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District soil
conservation awards

Awards were presented during a noon luncheon to winners in the Benton County district Soil Conservation Service awards program. Citations were issued for the outstanding owner-operator, and for the outstanding tenant-operators in the county. Chairman of the Benton County Soil Conservation

District Commission, John "Dick" Schild, center, presented awards to from left, Allan, Thelma and Harry Horak winners in the owner-operator category, and Noma L. Jebe, Ann Arbor, Mich., and Lois and Willard Jesse, La Porte City, tenant-operator.

Timesphoto by John Gilbert

District conservation awards
to Jebe, Jesses and Horaks

TIMESNEWS—Two north-Benton farmers have been recognized for soil conservation work considered to be outstanding.

Awards were presented to Noma L. Jebe, Ann Arbor, Mich., Lois and Willard Jesse, LaPorte City, Thelma and Harry Horak and their son Allan during a recognition luncheon Thursday in Vinton, hosted by the Benton County Soil Conservation District (SCD) and Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

Jebe and the Jesses were cited in the tenant-operator category; Horaks in the owner-operator category.

The awards are made each year by the SCD and SCS to farmers or farm operators in the county considered to be doing an outstanding job of conserving the soil.

Horaks were recognized earlier this month as having the most outstanding soil conservation program in the state.

Mrs. Jebe is executor of the estate of her parents. Part of the estate is the quarter-section farm three miles southeast of

LaPorte City now operated by the Jesses. (Mrs. Jebe's mother, Florence Rupprich, now lives in LaPorte City.)

The Jebe-Jesse award was for the program instituted on the farm, including terraces built in 1974 and this fall (both grassbacked and farm-over, tile-intake terraces are in use), tiling and development of waterways.

Mr. Jebe said he wanted to take the opportunity to thank Benton County for the assistance it gave him in the start of his career in ag statistics 42 years ago when he worked in Vinton as a corn-hog tabulator. He is now with the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, doing environmental research.

Horaks were recognized for their conservation program on the 260 acres they farm in northeast Harrison Township (northeast of Vinton or southeast of Brandon). The first-place state conservation program includes terraces, contours, tiling, waterways and timber reserves, on 260 acres.

The Horaks' son Allan has joined the farming operation. Harry is also the first and only soil conservation commissioner from Benton County to serve as the president of the state association of soil conservation commissioners.

Erosion problem

District Soil Conservationist Floyd Peters said the work done on the land farmed by the Jesses points up that conservation practices are also needed on relatively flat land. "We're getting quite a bit of erosion on flat land (with a 5-7 per cent slope). A loss of one inch of topsoil in 12 years is equivalent to losing two bushels of topsoil for every bushel of corn harvested.

State Rep. Russell Wyckoff, D-Vinton, told the people at the luncheon that one of the issues sure to come before the Iowa Legislature this year or next, would be land use. He was asked by Horak and District Conservation Commission Chairman John "Dick" Schild to do everything he could to insure any land use

legislation passed would provide for local input and control.

Wyckoff said the property tax and appropriations issues were likely to dominate much of the first year of the biennial session.

Benton County Extension Director Bill Meigs said a tillage demonstration was being planned for one day in the spring to show the effects of different minimum tillage methods, including the Buffalo Till, Sidewinder and Roterra. He said Gordon Geiken has consented to provide test areas on terraced ground for the demonstration. The date will be announced later, he said.

Wiley Hansen, director of the Benton County ASCS said about \$88,000 in federal soil conservation cost-sharing money would be available in the coming year to supplement state conservation funds.

Schild said the needs of soil conservation can not be underestimated. He said the comparison that the cost of one B-1 bomber (\$2 billion) would pay for all the soil conservation needs was shocking.