some alfalfa. Lyle is

"With no-till, all you have to do is plant, then harvest. We do some sub-tilling in the fall in the stalk fields, to break up the deep compaction. We alternate the sub-tilling between various tracts of land, doing one one year, another the next year, and so forth. We first test with a compaction meter, and that gives us an accurate indication of where we should till."

Lyle said they sub-till the cornstalk fields, then no-till soybeans in the spring. "We have seen a five to seven bushel per acre increase in the yield of these fields, using this alternating sub-till method," he declared. Then he quipped, "We try not to disturb the worms too much."

Attendance at numerous no-till seminars, and field demonstrations has given him some good ideas to incorporate,

years, we have used a planter marker which we shortened, and drive with the front tire following the planter marker. This way, instead of leaving a track or ditch for the water to run, the tractor tire fills the furrow back in."

Noting that they have been getting cost-effective yields -- with "reasonable" production costs (actually less than in the past) Lyle added, "They have to be less when you aren't wearing out a tractor each year."

Conservation-wise, necessary field borders and waterways have been installed on the farms Lyle and Mitch operate. Twenty-five acres of filter strips have been seeded along Graybill Creek and a tributary of the creek, which runs through their land. This was done with cost-share assistance through the Department of Natural Resources. "Actually," Lyle commented, "we have five different landlords. Three miles of continuous filter-strips were built, continuing from one farm to another, across the land of all five. Then we hope to expand another 1 1/2 miles of the same strip, right on up the creek! It will be interesting to see the result, once it is done."

The Fritz land is extensively terraced, with some old farmable terraces still in use, as well as newer bench and narrow-base styles. An erosion control structure is planned for one of the farms, where a gully is forming at the end of a waterway.

"We had sixty breaks in the terraces after all the rain last year," Lyle said, "but with cost-share from FSA and NRCS, they are all repaired. Some waterway repair was needed, and was done this spring."

"We certainly appreciate all the help from the NRCS staff," Lyle emphasized. "If you work with them, they will work with you! You must go to their office with the attitude that they will help you, but it's important to



Peggy and Lyle Bentley are involved in several ventures, which probably allows them little time to relax at ease, as seen here.

have your homework done before you go."

One farm lying along the Nishna River has a 5-acre area which has been bid into the REAP program for shallow water-wildlife areas. When seeding the filter strips, they crossed numerous tile lines, Lyle said, so they used a mixture of brome grass, oats, clover and timothy.

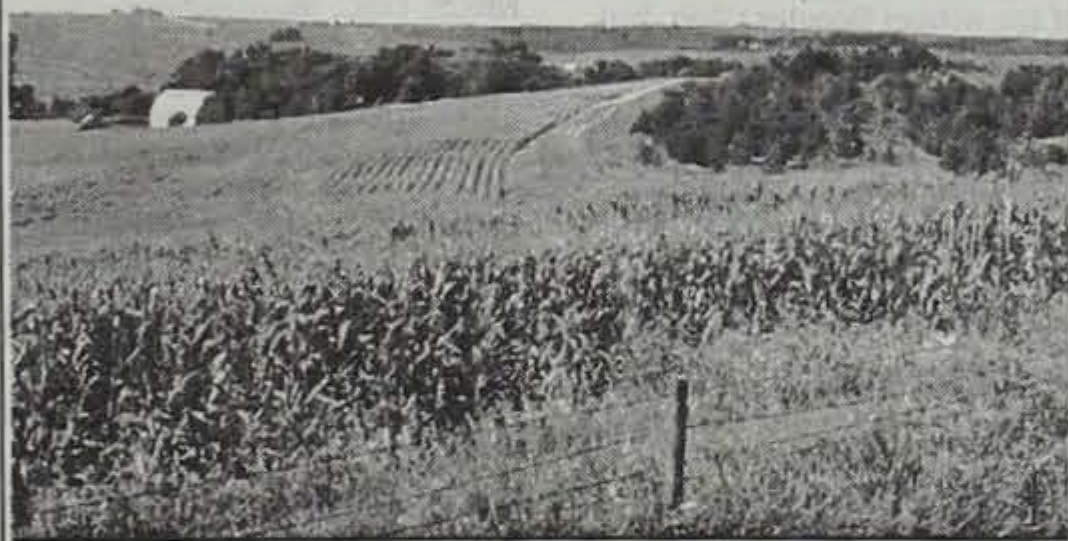
Asked to express his thoughts about conservation, Lyle reflected for a moment,

then said, "Conservation is a whole lot of little things which must be done to keep the soil in place. When I think of all the changes just in my lifetime Again, he mused briefly, then continued, "I've rented farms which haven't been farmed as they could have been. I've seen the soil washed to the bottom of the hills. I've thought that if we could just go back 50 years and teach no-tilling, there would be

See "Bentley" . . . Page 8

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So . . . what is this Trees Forever, anyway?



by Michael Tidman
Communication Coordinator
Trees Forever

Trees Forever was founded in 1989 by two volunteers and has since assisted hundreds of local landowners and over 400 Iowa communities in improving energy efficiency, renewing community and rural landscapes and improving water quality. This was all done by planting trees. Trees Forever remains committed to involving people and using trees, shrubs and grasses for long-term stewardship of water, land and air quality.

Trees Forever has been the catalyst for projects in all of Iowa's 99 counties and over 400 Iowa communities. Trees Forever is supported by individuals, corporations, foundations and government agencies. Today, more than two-thirds of Iowa's population benefits from the work of Trees Forever volunteers, staff and partners, with over 30,000 volunteers across the state.

The organization has three

major program focuses:

Community Programs -- With major sponsorship from Alliant Energy and People's Natural Gas, Trees forever assists local communities and volunteers through matching grants and on-site assistance. It also serves as Iowa's Volunteer Coordinator for Urban and Community Forestry for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division, with funding from the USDA Forest Service.

Living Roadway Trust Fund and Iowa's Living Roadways -- The Living Roadway Trust Fund (LRTF) of the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) sponsors Trees Forever to coordinate annual volunteer conferences and provide assistance to communities and volunteers. Iowa's Living Roadways was created by Trees Forever, in partnership with LRTF and ISU Landscape Architecture Extension, and provides project funds and planning/design assistance to communities and counties of under 10,000.

Trees Forever Iowa Buffer Initiative -- A statewide effort to demonstrate the effectiveness of maintaining trees and grasses as buffers along streams and rivers. Major sponsors are Novartis Crop Protection and the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, with numerous cooperating partners.



The Bentleys photograph this scene, which is viewed from the deck at the rear of their house, during every season of the year. Their collection of photographs is a record of the changes made by Mother Nature and Father Time (with help from Lyle).

Bentley . . . Continued from Page 7

less problems facing us today.

"Whenever I think about conservation, I think of the time I was going through a field, and I saw this little ridge of soil sticking up. On top of that ridge was a single corn cob! I thought to myself, if that one corn cob can protect that little bit of soil, think what a whole field covered with cobs could do. What a dramatic contrast! The soil was so fragile that it had washed away all around, but that one corn cob had protected that little column of soil. I've never forgotten it! Maybe that is one thing that convinced me to try no-till?"

The Bentleys also have a farm supply business, located in a shop 1/2 mile from where they reside. Their main product line is Apache livestock equipment, and also sanitation equipment (dumpsters, roll-off trash containers, etc.). They are Asgrow Seed dealers as well.

Peggy is bookkeeper and secretary for Bentley Farm Supply, and Bentley Land and Cattle. She is also a part-time secretary at Riverside School. Her hobby, when she finds time, is "creative memory scrapbooking". She likes to embroider, play piano and read. The couple's beautiful home,

built four years ago, is evidence of her decorating skills. It has many unique features which she designed and planned. She is a member of P.E.O. and vice president of chapter E.Q. in Oakland.

The eldest sibling, Todd, wants to farm and feed cattle. He is at present an over-the-road semi driver, but his father stated firmly that Todd's "heart is on the farm". Son Andrew (Andy) is a freshman at Iowa State in Ames, pursuing a degree in Ag Business and computer technology. Gregory is a freshman at Riverside High School in Oakland; likes sports, is a "golf fanatic", and very creative. "I wouldn't be surprised if he becomes an inventor," Lyle said. "He likes to design things, then build something to make his ideas come true." Kelly is a 6th grader at Riverside Middle School in Carson, and on the gold honor roll. She loves the computer, the Internet and basketball. She is artistic and a SWCD poster contest winner.

The family attends the Methodist Church in Oakland, where Peggy teaches primary Sunday School, and pre-school through 6th grade music. Lyle is currently on the board of parish relations.

Lyle and Peggy are members of the school Booster Club, but have little time for other

organizations. "We want to devote our time to family activities now", they said, and agreed there would be time later for other interests.

In this writer's opinion, the Bentleys are an outstanding example of the young farmers who are carrying on a tradition which must meet and overcome greater challenges each succeeding generation.

They are to be commended for their efforts, and more so for their accomplishments.

Stream channel erosion solutions

by Clair Acker
Technician

In keeping with the Hungry Canyons Alliance efforts to implement solutions to the problem of stream channel erosion in the deep loess soils of Western Iowa, a contractor workshop on streambed stabilization structures was held. The event took place March 1 at the Red Coach Inn in Red Oak.

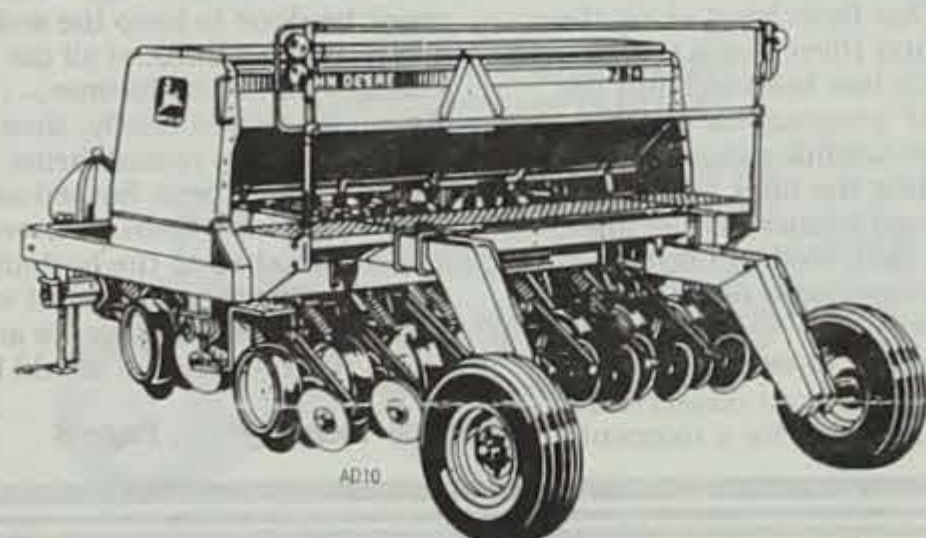
Hungry Canyons Alliance and the Land Improvement Contractors Association co-sponsored the workshop with other participants from NRCS, DSC, Montgomery County Engineering, private contractors, landowners, and other interested parties.

The meeting began with four different projects being presented by the landowners, contractors, and technicians/engineers involved, giving those in attendance the opportunity to ask questions and discuss in general the aspects of each.

Engineers from NRCS addressed the planning of a structure (reading a plan, site evaluation, cost estimates, pre-bid/construction meeting, etc.) and a review and explanation of design standards and specifications.

At the end, cost share and financial assistance was reviewed, followed by a question-answer period, and general discussion.

Follow-up outdoor classes are tentatively planned for this summer.



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McGinn following tradition

by Lou Walte

William F. McGinn (call him Bill, please) was elected as a West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner last November.

Bill is an Attorney at Law with McGinn, McGinn, Jennings and Springer, located at 333 West Broadway in Council Bluffs. The other McGinn is his brother, Dan, who is also affiliated with the Pottawattamie County Attorney's office. Dean Jennings and Norman Springer comprise the remainder of the firm personnel.

One might ask, "What does this lawyer know about farming and soil conservation? Isn't that a bit beyond his realm of expertise?" The answer might be, "Don't judge a book by its cover!" True, Bill appears to be the stereotype of a successful professional in his elegantly tailored dark suit, white shirt and silk tie. But it doesn't take much conversation with Bill to determine that he is not only knowledgeable about agriculture, but not afraid to get a little barnyard "residue" on his boots.

Bill is actually following a tradition established by Dan, who served two terms as a SWCD commissioner in the late 80's. "He was no longer seeking election," Bill said, "so he drafted me! I attended a meeting prior to election, and was impressed with what the commissioners were doing, and how well they were doing it. It struck me rather forcefully how important it is to protect our precious natural resources. I decided I wanted to do what I could to aid that cause."

"Born and bred" in Council Bluffs, Bill recalls fondly the summers he spent on his uncle's farm near Imogene. It was there he learned to operate a tractor, and how much hard work and management it requires to be a successful farmer. But he opted to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather, grandmother and father, and become an attorney.

"My grandfather established the law firm in 1914," Bill said, "and my grandmother became a partner in 1936. My uncle Ed



William F. McGinn, seated at his desk

joined in 1952, and my father in 1958. I worked in the office prior to passing the bar in 1988... the year that I became another name on the door."

Bill received his Juris Doctor degree from Creighton Law School, and specializes in criminal law. He also deals with business, real estate, estate planning, wills, and much more... the complete gamut of legal concerns. When asked his success rate as a criminal defender, he grinned, and said, "Well, they haven't thrown me out (of the firm) yet."

A licensed pilot and co-owner of a Beechcraft Bonanza, Bill said he "loves to fly." He leases a hangar at the municipal airport, and also one at the Missouri Valley airfield. He serves as a member of the Airport Authority, and at the time of the interview was interested in bringing about the move of the Airframe Powerplant program from Iowa Western Community College to

the municipal airport.

He still makes frequent visits to the farm, where he stables his horse, "Bart", a Tennessee Walker. He admits to being "outdoors oriented", and regrets that he cannot spend more time "communing with nature."

As for his new position, he emphasized again that he was impressed with the board of commissioners and the NRCS staff. "They are doing a good job," he affirmed. "The board reflects a diversity of backgrounds, which I feel is an advantage. But right now, I am just listening, and learning. They are good people, and communicating with them is easy." Then with another wry grin, he quipped, "At least I am trying to do more listening and less talking, until I find my niche."

Bill is a member of the Iowa State Bar Association, and the Iowa Public Defenders Association. He is unmarried, but admits to "spoiling his nephews at every opportunity."

J. Sterling Morton was founder of Arbor Day

Julius Sterling Morton, noted politician and founder of Arbor Day, was born in New York and later moved to Michigan. In 1854, he and his wife set out for Nebraska Territory, and settled in Nebraska City. Morton was appointed Secretary of Agriculture in 1893, and was the first appointed cabinet member from west of the Missouri River.

In addition to his political career, Morton was a promoter of agriculture. He served on the State Board of Agriculture and was a member of the State Horticultural Society. He advocated improved farming methods, conservation programs, and tree planting.

In 1872, the State Board of Agriculture adopted Morton's resolution setting April 10 as Arbor Day. The day was set aside for the planting of trees, and a prize was offered to the person(s) who properly planted the most trees.

In 1885 Morton's birthday, April 22, was designated as Arbor Day in Nebraska. Since 1989, Arbor Day has been celebrated on the last Friday in April.

What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants cool shade and tender rain,

And seed and bud of days to be,

And years that fade and flush again;

He plants the glory of the plain;

He plants the forest's heritage;

The harvest of a coming age; The joy that unborn eyes shall see --

These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants, in sap and leaf and wood,

In love of home and loyalty And far-cast thought of civic good,

His blessings on the neighborhood

Who in the hollow of His hand

Holds all the growth of all our land,

A nation's growth from sea to sea,

And stirs his heart who plants a tree.

Henry Cuyler Bunner

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What does he plant who plants a tree?

He plants a friend of sun and sky;

He plants a flag of breezes free;

The shaft of beauty, towering high;

He plants a home to heaven anigh

For song and mother-croon of bird

In hushed and happy twilight heard

The treble of heaven's harmony;

These things he plants who plants a tree.

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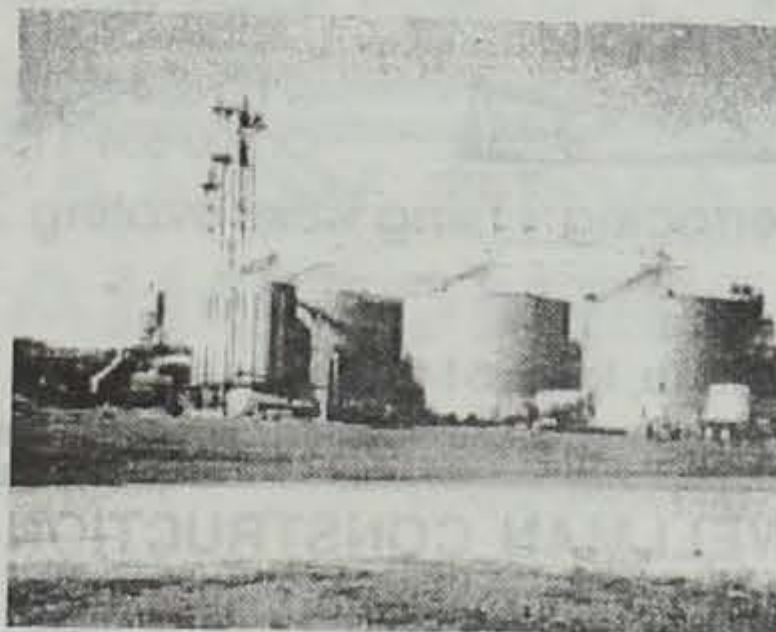
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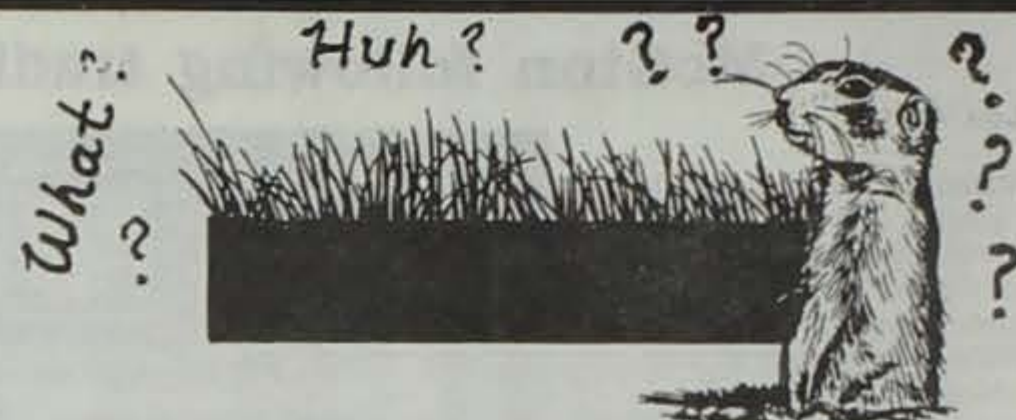
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West Pottawattamie SWCD Cost-share Policy

- Applications can be signed at District Office any time after January 1. Early sign-up is encouraged. Approvals will be made on a monthly basis, as needed.
- Applications will be approved not later than the end of June for spring construction, the end of July/Aug for summer construction and the end of October for fall construction.
- Applications will be approved based on need and contractor priority.
- Landowner is notified by letter of cost-share approval, landowner has 14 days to notify NRCS if they wish to accept the funding. Landowner should also contact contractor at this time.
- Contractor will notify NRCS of priority list, 2-3 jobs ahead and will follow this priority list. Contractor will give NRCS at least three days notice when contractor is ready to start so terraces can be staked.
- After terraces are staked, Landowner/Agent is notified of estimated and eligible cost. Estimates are provided to contractors and landowners.
- Commissioners reserve the right to cancel cost-share if the applicant does not have the terraces completed by the dates listed in item #2, not to exceed 30 days after layout.
- Contractor must check terraces, checkout notes signed by contractor and returned to District Office.
- An original copy of the terrace bill must be brought to the office by the applicant and voucher signed by applicant. Contractors are encouraged to list additional hourly work on

same bill as terrace work, but it must be broken out. Topsoiling, intakes, tree removal, terrace repair, etc. are to be listed separately.

- Terraces are spot checked by NRCS to make sure they meet NRCS specifications before certified for payment. Over building will not be cost-shared.
- Deleted; see item #14.
- Board approves application and voucher for payment. Payment is based on 50% of estimated cost or 50% of the bill, whichever is less.
- Vouchers sent to Des Moines are usually returned to District Office within 4-6 weeks. Vouchers sent to the county are paid around the 15th of each month. All checks come back payable to the applicant. It is up to the applicant to make arrangements with the contractor for payment.
- Landowner must come in to sign 20 year Maintenance Agreement (IP-4) and seeding/fertilizer recommendations and applicant must sign Receipt of Payment (SCD-5) before receiving cost-share check.
- The following cost-share limits apply:
 - Yardage based on 15-foot front slopes, except terraces with intakes, or based on narrow based (NB) or conventional terraces or as required by specifications.
 - Cost-share on intakes (riser to the toe) will be 50% of actual cost or 50% of \$200; whichever is less.
 - Earthwork cost based on \$.50 per cubic yard.
 - Annual cost-share limited to \$3,000.00. Applications will be approved for up to \$2,500.00 unless the owner requests less; the difference, if needed, will be used to finish the last terrace. Applicants can receive county or state funds, but not both in any one calendar year. Landowners can make application for extraordinary terracing projects. The commissioners will review these on a case by case basis and may approve more than the \$3,000. Example, landowners wanting to completely terrace a farm in one year.
 - No cost-share on seeding or fertilizer.
 - No cost-share on topsoiling.



Understanding our language

by Cindy Jones
Technician

It seems these days that everyone has their own language. Whether its the company or organization downtown, or the group of teenagers at the school, they all use words which they seem to understand. Some of those words or terms are new, but some are very common, except that they have a new twist. The twist changes the definition so that the word has an entirely different meaning.

We employees within the conservation assistance field realize we have a lot of terms unfamiliar to others. We therefore would like to help define some of the commonly used terms. Here are some which may or may not be familiar:

Conservation - The controlled use and systematic protection of natural resources.

Natural resources - Material sources of wealth, such as timber, fresh water, or mineral deposits, which occur in a natural state.

Water quality - The chemical, physical and biological characteristics of water, with respect to its suitability for a particular use.

Technical assistance - The assistance to anyone who needs it in the area of planning and implementing conservation systems.

Conservation systems - Systems set up so as to reduce erosion, improve soil and water quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range conditions, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands.

Wetlands - Wetlands are areas which support predominantly aquatic vegetation; contain hydric (wet) soils and/or are permanently or seasonally saturated with water.

Stewardship - The act of landowners or landusers in keeping their lands and natural resources productive and healthy.

Biodiversity - The variety and variability among living plants and animals in any ecosystem. The more diversity, the more healthy the environment.

Ecosystem - A community of plants and animals interacting with each other and with their non-living environment.

Locally-led conservation - Conservation which begins with the local community.

Community stakeholders - assess their natural resources, set community goals, develop an action plan, obtain the resources to carry out the plan, implement solutions and measure the successes.

Best management practice - Any practices which is an effective and practical means of reducing non-point sources of water pollution.

Non-point source pollution - When pollution does not enter a water source at a single location or course, but comes from many individual places and discharges over a wide land area. It cannot be pinpointed.

Sustainable - That which is able to maintain itself without help from other sources.

Watershed - The land over or under which water flows on its way to a stream, river or lake.

Nutrient management - The proper management of organic and inorganic fertilizers to optimize plant growth while limiting nutrient losses to the environment.

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Scholarship winners honored

Rachel Kritenbrink scholarship winner

Rachel Kritenbrink of Council Bluffs has been named the 1999 Conservation Districts of Iowa scholarship winner for the West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District.

A graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in the Bluffs, Rachel has been accepted for the fall term at Iowa State University in Ames. She plans to major in animal ecology and later attend the College of Veterinary Medicine at ISU. "Going to vet clinics and animal hospitals helped me choose my career," said Rachel, who plans to become a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

While in high school, Rachel has been involved in various activities, including band, soccer, Ironmen, Brain Bowl, and TJ's community service club, ASTRA. She was a four-year member of ASTRA, and served over 100 hours of community service.

Rachel is a piano student, and takes tennis lessons during the summer. She also participates in a group which meets monthly at the Council Bluffs Vet Clinic, to learn about animals and becoming a veterinarian.

At their April meeting, West Pottawattamie SWCD Commissioners presented Rachel with a check for \$100 and a certificate, and wished her "best of luck" in her future plans.

Brooke Hallberg 2nd place winner

Brooke Hallberg, also of Council Bluffs, was chosen second place scholarship winner. She is a graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School, and has enrolled for the fall semester at Iowa Lakes Community College. Brooke plans to study natural resource management, then transfer to a four-year college for her degree.

She said she would like to be a county, state or national park employee after graduation from college.

Her high school activities included basketball, track, orchestra, volleyball (she

served as team captain), and National Honor Society membership. She is also active in church and community groups, serving as Vacation Bible School assistant teacher and YMCA Summer Fun Club counselor. She also served with the Council Bluffs Recreation Association, and the Henry Doorly Zoo Explorer Post.

Brooke received a check for \$50 and a certificate, as well as the good wishes of the SWCD commissioners.

Conservation pays!

by Mark Schnepel

It is a phase that's used for more than in just conserving soil, probably because when it comes to saving soil, conservation is an investment. It is however, an investment which doesn't always have a rapid payback. As a district, we promote conservation because of its long-term benefits. Unlike other government entities who may not be looking for more work, we are always looking for more work, and we rely on you to do it for us!

Many of us can pick out fields or whole farms where previous conservation efforts have made a distinct difference. We can also point out areas where lack of effort has resulted in highly-eroded soil.

The reward for soil conservation has, for the most part, not been monetary. Care of the land (stewardship) has in the past been rewarding only if you enjoy it. Cost-share incentives have put conservation on the land. But incentives for total

Wise use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, as well as manure application, reduces environmental risks and enhances crop profits. There are no universal rules for the proper and safe application of soil amendments. Application rates and methods are highly dependent upon the crop grown, the nature of the soil and the climate of the area. The site-specific aspects of this recognition also argue strongly for a prescription approach for each crop, on each soil, in each field. Even within a field, soils may vary widely, and these differences could call for different application rates.

Excess fertilizer and pesticide use can contaminate ground and surface waters. With some common-sense use of these products, this risk can be avoided. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind when planning fertilizer or pesticide applications.

1) Do research. The increasing complexity of chemical use requires that both the farmer and the custom-applicator thoroughly understand how pesticides and their containers need to be properly handled. The complexity of fertilizer use is also increasing. Application rates have become more site-specific than ever, with some farmers using GPS (Global Positioning Satellite Systems) to pinpoint areas of need.

2) Test the soil. If unsure of the current condition of the soil upon which fertilizer will be applied, have the soil tested. The application rate may be

conservation programs, to reward those who properly steward the land, can only hope to be a part of future efforts.

Fertilizer application tips

lowered without reducing yields, and money may be saved on fertilizer costs.

3) Control erosion. Controlling soil erosion can substantially reduce contamination of lakes and streams while preserving higher soil phosphate levels for crop production. Practices such as terraces or grass waterways are good ways to reduce soil erosion.

4) Put in filter strips. It is always a good idea to have a grass filter strip along streams and open ditches to filter out contaminants before they reach the surface waters.

5) Use good timing. Timing of manure applications should be as close as possible to periods of use by the crop. Avoid spreading these materials on frozen or snow-covered ground to minimize losses from runoff caused by rainfall or snowmelt.

6) Establish realistic yield goals. Recognize that exceptionally good years are the exception. Establish realistic yield estimates for each field, based on soil type, normal weather conditions, and previous crop history. Then fertilize accordingly.

7) Have a nutrient management plan. Nutrient management plans help keep track of application schedules, and can make the system more efficient and safer for the

environment.

The county soil and water conservation districts work with landusers to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and educate people on the wise use of natural resources. For more information, contact the local SWCD office.

Ideas needed for LOST funds

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District receives a percentage of the funds raised through the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST). The funds are used for conservation and natural resource capital improvement activities and projects.

The District is looking for ideas or suggestions on how to expand programs to utilize the funds. Anyone with a suggestion is asked to forward it to West Pottawattamie SWCD, 305 McKenzie Ave., Suite 1, Council Bluffs, IA 51503, or stop at the office to visit with the staff.

Ideas submitted will be presented to the SWCD board of commissioners, who will make final decisions on how the funds will be spent.



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Greener economics and lifestyles



The growing interest in herbs and economically useful plants is part of the movement towards "greener" economics and lifestyles. It is, for example, clearly linked with the concern for renewable energy, conservation of resources, holistic medicine and organic farming.

What is a herb? The definition in the Oxford English Dictionary is "plants of which the leaves, or stems and leaves, are used for food or medicine, or in some way for their scent or flavor." Looking at the immense range of modern herbs and their current uses, one would be tempted not so much to narrow this definition, but to make it even broader. To expand upon the Oxford definition, therefore,

a herb can be any plant used for medicine, as an ingredient in food or drink for its preservative flavoring, or health-giving properties, or for its perfuming, cosmetic or cleansing actions in any other product.

Many plants found in our part of the state have herbal uses. Here is a list of various plants commonly found in our areas and their uses:

Mullein - Leaves and flowers useful for the treatment of hoarseness, coughs, bronchitis and asthma. The tea can be used for insomnia.

Plantain - Crushed leaves can be applied directly to the skin to stop bleeding and lessen the pain of bee stings and insect bites.

Stinging Nettle - Leaves may be cooked and eaten like spinach, made into soup or tea. Excellent source of vitamin C. The tea is a remedy for arthritis and gout.

Dock - Good for skin diseases. A compress can help soothe itchy skin; located in close proximity to stinging nettle.

Milkweed - The root (fresh root can cause nausea) is used for colds, flu and respiratory problems.

Dandelion - All parts are used. Leaves are used in salads; root as a coffee substitute; flowers as wine or as a digestive tonic for constipation; liver and gallbladder disease, rheumatism and skin diseases.

Purple Coneflower - (Echinacea) The root is one of the finest blood cleansers, especially for skin problems, such as boils and abscesses; remedy for tonsillitis and inflamed gums; externally, the plant is used to treat wounds or ulcers; stimulates the production of white blood cells which fight infection.

Garlic - Cloves are widely used in butters, vinegars, garlic salt; for colds and coughs; to aid digestion, for high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis.

Red Clover - Dried flowerheads are useful in treating coughs, bronchitis and skin conditions.

Oats - Whole plant and seed is used medicinally as a nerve tonic; for depression and insomnia. Overly large doses may cause headache at the back of the head.

Corn - Is used medicinally for urinary tract infections and stones; the "beard" of the corn silk is used.



Conventional McCormick one-way moldboard plows do a good job of plowing terrace land. Terraces last indefinitely if you throw the backfurrows on the ridge and deadfurrows in the channel.

Moldboard plow -- antique or conservation tool?

by Mark Schnepel,
Chairman
Board of Commissioners

The plow, while not widely used in today's farming, still has its place even in a no-till system. It seems in Iowa, we are blessed with two types of rainfall -- too little, or too much! After last summer's drenchers (up to five inches and more), sometimes referred to as "dirty rains", even no-tilled fields complete with terraces experienced a gully or two. I've always read where no-till will heal these gullies, but the truth of the matter is,

where water goes, soil leaves.

This is where the plow comes in. Oh, sure, you are thinking we've been plowing in our ditches for forty years! The trick is to go a step further -- to the top of the gully -- and plow what I call "eyebrows" (see picture) to break up the water over the field. Especially in a no-till field, but in any field with good residue cover, this will stop erosion by spreading the water over a greater area. Then while you are there, plow out the channels of the terraces to increase their capacity for next year's "dirty rains".

Today's children are tomorrow's leaders

Every generation's future rests with its children, and tomorrow's leaders are today's children. The people who share in shaping children's minds -- parents, teachers, counselors, friends -- are critical in shaping the future of the society in which they live. These are the people who transmit enduring attitudes and values which will shape words and deeds long after the teaching is finished. As we look to the twentieth-century, we need to ask what attitudes and values today's children will possess as they accept their turn as teachers and leaders. Who is teaching them, and what are the most important attitudes and values to which they are being exposed?

At the turn of the twentieth century, a children's education was dominated largely by his or her family. With almost half the nation's people being farmers, children spent much of their growing and learning in the company of parents. Whether tagging along through the fields with a father, or helping a mother take care of household duties without today's conveniences, children learned not only vocational skills, but values. Hard work, honesty, and thrift were often high on that list; perhaps as much out of necessity as out of virtue. Schooling, where it was available, often was limited to grammar school and sometimes high school, preparing the child to do the reading, writing and arithmetic required for a life

closely associated with the farm, town or city where they were born and raised.

The latter half of the twentieth century showed dramatic changes. Families no longer spend most days and nights interacting with each other on the farm. Only two percent of our people farm, and family members go in several different directions to spend their days. The hours together shrink, and finding "quality time" to spend together is a major issue in many families. Each of us has only so much time, and adding new obligations or distractions means dividing up the remainder. The sources of information and influence are far more diverse. In addition to a higher percentage of people graduating from high school and college, every educational hour is fortified with materials from around the world. Today's student is tutored by dozens of teachers and influenced by literally thousands of information providers as part of his or her education.

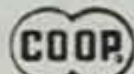
Clearly, the challenge of the twenty-first century is not lack of information about natural resources (or anything else).

Overwhelmed by information from millions of sources, our children will need to be skillful in sorting the bad from the good, the reasonable from the false. That will require an education that includes not only reliable facts, but a view of past history, as well, to help form a knowledge of what seems reasonable, and what does not. Those who understand how the natural world works, and how humans have dealt with it, both responsibly and irresponsibly over the ages, will be better equipped to make sound choices when they are confronted with tomorrow's unprecedented challenges and choices.



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"In the children's hands . . ."

by Lou Walte
and Russ Kurth

The theme of Soil and Water Stewardship Week, from April 25 to May 2 this year, is *In the Children's Hands*. "As we close the twentieth century and second millennium, we must think about what is being passed on to future generations. The children of the new millennium will need both roots and wings. They will need roots anchored in the legacy of sound natural resource conservation and wings to strike out, to innovate and make the world a better place in which to live." (These statements were made by the organizers of the event).

We asked Michelle Mether and Justin Gochenour, both fourth grade students at LoMa Elementary School, to give us their ideas about the topic. Michelle is the daughter of Curtis and Anita Mether; Justin's parents are Paul and Lana Gochenour, all of rural Logan.

We found both Michelle and Justin to be very familiar with the terms "conservation", "environment", "natural resources", etc. They weren't as certain about the meaning of "stewardship", but once it was defined, they had some good ideas about how it should be carried out.

"People need to stop polluting," Justin said, "and pick up their trash! They need to build terraces, and do no-till, and fertilize the crops. They should also plant trees. We just planted trees and grass around our new house. Trees are good, because they take carbon dioxide out of the air. And grass helps stop the soil from washing away."

Michelle added, "Some insects are good, too. Bees help pollinate the flowers, and ladybugs eat other bugs (aphids). Last year I helped plant marigolds and zinnias, and helped take care of them. I caught ladybugs at my grandma's house and then took them to the flowers and let them go."

Kurth asked, "Do you think the way people farm the land is important to you? Both young people were quick to agree that it was 'very important'. 'You have to stop the topsoil from washing off,' Justin affirmed. 'You need terraces so this won't happen.' Then he added solemnly, 'Some



Justin Gochenour, Russ Kurth and Michelle Mether discuss conservation ways and means.

people just need to fix their terraces!"

"You shouldn't plow up the ground," Michelle chimed in, and Justin agreed. Both said their father's "do no-till", and they knew this meant leaving "all the stuff" (stalks, leaves, etc.) on the field, "so the soil won't wash away."

The next question from Kurth was, "Do you think farmers in general take good care of the land?" In unison, the response was, "Some of them!"

"Some are just in it for the money," Justin commented, "and really don't care about the land or animals."

"You can just drive by the farms and see which one are not being taken care of!" Michelle said emphatically.

When asked what they felt could be done to better preserve the soil, they listed terraces, no-

till, contour farming, fertilizing, planting grasses and trees, and worms. "You need worms in the soil to keep it loose," Michelle informed. "Yeah," added Justin, "it's a lot harder to plant without them keeping the soil soft. The plant can't push up through (compacted soil) and the roots can't go down to water!"

Both said they learned much about conservation from their parents, but also from their teacher, Mr. Riess. "He's really a good teacher," Michelle said earnestly, and Justin nodded his head in agreement. "I was at Willow Lake," (the outdoor classroom sessions) Justin said. "We saw the limestone where the soil was all washed off. They showed us a lot about nature and stuff there." "Yeah, like those things we picked up," Michelle said, then after a moment's thought added, "Fossils!"

We learned that both young people learn through practical application, such as doing chores, or assisting with farm activities. Justin said he has helped scoop corn, tend livestock, change parts on machinery, fix fence, and "other things for Mom." Michelle feeds the sheep and lambs, and helps with the cows. She also helps her mother when called upon, but admitted she would "rather be outside."

Being outside for Michelle

often means playing with her rabbit, "Snowstorm", the family dog, "Grizzly", or "tons of cats!" She has a horse, "Katie", one of five quarter horses on the farm, who is "not quite old enough to ride yet." She might be found in the windbreak, observing the small creatures sheltered there.

or riding her bike. She is a piano student of "Miss Nixon"; a member of the Magnolia Hillbillies 4-H Club, and busy with school and community events. She has two older siblings: a brother Lynn and sister Jennifer.

Justin loves sports, and plays baseball, soccer and flag football. He is looking forward to participating in basketball at school, and has attended basketball camps. He likes to fish, and has enjoyed many out-state fishing trips with his family. "But I caught a 10-pound catfish right in my grandpa's pond!" he said, spreading his hands to show the size of it. (Like most fisherman, he might have exaggerated a bit!)

He has a pet parakeet, as well as an aquarium filled with goldfish. He once had a pet chicken, which he named "White Hen", and for a time a wild rabbit which had been injured by a mower. "I tried to take care of it after it got hurt," he said a bit sadly, "but it didn't live very long." (Michelle was obviously sympathetic, but sagely advised "We should leave the wild animals alone in their own environment.")

When asked what occupation he plans to follow, Justin said with conviction that he wants to be a farmer. He has two brothers, Clinton and Ryan, and two sisters, Brittany and Kaitlyn.

Justin and Michelle impressed us as being intelligent, literate, outgoing, personable, and obviously well brought-up. Stewardship, in the hands of children like these, is a hope for the future.

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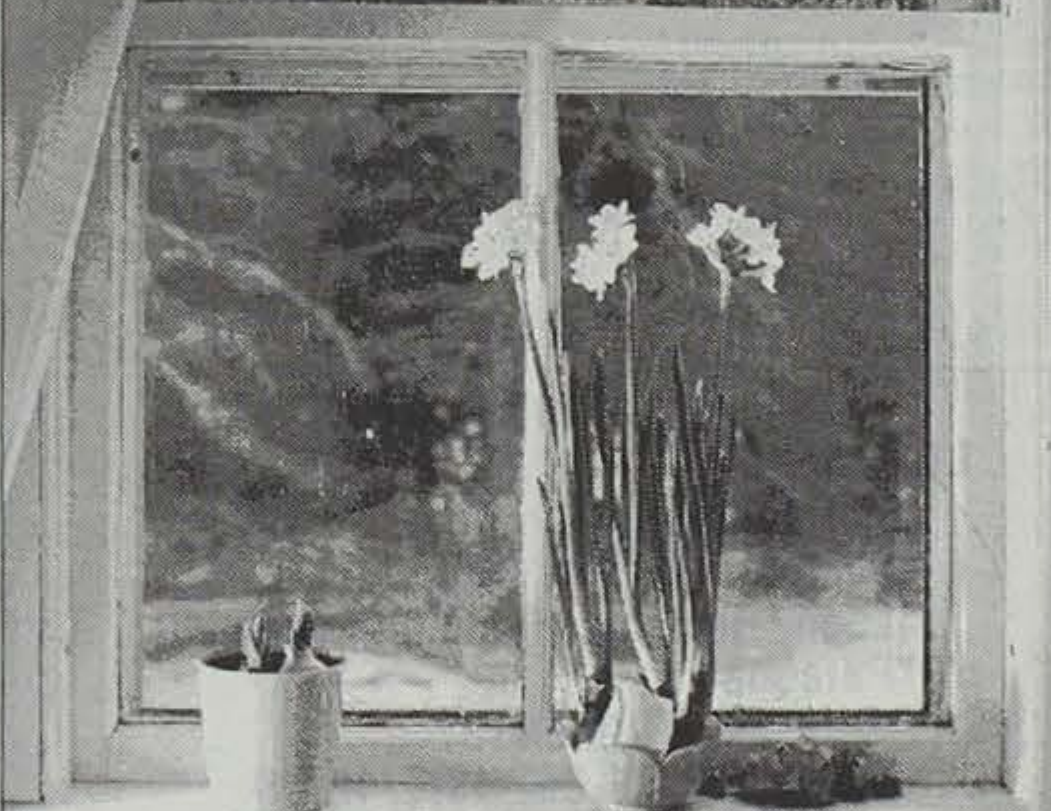


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"Barry's Bloomers" survive some serious setbacks

by Lou Waite

Kellie Barry selected the name for her business when her first enterprise was designing and making flower arrangements. She used both fresh blooms, and silk posies in floral requirements for weddings, anniversaries, etc. But later she said felt uncomfortable, because she didn't want to compete with "the excellent florist in Woodbine." So she decided to diversify.

"I have my grandmother Helen Brown's cookbook", she said, "filled with recipes she used over 100 years ago. Many of these were for jams, jellies and preserves. So I decided to use the recipes, and see if there was a market for these things today."

Kellie knew that marketing was very important for a venture of this kind. She also knew setting up marketing procedures, to compete in this age of advanced technology, would be expensive. In 1996, she consulted Sharon Sullivan, Director of the Harrison County Development Association. Sharon suggested Kellie apply for a grant from the Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development agency, which she did.

"Marty Braster was the RC&D coordinator at that time," Kellie recalled, "and he was extremely helpful -- very knowledgeable and efficient. My application was approved, and I received a 'marketing' grant. The money

received allowed me to gain access to the Internet, and develop a web page for the business. I was able to purchase computer hardware which allows me to print my own brochures, labels, etc. I could never have done all this without the grant, and I really appreciate it."

So everything was going well! Kellie and her husband Roger, an accountant, moved into a downtown office, which they shared. She prepared the jellies, jams, preserves, etc., in her well-equipped kitchen, packaged or bottled them, applied her own labels, and displayed them for sale. (The delicious fragrances from her kitchen often wafted into Roger's half of the office, perhaps lightening the mood of those waiting to pick up their tax returns.)

"I use locally-grown fruit whenever possible," Kellie said, "or shipped-in varieties in season. Right now, rhubarb is ready, and soon it will be strawberries and raspberries. Later in the summer, I'll pick elderberries, which are found along country roads or -- with their permission -- in farmer's fields."

Excess fruits and juices are frozen, so that a supply of product is available all year. "This time of year, I usually do a 'batch' per day," Kellie said. Corn cob jelly, made from her grandmother's recipe, is packaged with a corn-cob replica of a tractor atop the jelly jar. "I don't change a thing in those recipes," Kellie



Kellie Barry is shown in one section of Barry's Bloomers, with displays of jams and jellies, candles, etc.

declared. "Actually, they are more adaptable than you think. They had pectin back in those days, which was made from apples." (It should be noted that Kellie's business is state licensed and inspected annually.)

Circumstances for the Barry's took an abrupt turn for the worse on May 5, 1997, however. A lighted cigarette thrown from the window of an apartment upstairs ignited the awning on the office building. Although the blaze was extinguished by the local fire department, the residue from the chemical used contaminated the food products, and they had to be thrown away.

"It was devastating," Kellie said, "but that wasn't the worst. A little over a month later, on June 10, there was the terrible fire which destroyed three buildings next to us. (Note: An electrical short-circuit was blamed for the fire, which was battled for hours by ten fire departments before being

brought under control.) Roger's computer and office equipment were saved, but what little product I had got back together was lost again. Smoke and water damage to the building made it non-repairable, so it had to come down."

Roger operated his business from a rented mobile home while the demolition process was taking place. Barry's Bloomers, however, was "homeless". But today, a stately new building stands on the site of the old, having been completed in December, 1997. Appropriately, a Phoenix bird is engraved into the fascia near the entrance. Kellie and Roger once again share the spacious and attractively enhanced interior of their new structure. On the second level are two apartments, which are presently occupied.

Kellie has added a new product, which she again makes herself. The air is now perfumed by the fragrance of hundreds of candles, of all sizes and scents. Many of them

are unique in design, such as a replica of an ear of "Iowa" corn, complete with removable green "husks". A popular item is "Sweetness and Light"; a package containing a small jar of strawberry jam, and a strawberry-scented candle, which will fit into the jar when empty. Kellie has originated numerous clever ideas such as this, and declares she is "having a ball" doing it.

We cannot tell Kellie and Roger's story without mentioning "Hillary", who has no connection to the White House.

Actually, Hillary was adopted into the family, and since has developed a persona unique unto herself. When she sees Kellie driving up the lane to their country home, she always runs to meet her, with a loud, vocal welcome. She provides excellent "watchdog" service, giving forth with the same vociferous vocalizations whenever she sees or hears something out of the ordinary.

Hillary loves to play tag, but Kellie warns that she sometimes "gets carried away". Since she is double-jointed,

See Barry . . . Page 15



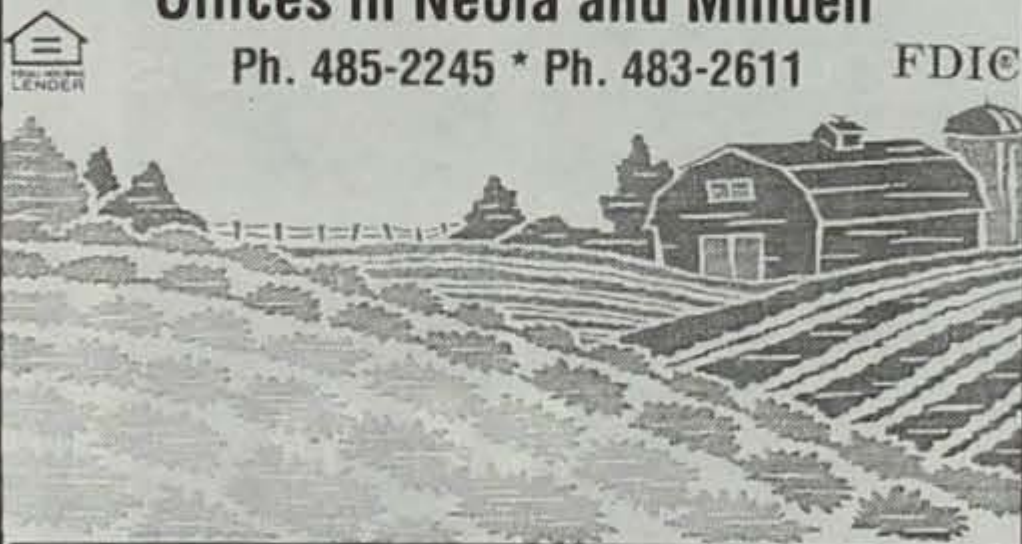
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Two new faces around the office



Konda Slagle, State Secretary, has been missed around the office while on maternity leave. She brought new son, Cameron, to a recent commissioner's meeting, and he immediately became the top agenda item.



Warren Wohlers, interrupted from his data entry at the computer, smiles for the camera.

A new face around the Harrison office is that of Warren Wohlers, of Missouri Valley. He is serving the Soil and Water Conservation District as a Soil Conservation Aide, on a part-time basis.

Warren is a graduate of Missouri Valley High School. He attended Iowa Western Community College, where he received certification as a tool & die machinist, and in welding and hydraulics.

He helps his father, Everette, with farming, and his mother, Karen, with her hog operation. Karen also raises, breaks and trains horses, and Warren is "chief assistant" for this enterprise.

In his "spare time", which is limited, Warren likes to ride his Appaloosa, *Little Boy*, who was obviously named before he grew to be 14-hands tall. He and *Little Boy* like to take part in trail rides, when possible. Other family members sometimes ride along on one of the 6 horses the Wohlers own.

Warren was an active 4-H participant when younger, and a "Whiz Kid" club member until after graduation from high school. He was involved in various projects, and belonged to the "Harrison Hoof-beats", a 4-H horse club.

He said his plans for the future are undecided at the present, but he hopes to find an occupation which lets him enjoy nature and the outdoors.

Russ Kurth, District Conservationist, remarked:

... Barry

Continued from Page 14

she can kick in any direction, and that is her favorite trick if one is unwary. A natural comedian, she is becoming well-known around the neighborhood, and passers-by have been known to wave at her, and yell, "Hi, Hillary!" They also can hear her serenade, provided for whatever occasion, from miles away.

If you haven't guessed by now, Hillary is a donkey, but don't tell her so. She thinks she is people!

The Barry's have one daughter, August, who is a freshman at Woodbine High School. Melissa, Roger's daughter from a former marriage, is a freshman at the University of Northern Missouri, Marysville.

The family is busy with school and community affairs, but long business hours allow for little leisure time. They are members of the Methodist Church in Woodbine.

As for the future, Kellie said, "Right now, I am attempting to recover the business accounts lost due to the fires. I want to get back to where I was then, before I make too many future plans." Then with her attractive, gamin smile, she added, "You know nothing is certain these days." (Did we hear Roger add that old saying, "except you-know-what and taxes?")

Oh, and by the way, Kellie would like to have a horse, but she swears she won't name it "Bill!"

the conservation buffer initiative. Through the latter, the district hopes to increase the number of filter strips along streams and ponds.

Warren has sent letters to landowners along Keg Creek and the three major drainage areas which drain into DeSoto Bend. He will be making a follow-up contact with each of these landowners later in the year.

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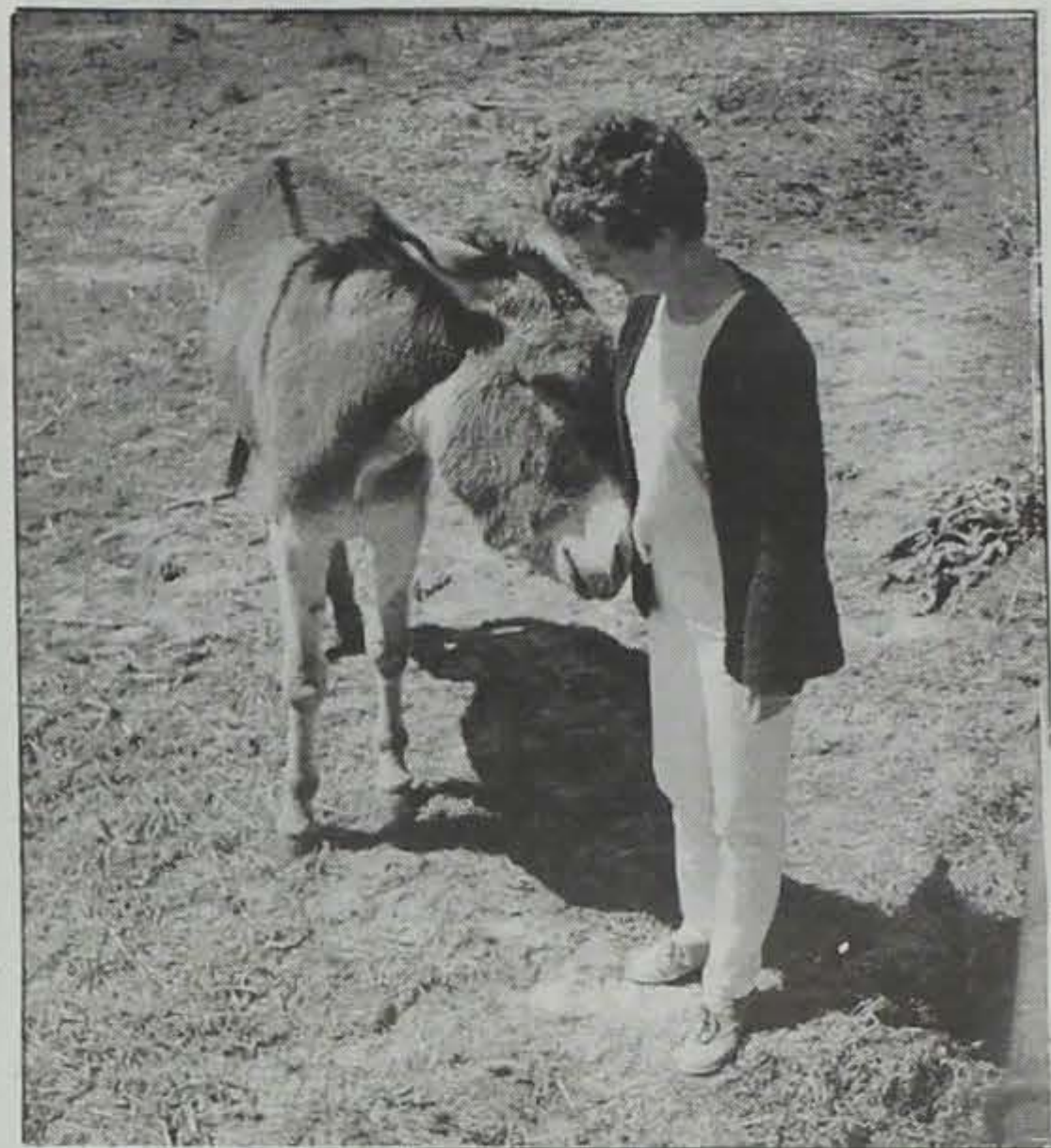
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"Tag, you're it!" Hillary gives Kellie a playful nudge.



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Boltons honored for their achievements



Bernie and Norma Bolton

The family of Bernard and Norma Bolton and their livestock enterprise, *Bern-A-Dale Shorthorns*, was honored at this year's Iowa Beef Exposition, as Iowa Seedstock Producers of the Year. Each year, various state breed organizations submit nominations to the Iowa Breeds Council, and from these, one is selected to receive the award.

The prestigious award was presented by Secretary of Agriculture Patty Judge in a

ceremony held on February 15 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. A portrait of the Boltons was hung in the cattle barn office, along with those of past recipients.

"Bernie" began raising shorthorns in 1953 as a 4-H project, and has expanded the herd at intervals throughout the years. At one time, the herd included 125 purebred cows, but this year there are less than 100. *Bern-A-Dale* is very much a family operation. Beginning with Bernie's father, the

operation involves four generations, since now the grandchildren are part of the work force. Everyone assists with feeding, AI procedures, advertising, showing cattle at sales and fairs, etc.

The family has had numerous leadership roles with 4-H and Shorthorn Associations during the past years, actively promoting the breed. That tradition is being carried out by the daughters and granddaughters. Bernie and Norma have each held state and national offices with the Shorthorn Association.

The promotions which they have managed and hosted have resulted in sales to producers in 26 states and several Canadian provinces. They have shown and sold cattle at the National Western Stock Show in Denver; the Southwestern Beef Exposition in Ft. Worth; the Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois and Wisconsin State Fairs, and the Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, South Dakota, Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama and North Dakota Beef Expos. They were Junior sponsors when Iowa hosted the Junior Nationals in Des Moines in 1994. At present they are assisting with the organizing of the Junior Nationals for the year 2000, to be held in Kansas City. The event will be in conjunction with Missouri, Arkansas and Nebraska.

Educational grant winners

by Michelle Zimmerman
County Resource Planner

The East Pottawattamie Soil and Water District Commissioners have established an environmental education grant, with emphasis on soil and water conservation and environmental education. The first time the grant was available, seven grant applications were returned to the SWCD office.

The Educational Grant winners and their projects were:

Tara Green and Brooke Ausdemore - Installing a goose nest from DNR, building ten wood duck nests, 10 birdhouses and 5 bat houses for the Walnut Community Wetlands.

Walnut 1st and 8th grade students - Planting a native boundary between residential areas and the Walnut Wetlands.

Riverside North Elementary Outdoor Classroom - Enhancing the appearance of the Walnut school frontage with cross-curriculum integration of high school biology, junior high and 4th grades science classes, agriculture and construction classes.

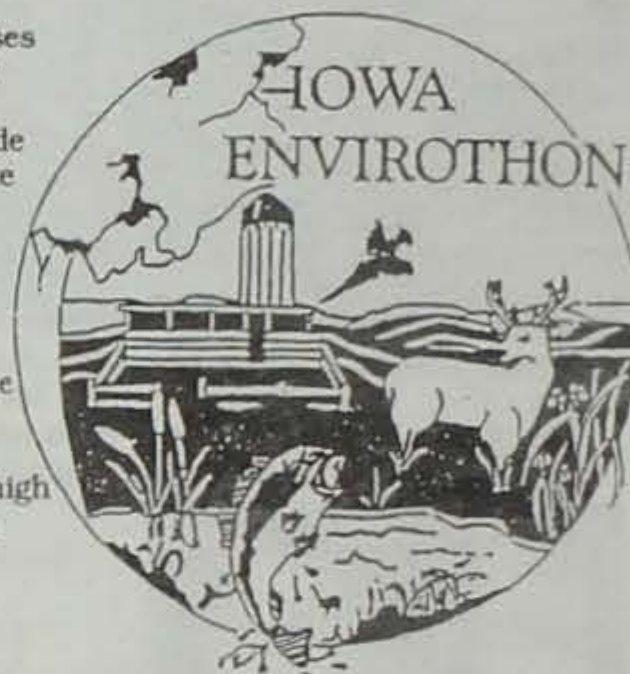
Carroll Olsen, ISU Extension - Armstrong

Research Farm, Forage Management Course for Southwest Iowa farmers.

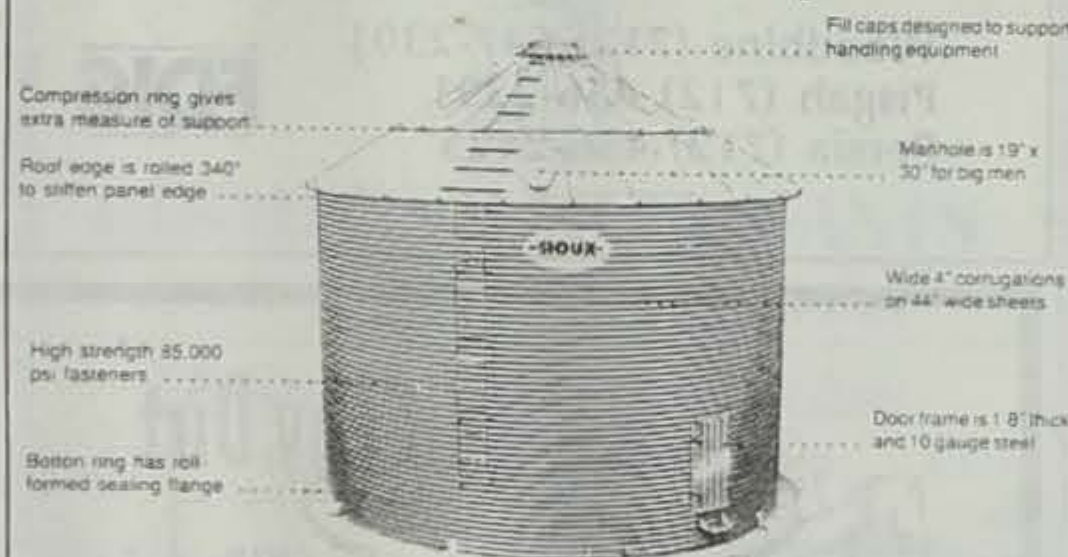
Westside Feeders 4-H Club - Touring the USDA Soil Tilth Laboratory and the Agronomy and Horticulture plots.

Armstrong Research Farm - Constructing a glass-walled soil-viewing pit on the farm.

The grant is funded through donations received from the public. It is available to all school districts, county 4-H clubs, the Armstrong Research Farm or any other organization with education as a focus. For more information, those interested may call 712-482-6408.



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