

Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District 63rd Annual Report



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2008 Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and Assistants were (front row) Todd Heckenberg, Maureen McLaughlin, Ron Snyder, (back row) Don Lounsbury, Jeff Burgus, Brad Weiss and Bob Hinson.

Personnel During 2008

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS	AREA OFFICE STAFF (Fairfield)
Maureen McLaughlin, Chairperson	Bruce Trautman, Assistant State Conservationist (FO)
Don Lounsbury, Vice-Chairperson	Shawn Dettmann, Area Resource Conservationist
Jeff Burgus, Conservationist	Kristina Harris-Hull, Area Program Specialist
Todd Heckenberg, Conservationist	Sarah Anderson, Agricultural Engineer
Ronald Snyder, Conservationist	Kevin Andersen, State Private Lands Biologist
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS	IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & LAND STEWARDSHIP - DIVISION OF SOIL CONSERVATION (Des Moines)
Robert Hinson	Chuck Gird, Director
Bradley Weiss	James Gillespie, Chief Field Services Bureau
OFFICE STAFF	Paul Valin, Field Representative
Drew DeLang, District Conservationist	
Shloh Bradley, District/Resource Conservationist	
Courtney Myers, Soil Conservationist (transferred to Maquoketa in August)	
Jon Matz, Soil Conservationist (started October)	
Daryl Boulware, State Technician	
Lori Heckenberg, District Employee	
Jay Jenson, District Employee	
Theresa Pintar, Geode Watershed Coordinator (through March)	
Jamie Grimes, State & District Secretary	

REVOLVING FUNDS ACCOUNT

Expenditures and receipts of Des Moines SWCD regular checking account from July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008:

Balance on Hand, July 1, 2007	\$1,928.05
Receipts:	
Miscellaneous Sales	1.61
Contractor Meeting Reimbursement	123.73
Checking Account Interest	6.92
Geode Meeting Reimbursement	5.99
Cookbook Sales	168.00
CD Sales	110.00
Sipping Reimbursement	5.05
Flower Sales	735.00
IN Reimbursement	2,124.81
TOTAL	\$3,279.11
Disbursements:	
Postage	245.81
Office Supplies & Expenses	16.00
Awards & Dinner Expenses	302.84
Commissioner Travel	1,321.66
Poster Contest Prizes	215.00
Geode Kick Off Meeting	11.98
Dues	775.00
Subscriptions/Memberships	28.00
Scholarships	250.00
Internet Marketing	120.00
Flower sales	360.15
Assistant Commissioner retirement Gift	28.95
Contractor's meeting	168.45
Envirothon	115.00
TOTAL	\$3,958.84
Balance on Hand, June 30, 2008	\$1,248.32

Expenditures and receipts of Des Moines SWCD special projects/ payroll account from July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008:

Balance on Hand, July 1, 2007	\$6,148.07
Receipts:	
Account Interest	34.52
Geode Account Reimbursement	1,000.00
Transfer from Geode Account for IPERS	791.93
CDI Farm Bill	9,274.70
DSC Buffer Initiative	13,435.90
TOTAL	\$24,537.05
Expenditures:	
Federal Tax	1,221.61
State Of Iowa - Tax	164.26
Unemployment Insurance	93.50
IPERS	2,002.16
Payroll Preparation Fees	217.50
Transfer To Geode Account	1,000.00
Payroll	8,164.77
TOTAL	\$12,864.80
Balance on Hand, June 30, 2008	\$17,820.32

Expenditures and receipts of Des Moines SWCD Geode watershed account from July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008:

Balance on Hand, July 1, 2007	\$0.00
Receipts:	
Account Interest	15.79
Transfer from Payroll Account	1,000.00
IDALS - Watershed Development Grant	15,607.50
TOTAL	\$16,623.29
Expenditures:	
Payroll	7,502.02
Payroll Preparation Fees	127.50
Federal Tax	1,916.66
State of Iowa - Tax	190.50
Unemployment Insurance	100.55
IPERS	791.93
Washington SWCD	1,065.17
Postage	230.56
Supplies	142.17
Check Order	17.40
Transfer to Payroll Account	1,000.00
Geode RC&D	3,028.14
TOTAL	\$16,112.60
Balance on Hand, June 30, 2008	\$510.69

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES DURING 2008

- January**
- Election of Officers for 2008 resulted as follows: Chairperson - Maureen McLaughlin; Vice Chairperson - Don Lounsbury.
 - Appointments for 2008 resulted as follows: Secretary - Jamie Grimes; Treasurer - Grimes; Co-Treasurer - Jeff Burgus; Assistant Commissioners - Bob Hinson, Brad Weiss; RC&D Executive Board - Lounsbury, McLaughlin (alternate); Flint Creek Advisory Board - Hinson, Ron Snyder (alternate); REAP - Todd Heckenberg; Education/Contests/Awards Committee - McLaughlin, Hinson, Snyder; Fund Raising Committee - All; Marketing Committee - McLaughlin; Legislative Committee - Burgus, Lounsbury; Urban Conservation Committee - Snyder.
 - McLaughlin attended the CDI Legislative Day held at the capital in Des Moines.
 - Civil Rights were reviewed.

- February**
- Annual report was printed in Mediapolis News.
 - Boulware assisted with science fair judging at Notre Dame.
 - The SWCD donated \$50 to Johnson County Conservation to Envirothon lunch costs.
 - The SWCD co-hosted a contractor's meeting with Louisa County SWCD on February 27.

- March**
- Myers attended the Envirothon with the Mediapolis High School team.
 - Snyder attended the Spring Regional meeting in Chariton.
 - Thomas Lingenfelter was chosen as local recipient of the high school scholarship.
 - The SWCD sold Dutch Mill flower bulbs.
 - Boulware and Myers assisted with science fair judging for Southeast Iowa Super Conference at Westland Mall in West Burlington.

- April**
- Soil and Water Stewardship week was April 27 - May 3.
 - Winners were chosen for the poster contest.
 - Boulware presented information to high school juniors and seniors at a SCC career day.

- May**
- Myers and Boulware did soils runoff and apple/earth demonstrations at the New London 6th grade campout.
 - Local winners were chosen for the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program.

- June**
- NACD dues were paid.
 - A \$250 donation was given to the Tri-State Agricultural Education Foundation for a scholarship.
 - The SWCD raised the state cost share limit for all practices, except grade stable structures, to \$7,500.

- July**
- The SWCD had a booth during the Des Moines County Fair, July 23 - July 29.
 - McLaughlin attended a Geode partners meeting at the Geode lake office, along with DeLang, Boulware and Grimes.

- August**
- McLaughlin and Heckenberg completed the annual audit of the District books.
 - CDI dues were paid.
 - Myers transferred to the Maquoketa Field Office.

- September**
- Snyder attended the Fall Regional meeting in Keokuk County.

- October**
- Matz started as Soil Conservationist, transferring from the Algona Field Office.

- November**
- McLaughlin and Snyder attended Annual Conference in Ames.
 - McLaughlin and Grimes decorated the Christmas tree at Westland Mall for the Boulevard of Trees.
 - Hinson, Lounsbury and Snyder were elected on the general ballot.

- December**
- Awards supper was held at Turn 2, Mediapolis.
 - The SWCD paid registration fees to sponsor an Envirothon team from Mediapolis High School.
 - A fund raising newsletter was mailed.

Cost Share Available for Windbreaks

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District has cost share available for windbreaks through the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP).

Windbreaks consist of multiple rows of trees and shrubs established to protect structures from troublesome winds. Windbreaks also can increase aesthetic value, lessen noise, and provide wildlife habitat. REAP is a cost share program for forestry practices on privately owned land used for agricultural production. Besides windbreaks, REAP can be used for timber stand improvement, tree planting, site preparation for natural regeneration, and riparian forest buffers.

Since 1989, the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) has invested over \$34 million into soil and water enhancement activities throughout Iowa. Locally, the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District has received \$304,843.

Applications are accepted year round. If you are interested in signing up for REAP or have questions, contact the Des Moines County SWCD at 319-753-6221.

Soil & Water Conservation District Scholarship Recipient

Thomas Lingenfelter of Yarmouth was chosen as the 2008 recipient of the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship. This scholarship is sponsored in conjunction with the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI).

Thomas was chosen from the applications received from seniors throughout the county. Criteria considered in judging the applications included scholastic achievement, need and leadership, which include service, character and self-motivation.

Thomas graduated from Mediapolis High School and is currently attending Southeastern Community College. He is the son of Tom and Sharon Lingenfelter.



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MHS Team Competes at Envirothon

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored a team of students from Mediapolis High School who participated in a regional Envirothon competition held in Iowa City in March 2008. The team placed fifth at the regional competition. From the regional level, the top fifteen teams in the state advanced to the state competition held at Springbrook State Park.

Team members Cody Vantiger, Whitney Wagenbach, Crystal Armstrong, Alison Tamminga, and Jessica Carey competed against ten other teams from Iowa City West, Muscatine, Bellevue, Maquoketa, Springville, Preston, and Union-LaPorte. The group was coached by NRCS Soil Conservationist Courtney Myers and MHS teacher Stacey Rector.

The Envirothon is a team competition for high school students. In the field and classroom, teams of five students are challenged to use their knowledge and critical thinking skills to conduct hands-on investigations, solve real-life scenarios and answer written questions about Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Wildlife and Soils.



Mary Honson received New Cooperator award – pictured with her daughter Kathy Strawhacker

LOCAL LANDOWNERS CHOSEN FOR CONSERVATION AWARDS

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District selected local landowners as District winners for the 2008 annual Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program, which is co-sponsored by the Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee and Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI).

Carroll & Lois Oberman, Yarmouth, and Mike Oberman, Mediapolis, were selected as the winners in the division for owner-operated farms on which the owner-operator has established and maintained the most complete conservation program.

NRCS Soil Conservationist Courtney Myers said about the Obermans, "I felt that Carroll and Mike Oberman were very deserving of the Owner/Operator award after visiting their farm this past winter. I was very impressed by how conscientious they were about keeping grassed waterways well mowed, making sure they had enough crop residue in the fields that need it, and being concerned about even the smallest gullies that appeared. This same care is evidenced in the health and appearance of their cattle herd. The Obermans have installed numerous conservation practices throughout the years, but they have also made decisions about their land use that also shows their commitment to keeping the soil in place. They have decided to keep their steepest ground in hay and pasture to protect it as much as possible. Keeping cattle as part of their operation may mean more work, but they realize that some of their land was best suited to hay and pasture."

Mary Honson, Mediapolis, was selected as the winner of the new cooperator division. This division is for a landowner who becomes a new soil conservation district cooperator during the calendar year.

Sometimes landowners can work with the office for years on a variety of things but the minute they are approved for state cost share, they become a new district soil and water conservation cooperator. Mary has worked with the office in the past on CRP and conservation plans but it wasn't until she recently completed a terrace project through state cost share that she became a District cooperator. Mary may be receiving the award of New Cooperator but to the office, she has been cooperating for many years and we appreciate her dedication to the environment.

If you know a landowner or producer you feel is doing a great job of conserving natural resources, please call the Soil & Water Conservation District at 319-753-6221 to nominate them!



Winners in the owner-operator division are Mike & Sonia Oberman and Lois & Carroll Oberman

Geode Watershed Update

As some of you are aware, the SWCD and NRCS office completed an assessment in Lake Geode watershed during the winter of 2007-08 through a grant provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS).

This assessment found that while a great deal of conservation work has been completed throughout the watershed on private land, there is a need for more practices. Although most of these conservation practices will be more beneficial in Lake Geode Park, money will be available to assist private landowners in the watershed who are interested in constructing terraces, grade stabilization structures, or rebuilding waterways.

The SWCD is partnering with Henry County SWCD, DNR, NRCS, and IDALS-DSC to receive grant funding to hire a project coordinator to oversee this project, fund the projects inside the park and also provide cost share to private landowners.

We are very excited about this project and hope you will join us in our efforts to improve the water quality at Lake Geode!

District Donates Scholarship

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District donated \$250 to the Tri-State Agricultural Education Foundation for the 2008 school year.

The Foundation was established to assist students enrolled in agriculture programs at Southeastern Community College in West Burlington.

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District is one of many local organizations who made contributions towards the scholarship fund. (Continued on page 6B)

Conservation's Power

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and Conservation Districts of Iowa, sponsored the annual poster contest for all students in the county.

The 2008 theme was "Water is Life." The contest consists of five divisions – Division 1 is kindergarten and 1st grades; Division 2 is 2nd and 3rd grades; Division 3 is 4th - 6th grades; Division 4 is 7th - 9th grades; and Division 5 is 10th - 12th grades. Judging criteria included conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

Additionally, each first place winner was submitted for regional competition. The posters from Amy Schulz and Alexis Coulter were chosen as regional winners. Regional winners are then submitted for state competition. Alexis was chosen as a state winner and her poster was displayed during the Conservation Districts of Iowa Annual Conference! Her poster will now go to national competition at the National Association of Conservation District conference in mid-February.



Division 1 winners from Mediapolis Elementary were Cade Nollen, 1st; Maya Johnson, 3rd; Genesis Harvey, Honorable Mention; Jacqueline Dunshee, Honorable Mention; and Olivia Moehle, 2nd.



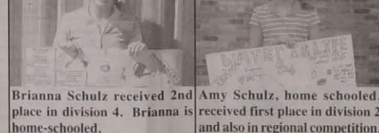
Division 2 winners from Mediapolis Elementary were Brianna Eberhardt, 2nd; Autumn Fjeld, 3rd; Honorable Mentions Kendra Witte and Tyler Johnson.



Division 3 winners from Mediapolis were Tyler Rogers, 3rd, Abigail Coates, 2nd, Adam McAlpine and Mikala Denney, Honorable Mention.



Grimes Elementary students Kaitlynn Whitehall received Honorable Mention and Kassidy Lawler received first place in division 3. Winners in Division 5 from Burlington High School were Luke Corrick, 2nd place, and Bethany Dichraft, 1st place.



Brianna Schulz received 2nd place in division 4. Brianna is home-schooled. Amy Schulz, home schooled, received first place in division 2 and also in regional competition.



Honorable mention winners in division 4 from Burlington High School were Natasha Williams-Yee, Robert Foster and Kenneth Cravens. Burlington High School winners in division 4 were Alexis Coulter, first, and Natalie Larson, third.

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