

2012 Annual Report



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Cass SWCD Celebrates 70th Anniversary



The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District celebrated their 70th Anniversary on Thursday, August 23rd at the Cass Community Building in Atlantic Iowa. Jim Gillespie with IDALS-DSC and Jamie Carpenter with the NRCS helped in opening the celebrations. Iowa Agriculture Secretary, Bill Northey spoke about when producers started using more conservation practices, farms started becoming Century Farms, or farms that have been in the same family for 100 years or more, or Heritage Farms, farms that have been in the same family for 150 years or more. He also spoke about Urban conservation in which individuals in urban areas try

to get water off the streets, parking lots and other areas. Shiona Putnam and Lila Hoogveen, local authors and officers, curators, and board members of the Cass County Historical Museum also presented information about Cass county. The Cass SWCD also made recognitions of the area youth who participated in the poster contest and presented awards to Landowners. Glen Dinkla was awarded the Owner/Operator Award, Lee & Jo Ann Poepe were awarded the Landowner Award, Glen Smith was awarded the Windbreak

Award and Jim and Kathi Mailander were presented the Tree Planting Award. Curt Behrends, District Chairman, stated that there are many producers in Cass County that are doing a great job in applying conservation practices to their properties and that it was extremely difficult to choose award winners. They would like to thank all the producers in Cass county for working hard to save the soil for future families. The Cass Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank these landowners for being good stewards of the land. Approximately, 228 people attend the banquet. Cass SWCD Commissioners are; Curt Behrends, Greg Zellmer, Fred Kay, Ray Wilson, Tracy Marshall. Assistant Commissioners are; Alan Peterson and Alan Zellmer.

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Glen Dinkla



Glen Smith



Lee and Jo Ann Poepe



Jim and Kathi Mailander

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District

Curt Behrends Greg Zellmer Ray Wilson Fred Kay Tracy Marshall Alan Peterson Alan Zellmer



2012 Scholarship Winners



Griswold Community Schools



Abigail Leighton



Melanie Palmer

CAM Community Schools



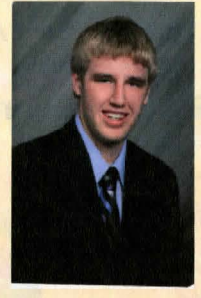
Justin Aupperle



Devan Amdor



Morgan Anstey



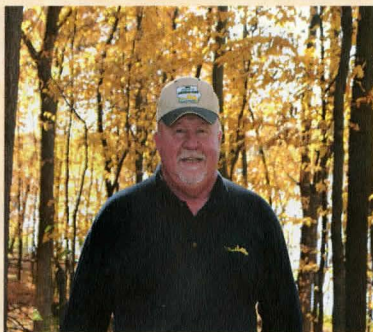
Ryan Aupperle

SWCD Election Results

The Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners are the governing body of the local district in Iowa, as delineated in Iowa Code Chapter 161A. This year, there were three seats to fill for the November election. Curt Behrends, Ray Wilson, and Chase Wheatley have been elected to four year terms beginning the 2nd day of January, 2013. Assistant commissioners are also appointed at the District Organizational meeting. Fred Kay and Greg Zellmer continue their terms on board also. Greg Zellmer will serve as Chairman, Ray Wilson will serve as Vice Chairman, Fred Kay, Treasurer



L-R: Ray Wilson, Chase Wheatley, Curt Behrends



DOING YOUR PART FOR CONSERVATION

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts to protect our soil and water resources in Iowa. Each landowner and operator does this because of a strong connection to the land, water and business they are involved with. I call it an Iowa ethic or commitment and it is part of our heritage, something we have been doing for a long time.

We have just gone through one of the worst droughts most of us can remember and some farmers were still able to produce crops that yielded more than expected. Part of that is of course based on better genetics but I also believe it was based on healthier soils. Mother Nature is beyond our control but how we take care of our

soil and water is within our control. If we consider the cost of land or rental rates today, we should do everything we can to protect it and keep it where it can be as productive as possible and out of our waters.

By reviewing your conservation plan with someone from the field office, it will provide another opportunity to update that plan and implement some practices that will protect your soils and its productivity. Everything you do today will continue to improve your soil health and quality that will increase its productivity into the future. The types of things you can do involve management practices, structural practices and proper nutrient management.

Keep up the good work and contact your local soil and water conservation district and staff in the field office concerning your soil and water conservation needs. They are great people to work with that have a tremendous amount of knowledge and skills, and in some cases may be able to provide some financial assistance as well.

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District

Curt Behrends Greg Zellmer Ray Wilson Fred Kay Tracy Marshall Alan Peterson Alan Zellmer



POSTER CONTEST

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) co-sponsored the Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest. The Cass SWCD is honored to announce the following winners of the local judging done in Cass County. 1st Place winners won a movie pass to the Atlantic Theatre, 2nd Place winners received gift certificates from Westside Diner and 3rd Place winners received Crayola marker sets. These students were recognized at the Cass SWCD 70th Anniversary Celebration. Thanks to all who participated.

K-1

Landon Pelzer, Konner Cruz, Aiden Kennedy, Michael Hotze, McKenna Wiechman, Ryan Wetterlind, Katelyn Pollard, Ryla Echternach, Nathan Keiser, Alex Rush, Emma Mundorf, Claire, Pellett, Erynn Peterson

2-3 Grade Group Participants

1st Place- Madison Foresman, 2nd Place-Caroline Pellett, 3rd Place Wesley Brown, Bryan York

4-6 Grade Group Participants

1st Place- Connor Pellett, 2nd Place-Katie York

7-9 Grade Group Participants

Weston Erickson, Danyelle Hass



Emma Mundorf, Erynn Peterson, Clair Pellett, Caroline , Pellett, Katie York, Danyelle Hass

Danyelle Hass
Region 5, First place winner
7-9 Grade



Julie Tjepkes and Danyelle Hass

The Cass SWCD sponsored an award to any teacher or youth coordinator, if one of their student's poster was selected as a Regional Winner. Julie Tjepkes, Children Services Director, with the Atlantic Public Library was presented a certificate and a check for \$50 at the Cass SWCD 70th Anniversary Banquet. These funds are to help teachers and youth coordinators purchase supplies for their classrooms. Congratulations to Julie

NRCS Summer Interns



My name is Aris Anthony Harris. I'm a graduating senior at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pursuing a degree in Agriculture Sciences with a concentration in plant & soil sciences. I found out about the Natural Resources Conservation Service through my liaison, Miss Allison Johnson, who interned in Iowa during her college summers. She told me about the agency and explained to me that Iowa is a great state to learn about agriculture. So Miss Johnson spoke with Mr. Shaffer Ridgeway about recruiting me to the great state of Iowa. So I decided to start my first internship in Iowa and was placed in the Waterloo/Waverly field office during the summer of 2010. I enjoyed my first summer of work experience so much that I decided to come back the next summer. The following summer in 2011, I worked in the Jefferson/Boone field office in Greene County and learned a lot more about

the agency. This past summer I enjoyed working with the Atlantic /Audubon field office! Working in Iowa has given me a chance to meet some great individuals and see agriculture on a larger scale.

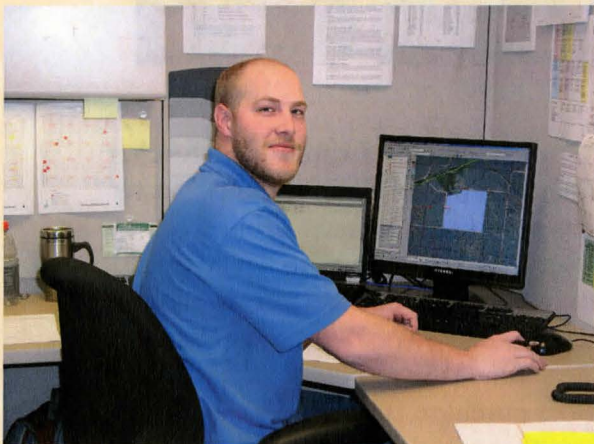
Soils Summer Student Trainee

Elyssa McFarland spent the summer in Atlantic as a Soil Science Student Trainee. Elyssa is originally from Columbus Junction, Iowa and will be graduating from Iowa State University in May 2013. She is a member of the Iowa State Agronomy Club and participates in Collegiate Soils Judging. In her spare time, Elyssa likes to go fishing, sew, read, and help out around her family's farm. Elyssa enjoyed meeting farmers across south-west Iowa and learning about soils unique to this area.



New Soil Conservationist Joins Atlantic Field Office

Hi, my name is Justin Boersma and I'm the new soil conservationist in the Cass/Audubon NRCS Management Unit, so I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I grew up on a small farm in Sioux County in Northwest



Iowa where we raised hogs, cattle, and grain crops. After high school, I attended Northwestern College in Orange City where I received a degree in Biology with an emphasis in Ecological Science. The following year I attended the University of Northern Iowa and earned a Master's degree in Ecosystem Management. In the summer of 2010, the Allamakee County SWCD offered me my first job in conservation, and I began a watershed assessment for Waterloo Creek. Before I was able to finish that project I was offered a full time position as a soil conservationist in the Jones County field office and chose to accept it. After serving in Jones County for a year and a half, I accepted a transfer to the Atlantic field office. Even though I've been here since February, I haven't had a chance to work with

many people, but my experiences have been very positive. I have a deep appreciation for Midwestern agriculture and hope to be able to protect that way of life through conservation. I look forward to working with more folks in Cass and Audubon Counties and helping them with conservation. When you stop in our office feel free to introduce yourself and I'll see if there is any way I can help you.

Cass County Soil & Water Conservation

Financial Report FY 12

July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012

Revolving Funds

Balance 7/1/11 \$30,300.97
Total Deposits \$55,197.52
Total Expenditures \$51,630.58
Balance 6/30/2012 \$33,867.91

Drill Fund

Balance 7/1/11 \$12,275.24
Total Deposits \$6937.21
Total Expenditures \$4729.64
Balance 6/30/12 \$14,482.81

BONDING 2

Balance 7/1/11 \$124,458.54
Slippage \$35,666.20
Total Obligated \$2,577.48
Total Expended \$157,547.26
Balance 6/30/12 0.00

REAP P

Balance 7/1/11 \$7,429.14
Supplemental \$22,287.42
Slippage \$20,677.33
Total Obligated \$48,722.50
Total Expended \$1,670.95
Balance 6/30/12 \$0.44

REAP F/NG

Balance 7/1/12 \$2,476.38
Supplemental \$0.00
Slippage \$1189.16
Total Obligated \$2,212.64
Total Expended \$1,452.90
Balance 6/30/12 \$0.00



CHECK YOUR YARD FOR FUGITIVES!

Many people may not know that their residential yards, acreages, and even woodlands can contain insect, disease, and plant fugitives. By my definition, fugitives are actually invasive organisms; plant, insect, or disease species that were transplanted here knowingly or by accident. What do I mean knowingly? Well a lot of times the latest and greatest showy plant/shrub/or tree may be from a foreign country where its native plant community and predators keep it in check. When these biological specimens are brought to the United States for seemingly good intentions, they use their natural adaptations in this new land for out-competing our native species. Why? Be-

cause the conditions that normally keep them under control are not present here. Here is an abbreviated laundry list of such offenders: Gypsy Moth – brought to the U.S. for the silk industry – now are actively defoliating oak woodlands. Sudden Oak Death – pathogen can be carried on rhododendron plants – which are commonly distributed outside of their natural range (West coast) all through the country. Tree of Heaven – brought to the U.S. as a fast-growing street tree – it is now one of the top invasive trees in this Forest District. Bush Honeysuckles, multiflora rose, and buckthorn – once promoted for conservation plantings, these shrubs easily are distributed to woodland understories by wildlife where they threaten to extinguish native oak/hickory regeneration.

Garlic Mustard – brought to the U.S. from Europe to be used as an herb. This plant escaped to woodlands and now severely threatens native woodland plant diversity including forest flowers like Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Japanese Barberry – still commonly sold as decorative shrub, this small bush also threatens woodland understories. Burning Bush – native to Asia but still commonly used as a decorative shrub, this shrub is another woodland invasive. Oriental bittersweet – imported for use in home decorations – now is smothering forest vegetation from Iowa eastward. Salt Cedar – introduced from Asia as a decorative plant – still commonly planted even in this area (I've seen it!) – kills native plant communities by creating salty soil conditions Bradford/Callery Pear – An oriental pear commonly used as a decorative tree – some hybrids have made viable seeds that escape and threaten to take over disturbed areas. Norway Maple – a very common urban tree, can easily escape into woodlands where it's shade tolerant nature smothers out native vegetation and inhibits native oak/hickory regeneration. Why are native plants so important? Native plants are adapted to our climate, and native wildlife species are best adapted to living in habitat surrounded by these native plants! Each species of plant, large or small, plays an important role in the way the rest of the biological system works. When fugitives (invasives) are introduced, this disrupts or stops the natural cycle; affecting wildlife, soil and water resources, and ultimately us. What can we do? Let's start by learning a lesson. Just because these exotic plants are available, doesn't mean we know how they will impact our natural areas in the future. We need to get a little more creative with what we choose to plant in our yards. Nature has provided us with many beautiful plant species – we just need to find out what they are and how to use them. For instance, here are some great native shrubs and small trees to use in tight spaces and for conservation plantings: serviceberry, ironwood, muscledwood, red bud, red mulberry, Eastern wahoo (cousin to burning bush), American bittersweet (vine), Virginia Creeper (vine), American plum, red osier, gray and silky dogwoods, hazelnut, elderberry, choke cherry, ninebark, arrowwood, nannyberry, New Jersey Tea, False indigo, and the list goes on and on. I assist private landowners with assessing and managing the health of their woodlands. If you think you might have some plant, insect, or disease fugitives lurking in your woodland, give me a call – your woodlands will thank you!

Written by: Lindsey Barney – DNR District 9 Forester

Tip top terraces

Is your terrace under a 20-year maintenance agreement? Terraces on cropland not only control erosion on the field, but reduce sediment pollution of lakes and streams and provide cover for wildlife. Terraces trap and store sediment lost from cropland that would otherwise be deposited into creeks and lakes. They trap and store about 95% of this sediment. So to keep them working properly, consider: If you have grassed backslope or narrow-based terraces, you may want to extend the seeded area out to the field boundary to eliminate point rows or awkward short rows. Soil buildup around tile inlet pipes of terraces could indicate a need for better erosion control between terraces. Make sure your terraces are visible. They

can be marked with posts or colored flags or you can install bright orange colored intakes. Tillage implements should never straddle the terrace ridge. The ends of your equipment should operate along the top of the ridge to prevent lowering the terrace ridge height. Clean out trash and debris around terrace intakes regularly. Debris can cause incomplete or slow drainage and overtopping. If water can't get into the intake, the terrace can't do its job. Inspect terraces regularly for damage from burrowing animals. Badgers, fox, and other rodents that build their homes in the terraces can weaken the structure, and make for costly repairs or be the start of a hole through the terrace that could turn into a blowout. Tree roots also weaken the terrace structure and need to be removed on a regular basis, preferably when they are small.

Waterway Maintenance

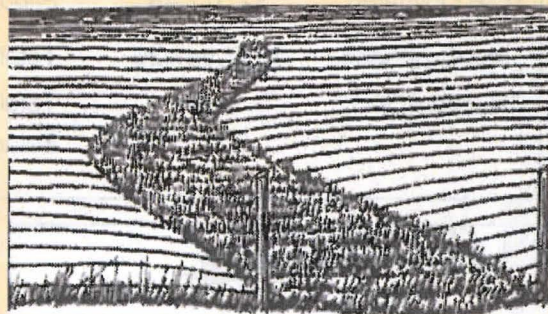
Proper maintenance will protect your investment in a grassed waterway. The following tips will help ensure longevity of the waterway:

Lift implements out of the ground before crossing the waterway.

Bring row crop patterns into the waterway nearly level, or use it as the turn area. Don't plant end rows along the side of the waterway, as they contribute to failure. Fertilize periodically.

Inspect the area frequently for places needing reseeding and eroding areas.

Repair minor rills or gullies by reshaping and reseeding. Maintain the width of the grass area when tilling and planting surrounding fields. Don't let herbicide spray continue into the waterway. Don't use the waterway as a road. Vehicle tire tracks can lead to the formation of a gully. Don't mow the grass until a good sod is established. Once it is established, the waterway should be mowed. To benefit wildlife nesting, delay mowing until August 1. Maintain outlets to prevent new gullies from forming at the outlet. This may include reshaping and reseeding the outlet, or repairing or replacing components of structural outlets.



Cass County Watershed update....

Cass County residents may not know that the creations of Crooked, Turkey and Troublesome Creek watersheds continue to have a valued impact on our area communities. Crooked Creek watershed was created back in 1958 with Turkey Creek starting construction on its first structure in 1967. By 1972 the Cass SWCD partnering with the Cass County Supervisors signed Troublesome Creek Watershed work plans. Operation and maintenance of these structures still remains a top priority with the district and the Cass county supervisors to help with flood control throughout our county. Each year the district does annual inspections of structures in the watersheds. Inspections determine any type of maintenance needed to structures. The district operates on a small budget each year to do the maintenance and repairs. Landowners of these sites can also help with protecting the sites from livestock creating paths or overgrazing the structures. Waterways need to have general maintenance done to them each year such as keeping them free of trees. Joint cooperation between the district, county supervisors and local landowners will help with extending live spans of these structures.

**Cass Soil & Water Conservation District
Rental Equipment
10 foot Great Plains No-till drill**

***Our drill rents for \$10/acre with a fifty dollar deposit at time of application ,which is applied towards your bill.
Applications can be found on cassswcd.org website or you may make application at our office
located at 503 W. 7th St., Ste 1 Atlantic, Iowa.***

NO INTEREST LOAN PROGRAM



Since 1983, the Division of Soil Conservation has been offering No-interest loans through the Iowa Finance Authority. Loans made under this program can be used to fund conservation practices that protect soil and water resources. Examples include terraces, water and sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures and waterways. To apply for these loans applicants must meet the following requirements: Applicants must own the land where the conservation work will take place, Tracts of land must be over 10 acres with a minimum of \$2,500 of agricultural products sold annually and project must meet NRCS field specifications.

TERMS OF LOANS

- * Up to \$10,000 loaned per borrower
- * Loans set up to be paid back in equal installments over a 10 year period
- * 2% loan fee paid to district prior to issue of financial funds to landowner
- * Security interest will be placed on the land until loan is paid in full
- * Payments due March 1st each year with no penalty for prepayment
- * Loans can be used to fund 100% of the cost up to the loan maximum, but cannot be used in conjunction with other public funds (EQIP or Iowa Financial Incentive Program funds).

Landowners can sign up for these loan at the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District office located at 503 W. 7th Street, Ste 1, Atlantic, Iowa.

STATE REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM

Iowa Finance Authority offers the state revolving loan program to eligible applicants to implement practices for animal feeding operations, waste storage facilities, deep bedded buildings or other roofed manure control structures that provide 100% confinement. Terraces, grade control and sediment control basins, pasture and hay land planting or prescribed grazing, grassed waterways, filter strips, windbreaks are also eligible under this program. The purpose of the loan program is to improve and protect Iowa's water quality. The loan assistance is facilitated through the State Revolving Fund. For more information on this program, please stop by our office. These loan funds can be used in conjunction with other public funds (EQIP or Iowa Financial Incentive Program funds).

TERMS OF LOANS

- * Loan amounts from \$5,000—\$500,000
- * Terms up to 10 years
- * Can fund up to 100% of eligible project costs
- * 3% fixed interest for life of the loan
- * Applications accepted anytime
- * Available through the lender of your choice
- * Can be used in conjunction with grants/cost share



Landowners can sign up for these loan at the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District office located at 503 W. 7th Street, Ste 1, Atlantic, Iowa.

Annual Tree Sales

Tree sales are held each year in Cass county. Anyone interested in purchasing trees and shrubs from the SWCD need to order by March 1st of each year. Landowners can apply for assistance through IDALS-DSC for REAP funds to help with installing new windbreaks. Applications taken first come first served till funds are exhausted. For more information stop in the SWCD office at 503 W. 7th Street, Atlantic, Iowa.

Cass Soil & Water Conservation District

Curt Behrends Greg Zellmer Ray Wilson Fred Kay Tracy Marshall Alan Peterson Alan Zellmer

Farm Credit Services of America, Luana Savings Bank and Pilot Grove Savings Bank Named Top State Revolving Fund Lenders

Iowa Lenders Recognized for Lending Practices for Water Quality Projects

Des Moines, Iowa – Farm Credit Services of America, Luana Savings Bank and Pilot Grove Savings Bank have recently been recognized as top lenders through the State Revolving Fund's water quality programs that provide low-interest loans to Iowans to assist in projects to reduce runoff in Iowa's waterways. The State Revolving Fund is jointly administered by the Iowa Finance Authority and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in partnership with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

"I congratulate Farm Credit Services of America, Luana Savings Bank and Pilot Grove Savings Bank for their shared commitment to ensuring that Iowans have access to affordable financing to make vital water quality projects a reality," said Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director Dave Jamison. "The Iowa Finance Authority is proud to have played a role in assisting nearly 4,000 water quality projects in partnership with more than 450 participating lenders throughout the state since the program's inception."

"The State Revolving Fund's success is a testament to the partnerships with the hundreds of dedicated lenders throughout the state," said Jim Gillespie, Director of the Division of Soil Conservation. "I commend Farm Credit Services of America, Luana Savings Bank and Pilot Grove Savings Bank on being recognized as top State Revolving Fund lenders and look forward to a continued successful partnership."

The State Revolving Fund features a variety of programs that offer low-interest loans to assist farmers, livestock producers, watershed organizations and others and are offered through participating lenders across the state. The Local Water Protection Program assists projects that will limit the runoff of sediment, nutrients, pesticides or other nonpoint source pollutants from entering Iowa waters. The Livestock Water Quality Program assists Iowa livestock producers with projects to prevent, minimize or eliminate non-point source pollution of Iowa's rivers and streams from animal feeding operations.

Top lender details:

Farm Credit Services of America, Red Oak

Local Water Protection Program: 131 loans for a total of more than \$3 million

Contact: Corby Fichter 712-623-5181

Luana Savings Bank

Livestock Water Quality Program: 19 loans for a total of more than \$900,000

Contact: Steve Ruzicka 563-539-2166

Pilot Grove Savings Bank

Local Water Protection Program: 81 loans for a total of more than \$1 million

Contact: Joshua Ragar or Matthew Morrison 319-469-3951



Envirothon

The Envirothon is a program for Iowa high school students who want to learn more about natural resources and current environmental challenges. Teams are tested in wildlife, aquatics, forestry, soils and current issues. This year's current issues oral competition theme was nonpoint source pollution, Low-Impact Development Design and stormwater management. The Cass and Adair SWCD hosts a Envirothon workshop held in Massena prior to regional competitions to help teams prepare for the competition. Julie McMichael, Area Resource Soil Scientist with the NRCS, provides information on soils, Lindsey Barney, District Forrester with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Bryan Hayes, Fisheries Biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Alan Carr, Green Valley State Park Ranger with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources all present information to the school teams and answer questions from the students to help them understand topic related questions. Any school in Cass county who would like to attend

this workshop should contact the Cass SWCD office at (712)243-3180.



NEW STATE COST SHARE FUNDS HELP 117 FARMERS INSTALL 4,660 ACRES OF COVER CROPS

DES MOINES – Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey today announced that 117 Iowa farmers took advantage of changes this year to the Iowa Financial Incentives Program, which is commonly called state cost share, to install 4,660 acres of cover crops across the state.

“We are excited about the initial response we received to this new effort to encourage the use of cover crops and hope it is the start of many more farmers looking at and using this conservation practice,” Northey said. “We have seen a lot of growing interest in cover crops and with the drought and early harvest this year it was a good opportunity for farmers to try them on their farm.”

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship made the rule change in August that included cover crops as an eligible practice under the state cost share program. Through the program Iowa provided up to \$25 per acre for the establishment of the cover crop. In total the Department’s \$104,253 investment was matched by farmers and landowners in 24 different Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state.

Research has shown that cover crops can be an effective management tool to control erosion from wind and water and ties up the nitrogen in the soil and reduces the potential for nitrate to leach into our surface waters and ground waters. Nitrate transport to streams can be particularly high after a drought period, when stressed crops may not have used all available fertilizer, or in times of excessive moisture.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) also provided assistance for cover crops and has seen tremendous growth in recent years. This year they provide assistance to support cover crops on 51,635 acres in Iowa, up from 4,059 acres in 2009.

Hispanic and Women Farmers Can Submit Discrimination Claims Until March 25

If you are an Hispanic or woman farmer who feels you were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans between 1981 and 2000, you have until March 25 to submit a claim with USDA.

As part of continued efforts to close the chapter on allegations that discrimination occurred in past decades, USDA established a process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who assert that they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans. The maximum cash recovery is set at \$250,000. The process offers a streamlined alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or woman farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their loan or loan servicing for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods.

The voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees or other costs to claimants to participate in the program. Participation is voluntary, and the program does not preclude individuals who opt not to participate from pursuing their cases in court.

Individuals interested in participating in the claims process may register to receive a claims package, or may obtain more information, by visiting www.farmerclaims.gov. Individuals can register to receive a claims package by calling the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429. **USDA cannot provide legal advice to potential claimants.** Persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

503 W. 7th Street, Ste 1
Atlantic, Iowa 50022

A group photo of seven people, four men and three women, posing in two rows. The back row has four men standing, and the front row has three people sitting. They are all smiling and appear to be at a formal or semi-formal event.

The Cass Soil and Water Conservation District monthly meeting is held on the fourth Thursday of each month.

Jana Coughlin, Scott Breach, David York,
Steve Fluckey, Randall Larsen



Tree sales are held each year in Cass county. Anyone interested in purchasing trees and shrubs from the SWCD need to order by March 1st of each year. Landowners can apply for assistance through IDALS-DSC for REAP funds to help with installing new windbreaks. Applications taken first come first served till funds are exhausted. For information stop in the SWCD office. See order forms on the Cass SWCD website at www.cassswcd.com

Item #	Description	Qty.	Price	Subtotal
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[illegible]

Order total: _____
Tax: _____
Shipping: _____
Total: _____

Name _____

Address

Phone _____

Remit Payment to: **Cass SWCD**
503 W. 7th Street
Atlantic, Iowa 50022

☐ Check # _____ Receipt # _____
☐ Cash _____ Receipt # _____

***Orders must be placed by March 1, 2013
To ensure availability.***

*"The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
is an equal opportunity employer and provider."*

Potted Evergreens	Size	Sold As	Number Ordered	Price Each	Total
Black Hills Spruce	2-3'	Each	X	\$25.00	
Black Hills Spruce	3-4'	Each	X	\$30.00	
Black Hills Spruce	5'	Each	X	\$58.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	2-3'	Each	X	\$25.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	3-4'	Each	X	\$30.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	5'	Each	X	\$60.00	
Norway Spruce	3-4'	Each	X	\$30.00	
Norway Spruce	5'	Each	X	\$58.00	
Concolor Fir	18-24"	Each	X	\$20.00	
White Pine	2-3'	Each	X	\$25.00	
White Pine	3-4'	Each	X	\$30.00	
White Pine	5-6'	Each	X	\$40.00	
Bareroot Evergreen Upon Request					

Deciduous Shrubs/Trees	Size	Bundles	Number Ordered	Price Each	Total
Lilac, Common Purple	2'-3'	Transplant	10	\$1.25	
Redosier Dogwood	2-3'	Seedling	25	\$1.00	
American Cranberry	2-3'	Transplant	10	\$2.00	
Other species available upon request					

2012 Annual Report

January, 2013

*Published by the
Atlantic News Telegraph*

Cass County SWCD



Cass County SWCD Commissioners

Pictured are (front row, left to right) Tracy Marshall, Fred Kay and Alan Zellmer; and (back row) Curt Behrends, Greg Zellmer, Ray Wilson and Alan Peterson. The Cass Soil and Water Conservation District monthly meeting is held on the fourth Thursday of each month.

The Function of the Conservation District: To take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.

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Justin Boersma is the new soil conservationist in the Cass/Audubon NRCS Management Unit

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Cass County Soil & Water Conservation Financial Report FY 12 July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012

Revolving Funds		Drill Fund	
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Total Deposits	\$55,197.52	Total Deposits	\$6937.21
Total Expenditures	<u>\$51,630.58</u>	Total Expenditures	<u>\$4729.64</u>
Balance 6/30/2012	\$33,867.91	Balance 6/30/12	\$14,482.81

BONDING 2		REAP P		REAP F/NG	
Balance 7/1/11	\$124,458.54	Balance 7/1/11	\$7,429.14	Balance 7/1/12	\$2,476.38
Slippage	\$35,666.20	Supplemental	\$22,287.42	Supplemental	\$0.00
Total Obligated	\$2,577.48	Slippage	\$20,677.33	Slippage	\$1189.16
Total Expended	<u>\$157,547.26</u>	Total Obligated	\$48,722.50	Total Obligated	\$2,212.64
Balance 6/30/12	0.00	Total Expended	<u>\$1,670.95</u>	Total Expended	<u>\$1,452.90</u>
		Balance 6/30/12	\$0.44	Balance 6/30/12	\$0.00

Cass SWCD celebrates 70th Anniversary

The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District celebrated their 70th anniversary on Thursday, Aug. 23 at the Cass Community Building in Atlantic. Jim Gillespie with IDALS-DSC and Jamie Carpenter with the NRCS helped in opening the celebrations. Iowa Agriculture Secretary, Bill Northey spoke about when producers started using more conservation practices, farms started becoming Century Farms, or farms that have been in the same family for 100 years or more, or Heritage Farms, farms that have been in the same family for 150 years or more. He also spoke about urban conservation in which individuals in urban areas try to get water off the streets, parking lots and other areas. Shiona Putnam and Lila Hooegeveen, local authors and officers, curators, and board members of the Cass County Historical Museum also presented information about Cass County. The Cass SWCD also made recognitions of the area youth who participated in the poster contest and presented awards to landowners. Glen Dinkla was awarded the Owner/Operator Award, Lee and Jo Ann Poepppe were awarded the Landowner Award, Glen Smith

Anniversary see page 3



Pictured are Jim and Kathi Mailander with SWCD Representative Curt Behrends.

EMPIRE CONSTRUCTION AND TRENCHING, INC.



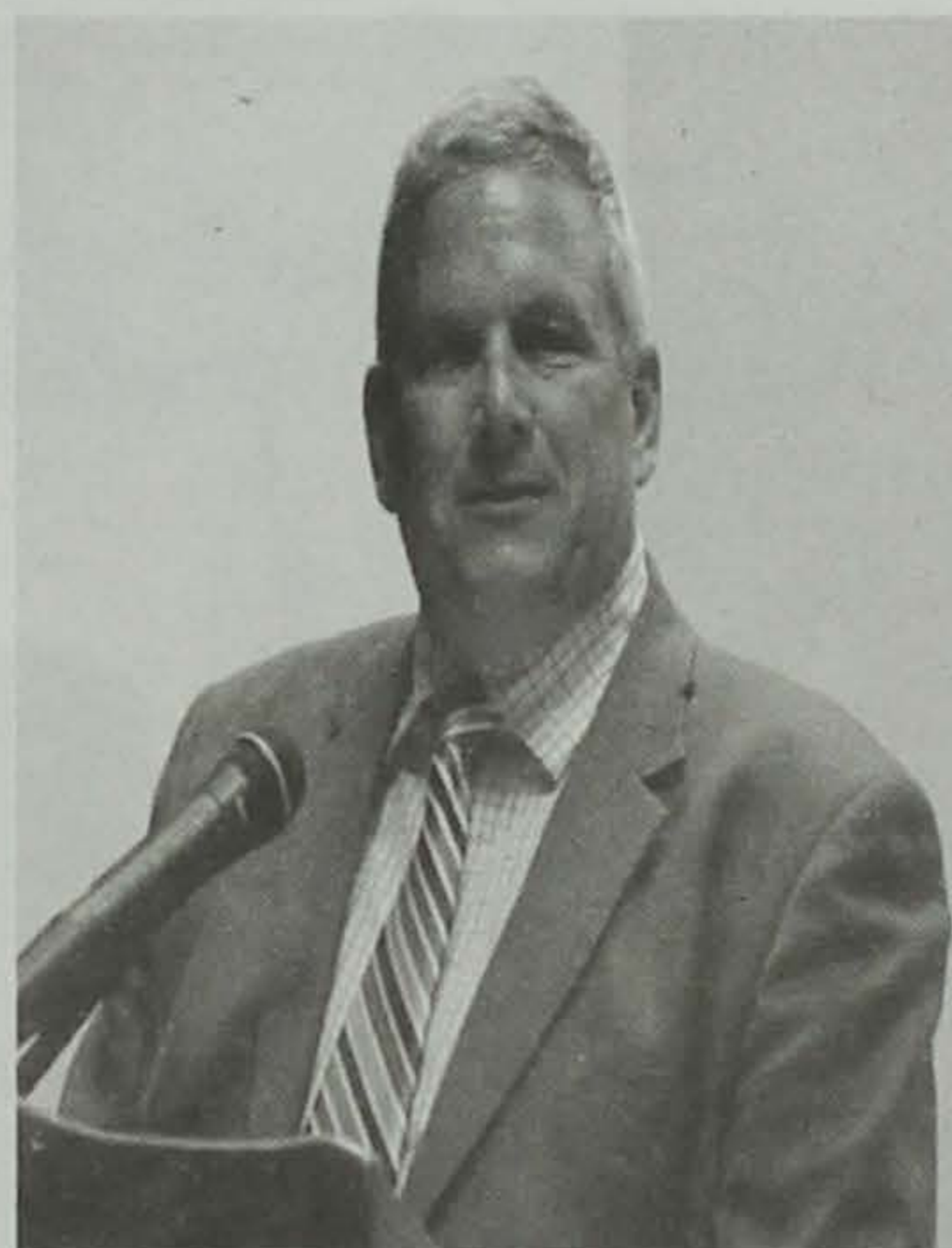
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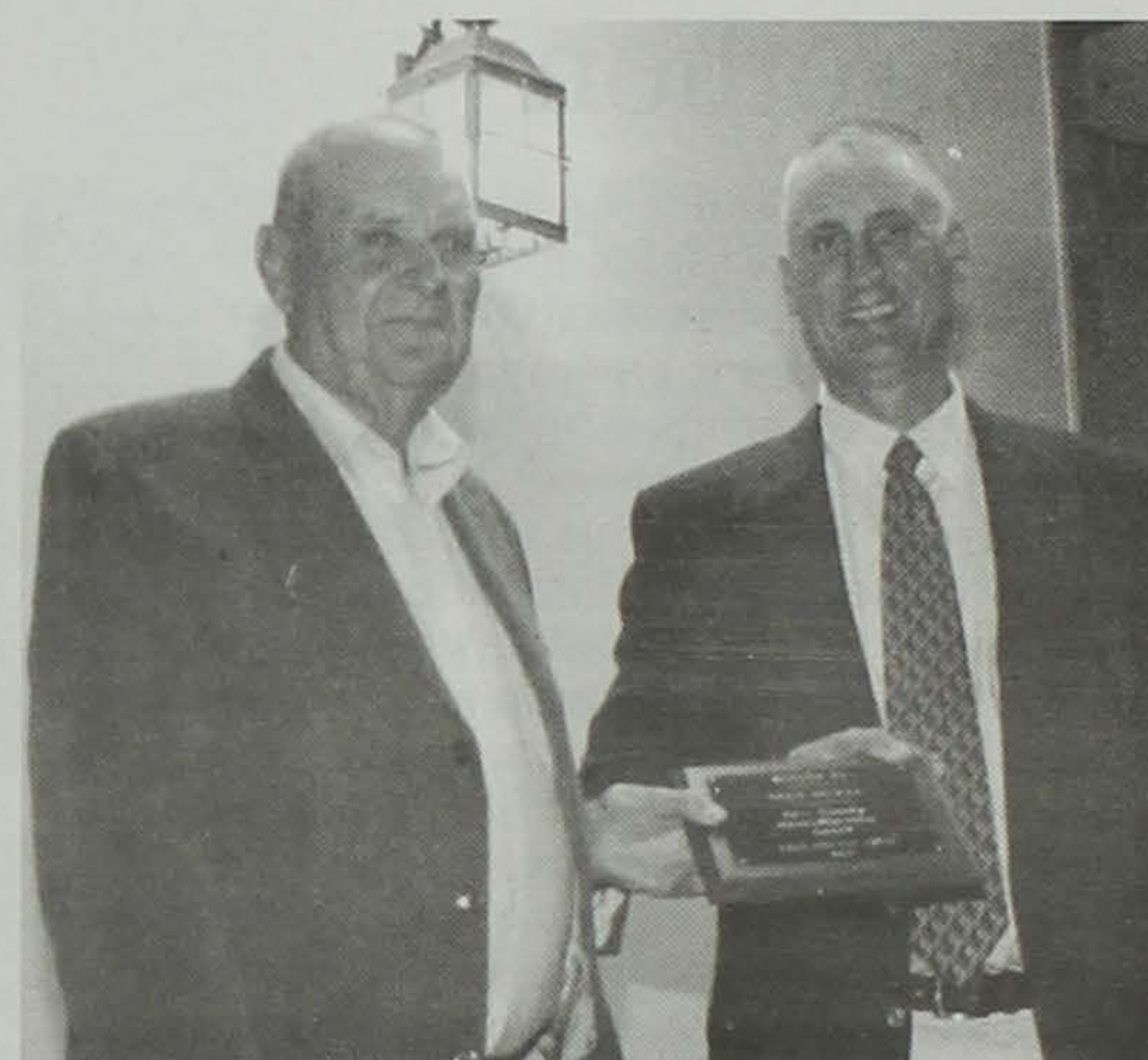
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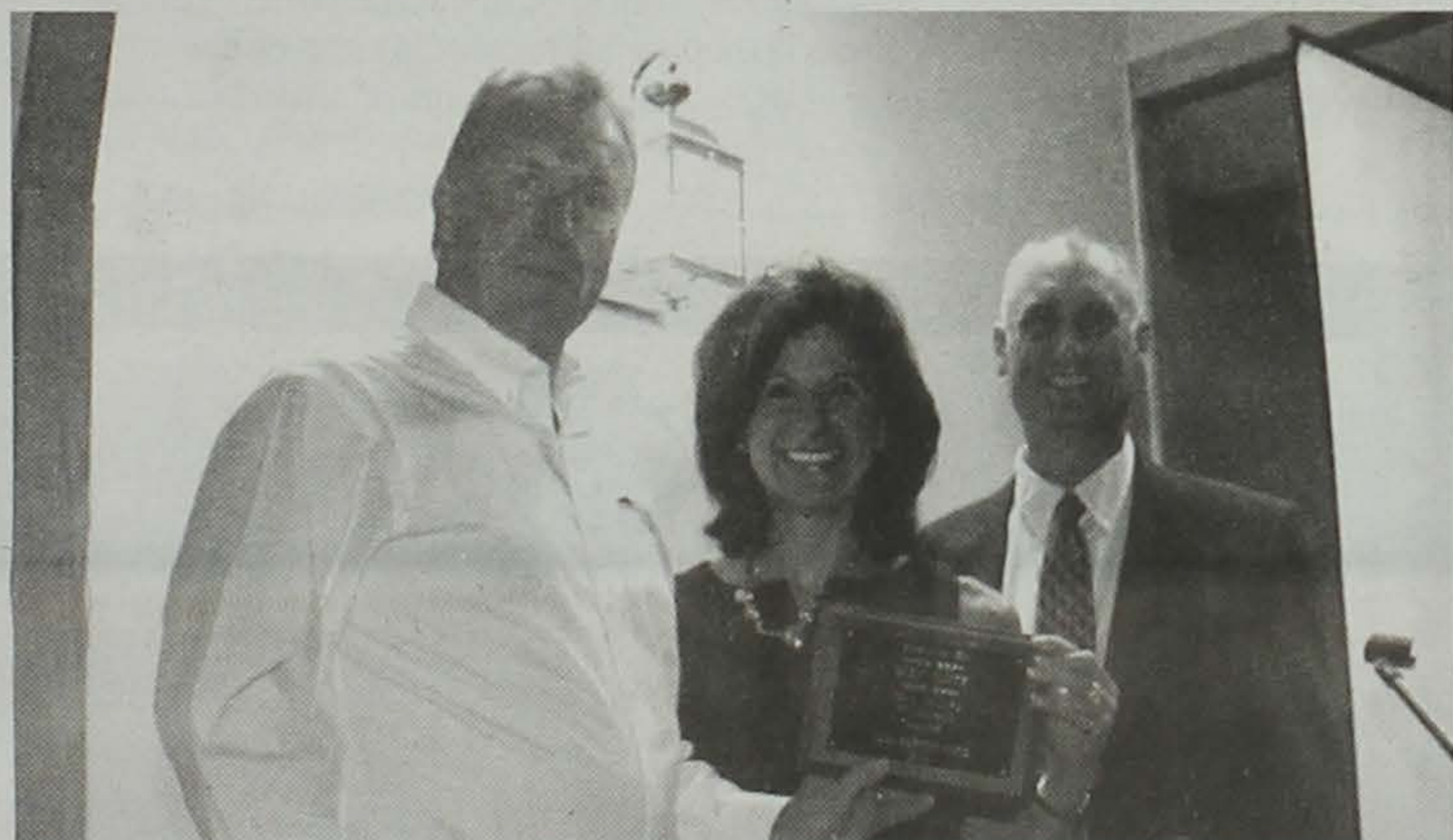
Pictured are Lee and JoAnn Poepppe with SWCD Representative Curt Behrends.



Iowa Agriculture Secretary Bill Northey was the guest speaker.



Pictured is Glen Dinkla with SWCD Representative Curt Behrends.



Pictured are Glen and Fauzan Smith with SWCD Representative Curt Behrends.

Cass SWCD celebrates anniversary

Anniversary From page two

was awarded the Windbreak Award and Jim and Kathi Mailander were presented the Tree Planting Award. Curt Behrends, District Chairman, stated that there are many producers in Cass County that are doing a great job in applying conservation practices to their properties and that it was extremely difficult to choose award winners. They would like to thank all the producers in Cass county for working hard to save

the soil for future families. The Cass Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank these landowners for being good stewards of the land. Approximately, 228 people attend the banquet. Cass SWCD Commissioners are; Curt Behrends, Greg Zellmer, Fred Kay, Ray Wilson, Tracy Marshall. Assistant Commissioners are Alan Peterson and Alan Zellmer.

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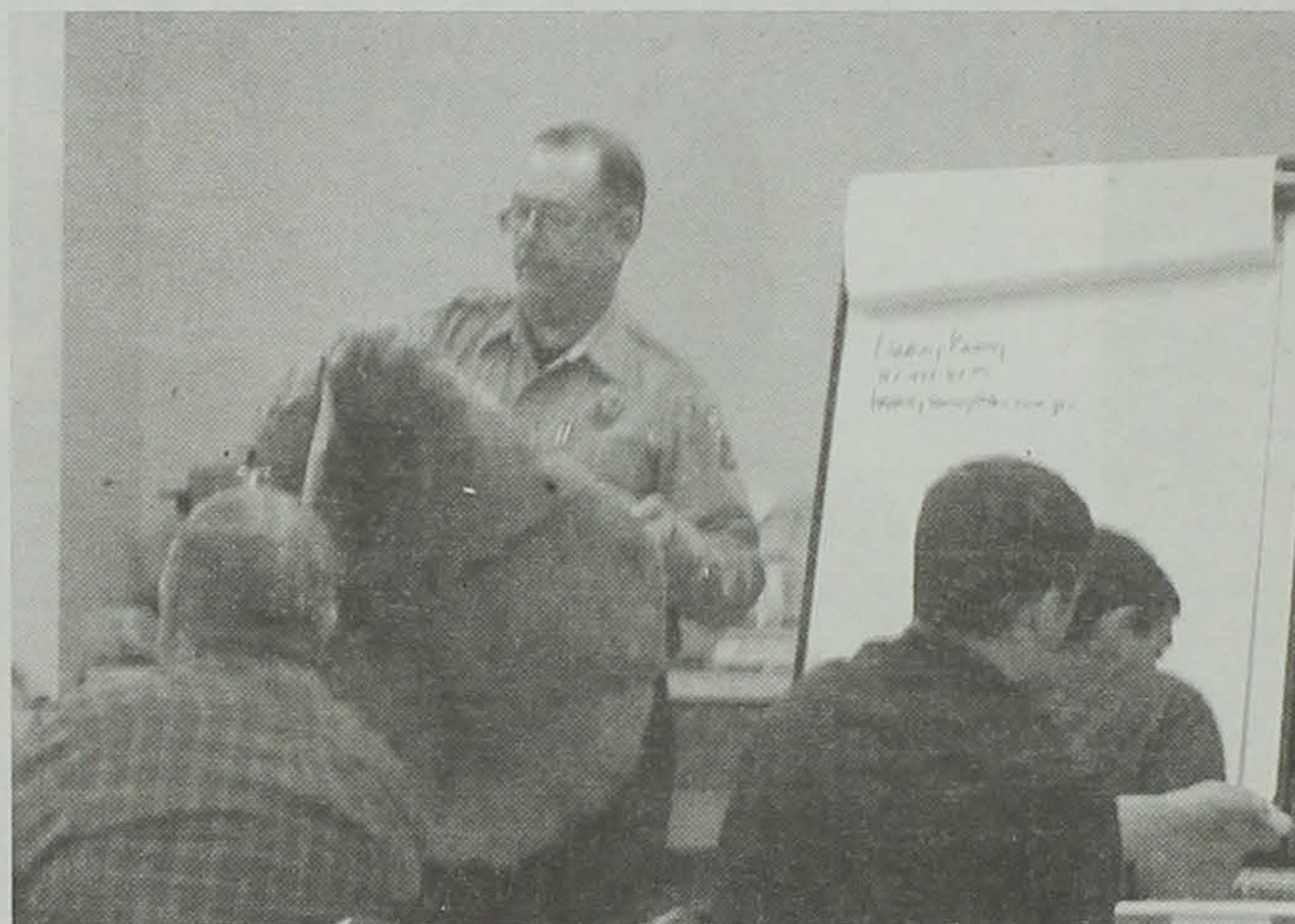
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Envirothon

The Envirothon is a program for Iowa high school students who want to learn more about natural resources and current environmental challenges. Teams are tested in wildlife, aquatics, forestry, soils and current issues. This year's current issues oral competition theme was nonpoint source pollution, Low-Impact Development Design and stormwater management. The Cass and Adair SWCD hosts a Envirothon workshop held in Massena prior to regional competitions to help teams prepare for the competition. Julie McMichael, Area Resource Soil Scientist with the NRCS, provides information on soils, Lindsey Barney, District Forrester with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Bryan Hayes, Fisheries Biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Alan Carr, Green Valley State Park Ranger with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources all present information to the school teams and answer questions from the students to help them understand topic related questions. Any school in Cass county who would like to attend this workshop should contact the Cass SWCD office at (712)243-3180.



Waterway Maintenance

Proper maintenance will protect your investment in a grassed waterway. The following tips will help ensure longevity of the waterway:

Lift implements out of the ground before crossing the waterway.

Bring row crop patterns into the waterway nearly level, or use it as the turn area. Don't plant end rows along the side of the waterway, as they contribute to failure. Fertilize periodically.

Inspect the area frequently for places needing reseeding and eroding areas. Repair minor rills or gullies by reshaping and reseeding. Maintain the width of the grass area when tilling and planting surrounding fields. Don't let herbicide spray continue into the waterway. Don't use the waterway as a road. Vehicle tire tracks can lead to the formation of a gully. Don't mow the grass until a good sod is established. Once it is established, the waterway should be mowed. To benefit wildlife nesting, delay mowing until Aug. 1. Maintain outlets to prevent new gullies from forming at the outlet. This may include reshaping and reseeding the outlet, or repairing or replacing components of structural outlets.

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THANK YOU

The Cass SWCD would like to thank everyone who contributed to the publication of the Annual Report

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2012 Scholarship Winners

Griswold Community School



Abigail Leighton

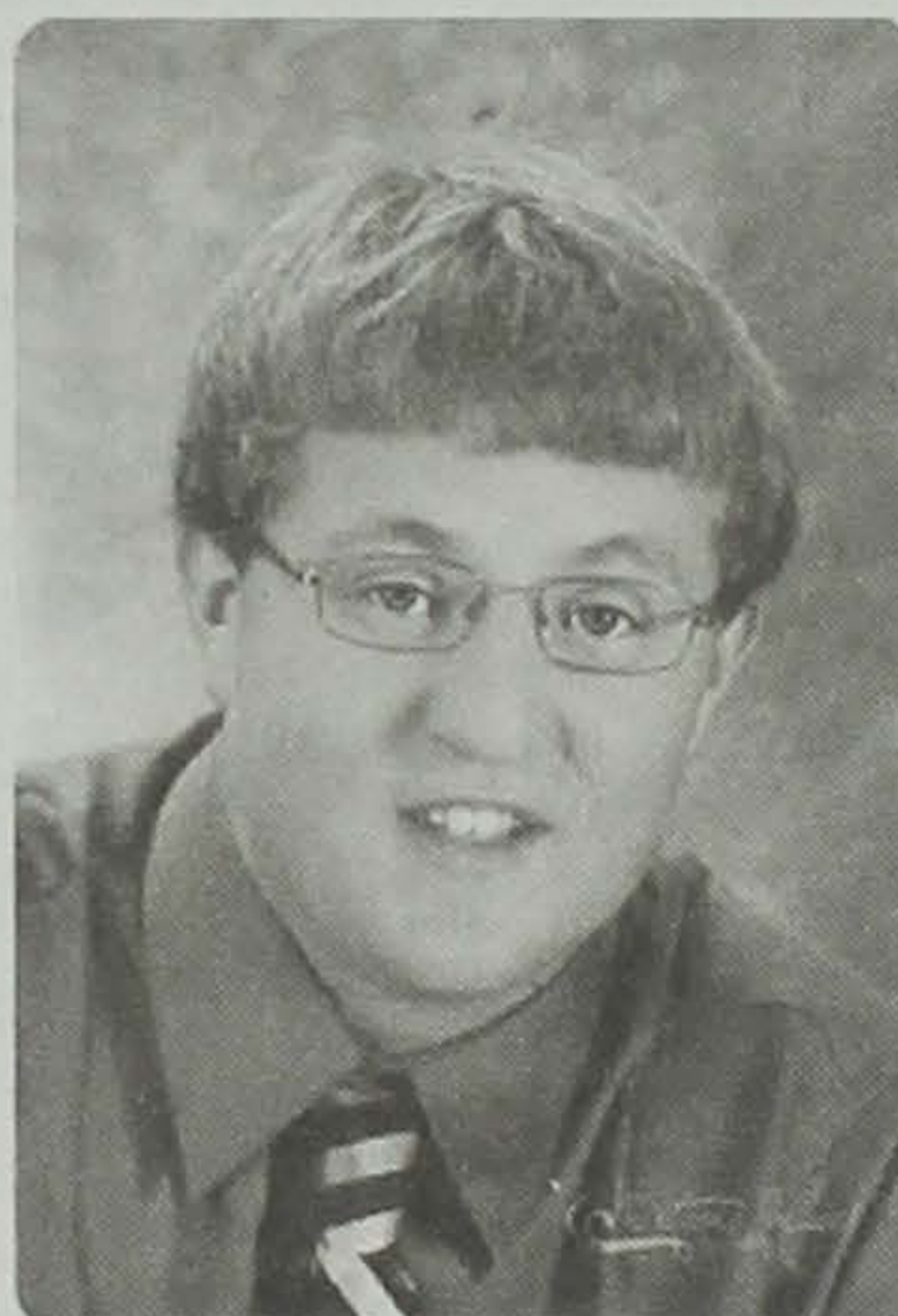


Melanie Palmer

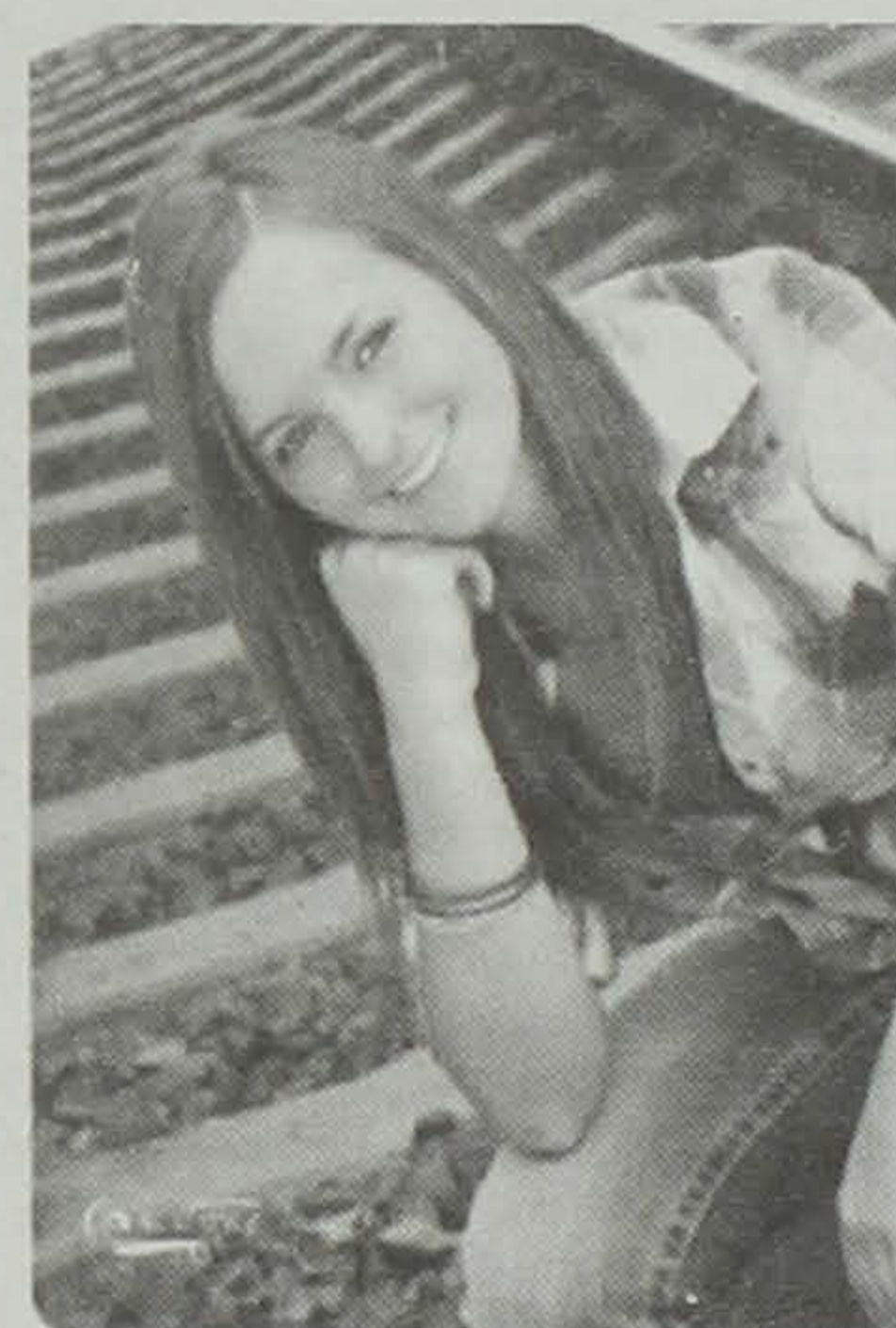
CAM Community School



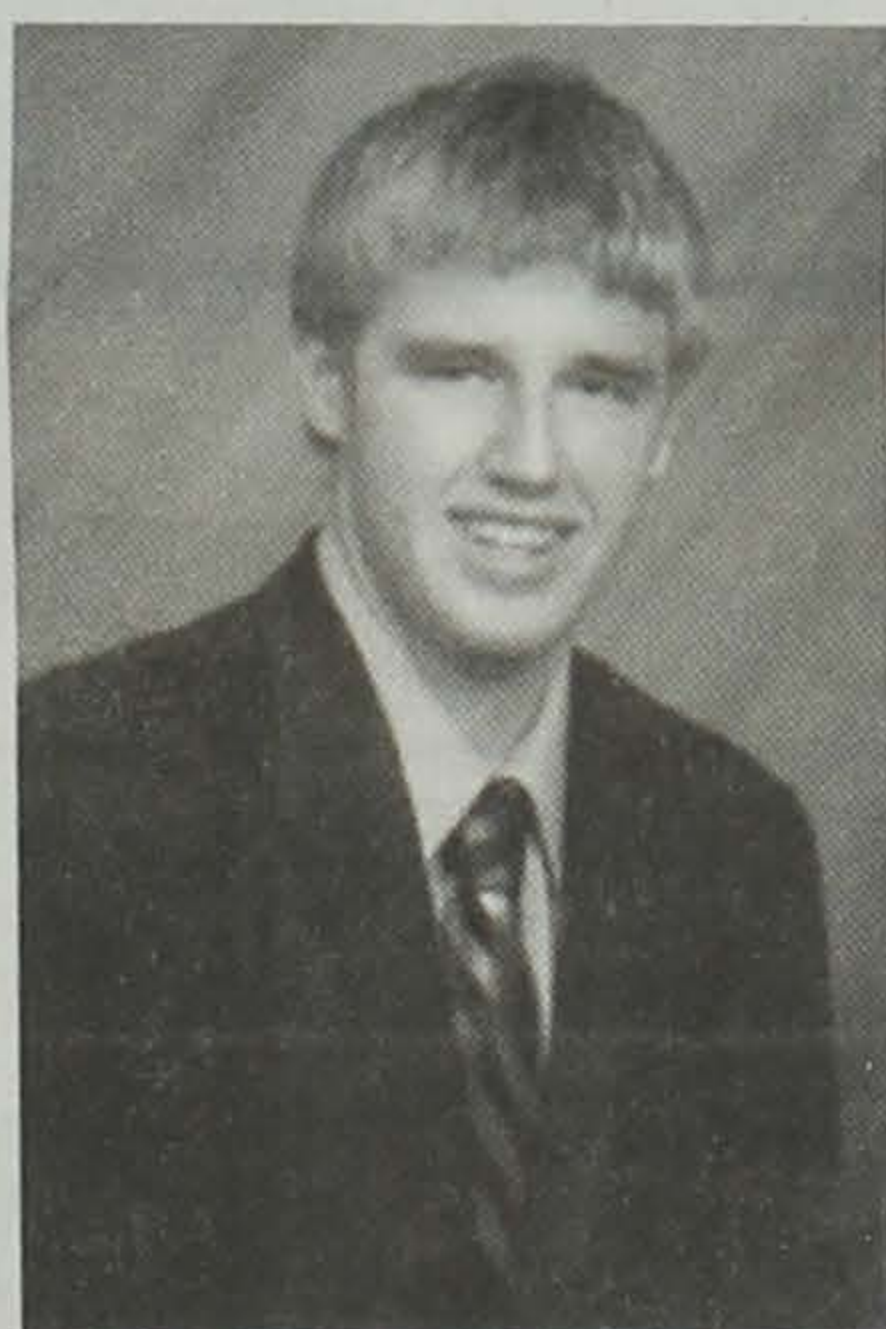
Devan Amdor



Justin Aupperle



Morgan Anstey



Ryan Aupperle

Congratulations to all the winners

No Interest Loan Program

Since 1983, the Division of Soil Conservation has been offering no-interest loans through the Iowa Finance Authority. Loans made under this program can be used to fund conservation practices that protect soil and water resources. Examples include terraces, water and sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures and waterways. To apply for these loans applicants must meet the following requirements: Applicants must own the land where the conservation work will take place, tracts of land must be over 10 acres with a minimum of \$2,500 of agricultural products sold annually and project must meet NRCS field specifications.

Terms of Loans

- * Up to \$10,000 loaned per borrower
- * Loans set up to be paid back in equal installments over a 10 year period
- * 2 percent loan fee paid to district prior to issue of financial funds to landowner
- * Security interest will be placed on the land until loan is paid in full
- * Payments due March 1st each year with no penalty for prepayment
- * Loans can be used to fund 100 percent of the cost up to the loan maximum, but cannot be used in conjunction with other public funds (EQIP or Iowa Financial Incentive Program funds).

Landowners can sign up for these loan at the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District office located at 503 W. 7th Street, Ste 1, Atlantic.

Check your yard for fugitives!

By Lindsey Barney

DNR District 9 Forester

Many people may not know that their residential yards, acreages, and even woodlands can contain insect, disease, and plant fugitives. By my definition, fugitives are actually invasive organisms; plant, insect, or disease species that were transplanted here knowingly or by accident. What do I mean knowingly? Well a lot of times the latest and greatest showy plant/shrub/or tree may be from a foreign country where its native plant community and predators keep it in check. When these biological specimens are brought to the United States for seemingly good intentions, they use their natural adaptations in this new land for out-competing our native species. Why? Be-cause the conditions that normally keep them under control are not present here. Here is an abbreviated laundry list of such offenders: Gypsy Moth – brought to the U.S. for the silk industry – now are actively defoliating oak woodlands. Sudden Oak Death – pathogen can be

carried on rhododendron plants – which are commonly distributed outside of their natural range (West coast) all through the country. Tree of Heaven – brought to the U.S. as a fast-growing street tree – it is now one of the top invasive trees in this Forest District. Bush Honeysuckles, multiflora rose, and buckthorn – once promoted for conservation plantings, these shrubs easily are distributed to woodland understories by wildlife where they threaten to extinguish native oak/hickory regeneration.

Garlic Mustard – brought to the U.S. from Europe to be used as an herb. This plant escaped to woodlands and now severely threatens native woodland plant diversity including forest flowers like Jack-in-the-Pulpit. Japanese Barberry – still commonly sold as decorative shrub, this small bush also threatens woodland understories. Burning Bush – native to Asia but still commonly used as a decorative shrub, this shrub is another woodland invasive. Oriental bitter-sweet – imported for use in home decorations – now is smothering forest vegetation from Iowa eastward. Salt Cedar – introduced from Asia as a decorative plant – still com-

monly planted even in this area (I've seen it!) – kills native plant communities by creating salty soil conditions Bradford/Callery Pear – An oriental pear commonly used as a decorative tree – some hybrids have made viable seeds that escape and threaten to take over disturbed areas. Norway Maple – a very common urban tree, can easily escape into woodlands where it's shade tolerant nature smothers out native vegetation and inhibits native oak/hickory regeneration. Why are native plants so important? Native plants are adapted to our climate, and native wildlife species are best adapted to living in habitat surrounded by these native plants! Each species of plant, large or small, plays an important role in the way the rest of the biological system works. When fugitives (invasives) are introduced, this disrupts or stops the natural cycle; affecting wildlife, soil and water resources, and ultimately us. What can we do? Let's start by learning a lesson. Just because these exotic plants are available,

doesn't mean we know how they will impact our natural areas in the future. We need to get a little more creative with what we choose to plant in our yards. Nature has provided us with many beautiful plant species – we just need to find out what they are and how to use them. For instance, here are some great native shrubs and small trees to use in tight spaces and for conservation plantings: serviceberry, ironwood, muscledwood, red bud red mulberry, Eastern wahoo (cousin to burning bush), American bitter-sweet (vine), Virginia Creeper (vine), American plum, red osier, gray and silky dogwoods, hazelnut, elderberry, choke cherry, ninebark, arrowwood, nannyberry, New Jersey Tea, False indigo, and the list goes on and on. I assist private landowners with assessing and managing the health of their woodlands. If you think you might have some plant, insect, or disease fugitives lurking in your woodland, give me a call – your woodlands will thank you!

Cass County Watershed update

Cass County residents may not know that the creations of Crooked, Turkey and Troublesome Creek watersheds continue to have a valued impact on our area communities. Crooked Creek watershed was created back in 1958 with Turkey Creek starting construction on its first structure in 1967. By 1972, the Cass SWCD partnering with the Cass County Supervisors signed Troublesome Creek Watershed work plans. Operation and maintenance of these structures still remains a top priority with the district and the Cass County supervisors to help with flood control throughout our county. Each year the district does annual inspections of structures in the watersheds. Inspections determine any type of maintenance needed to structures. The district operates on a small budget each year to do the maintenance and repairs. Landowners of these sites can also help with protecting the sites from livestock creating paths or overgrazing the structures. Waterways need to have general maintenance done to them each year such as keeping them free of trees. Joint cooperation between the district, county supervisors and local landowners will help with extending live spans of these structures.

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Doing your part for conservation

By Jim Gillespie

IDALES/DSC Division Director

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts to protect our soil and water resources in Iowa. Each landowner and operator does this because of a strong connection to the land, water and business they are involved with. I call it an Iowa ethic or commitment and it is part of our heritage, something we have been doing for a long time.

We have just gone through one of the worst droughts most of us can remember and some farmers were still able to produce crops that yielded more than expected. Part of that is of course based on better genetics but I also believe it was based on healthier soils. Mother Nature is beyond our control but how we take care of our soil and water is within our control. If we consider the cost of land or rental rates today, we should do everything we can to protect it and keep it where it can be as productive as possible and out of our waters.

By reviewing your conservation plan with someone from the field office, it will provide another opportunity to update that plan and implement some practices



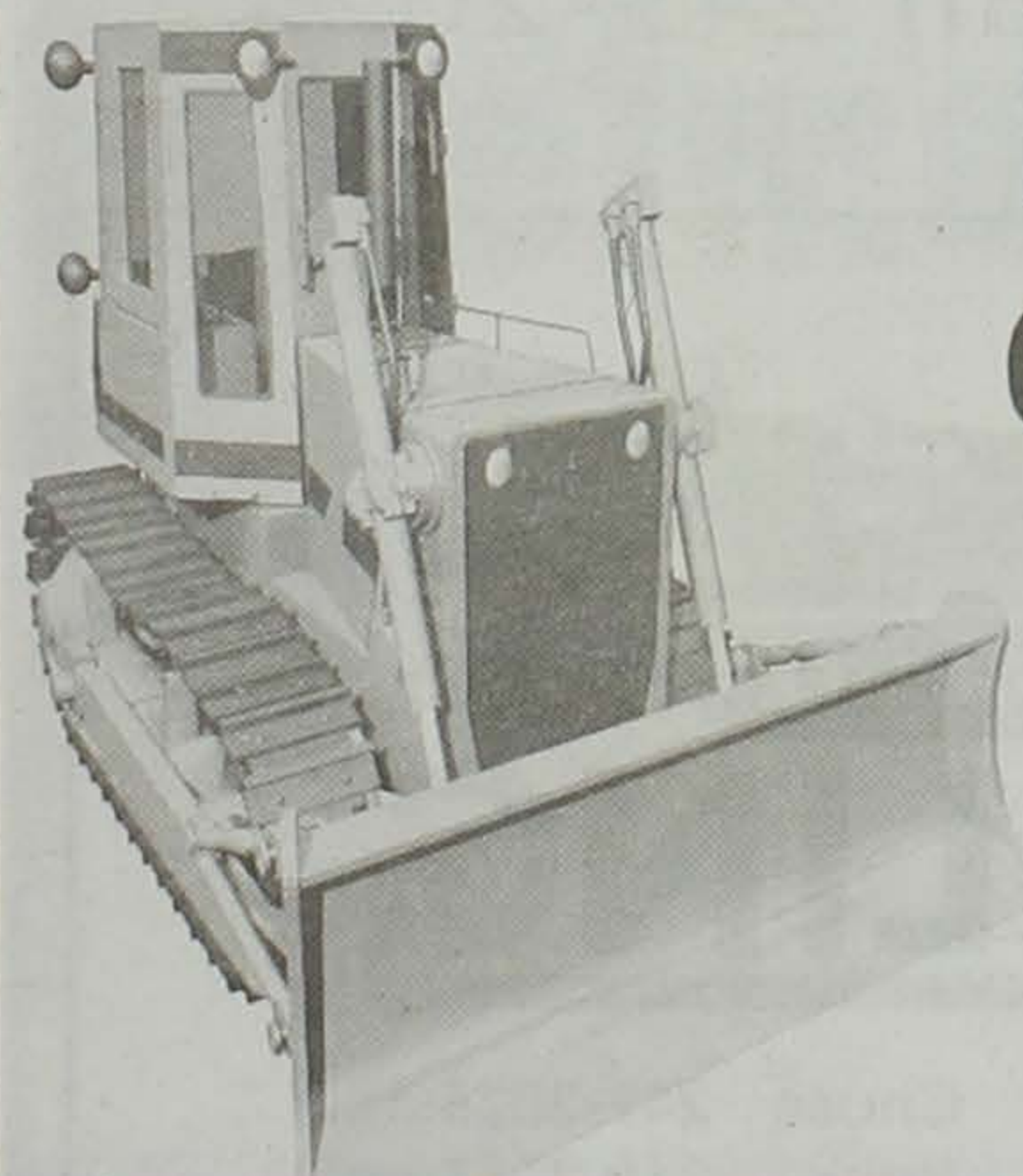
that will protect your soils and its productivity. Everything you do today will continue to improve your soil health and quality that will increase its productivity into the future. The types of things you can do involve management practices, structural practices and proper nutrient management.

Keep up the good work and contact your local soil and water conservation district and staff in the field office concerning your soil and water conservation needs. They are great people to work with that have a tremendous amount of knowledge and skills, and in some cases may be able to provide some financial assistance as well.

Ras Paul Construction

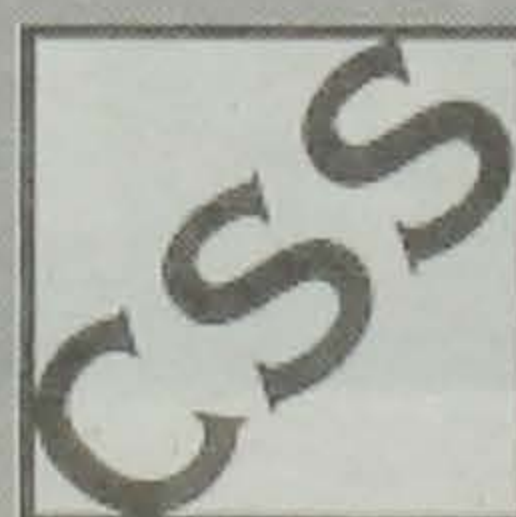
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Tip top terraces

Is your terrace under a 20-year maintenance agreement? Terraces on cropland not only control erosion on the field, but reduce sediment pollution of lakes and streams and provide cover for wildlife. Terraces trap and store sediment lost from cropland that would otherwise be deposited into creeks and lakes. They trap and store about 95 percent of this sediment. So to keep them working properly, consider: If you have grassed backslope or narrow-based terraces, you may want to extend the seeded area out to the field boundary to eliminate point rows or awkward short rows. Soil buildup around tile inlet pipes of terraces could indicate a need for better erosion control between terraces. Make sure your terraces are visible. They can be marked with posts or colored flags or you can install bright orange colored intakes. Tillage implements should never straddle the terrace ridge. The ends of your equipment should operate along the top of the ridge to prevent lowering the terrace ridge height. Clean out trash and debris around terrace intakes regularly. Debris can cause incomplete or slow drainage and overtopping. If water can't get into the intake, the terrace can't do its job. Inspect terraces regularly for damage from burrowing animals. Badgers, fox, and other rodents that build their homes in the terraces can weaken the structure, and make for costly repairs or be the start of a hole through the terrace that could turn into a blowout. Tree roots also weaken the terrace structure and need to be removed on a regular basis, preferably when they are small.



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Poster Contest

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) co-sponsored the Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest. The Cass SWCD is honored to announce the following winners of the local judging done in Cass County. First Place winners won a movie pass to the Atlantic Theatre, Second Place winners received gift certificates from Westside Diner and Third Place winners received Crayola marker sets. These students were recognized at the Cass SWCD 70th Anniversary Celebration. Thanks to all who participated.

K-1

Landon Pelzer, Konner Cruz, Aidan Kennedy, Michael Hotze, McKenna Wiechman, Ryan Wetterlind, Katelyn Pollard

Ryla Echternach, Nathan Keiser, Alex Rush, Emma Mundorf, Claire Pellett, Erynn Peterson

2-3 Grade Group Participants

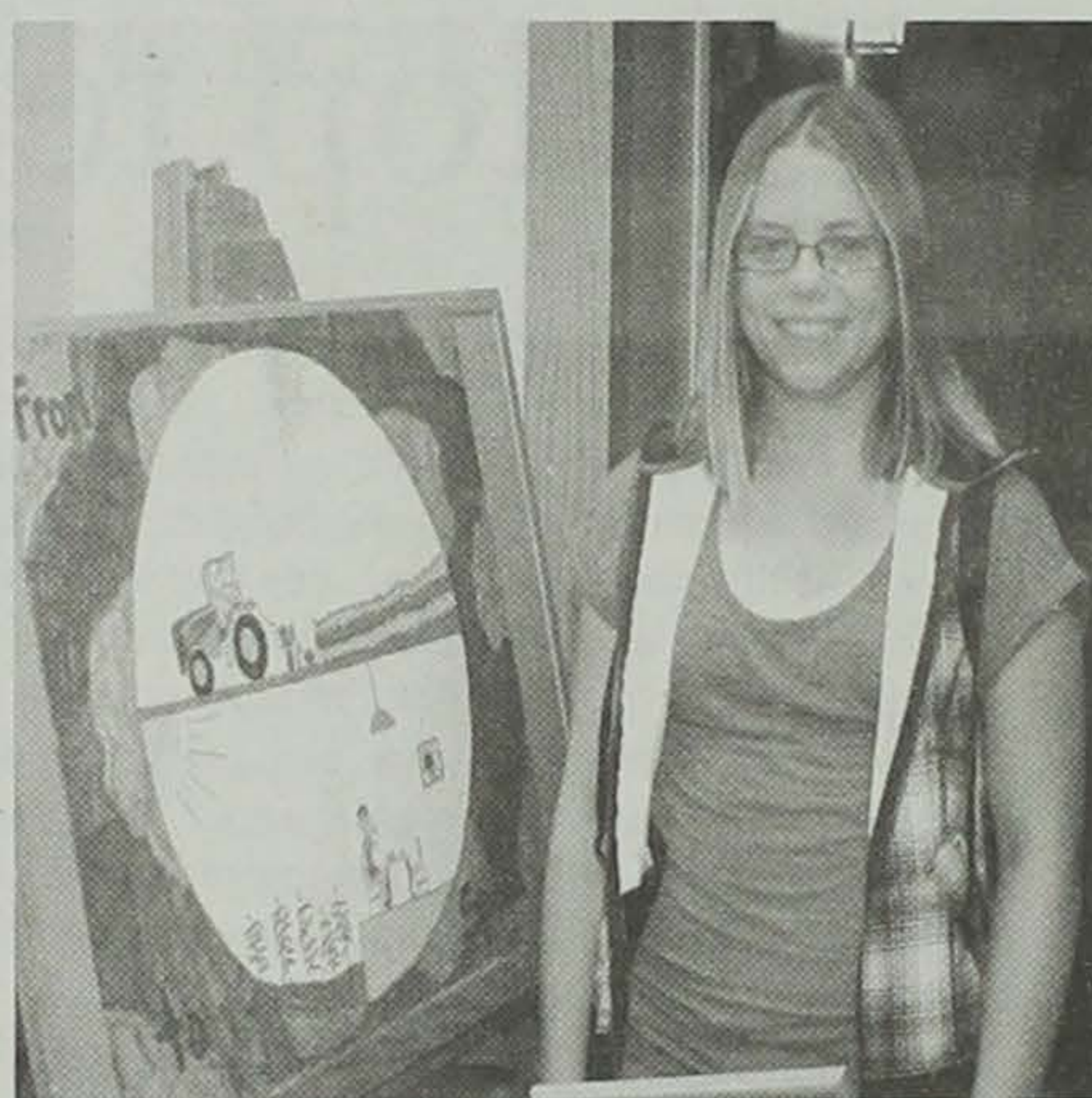
1st Place— Madison Foresman, 2nd Place—Caroline Pellett, 3rd Place Wesley Brown, Bryan York

4-6 Grade Group Participants

1st Place— Connor Pellett, 2nd Place—Katie York

7-9 Grade Group Participants

Weston Erickson, Danyelle Hass



Pictured is Danyelle Hass who was the Region 5 First place winner.



Teacher/Youth Coordinator

The Cass SWCD sponsored an award to any teacher or youth coordinator, if one of their student's poster was selected as a Regional Winner. Julie Tjepkes, Children Services Director, with the Atlantic Public Library was presented a certificate and a check for \$50 at the Cass SWCD 70th Anniversary Banquet. These funds are to help teachers and youth coordinators purchase supplies for their class-rooms. Congratulations to Julie. She is pictured with Region 5 Winner Danyelle Hass.



Pictured are poster contest winners being recognized during the SWCD 70th Anniversary Banquet (from left) Emma Mundorf, Erynn Peterson, Clair Pellett, Caroline Pellett, Katie York, Danyelle Hass.

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Annual Tree Sales

 Tree sales are held each year in Cass county. Anyone interested in purchasing trees and shrubs from the SWCD need to order by March 1st of each year. Landowners can apply for assistance through IDALS-DSC for REAP funds to help with installing new windbreaks. Applications taken first come first served till funds are exhausted. For more information stop in the SWCD office. See order forms on the Cass SWCD website at www.cassswcd.com

Potted Evergreens	Size		Sold As	Number Ordered		Price Each	Total
Black Hills Spruce	2-3'		Each		X	\$25.00	
Black Hills Spruce	3-4'		Each		X	\$30.00	
Black Hills Spruce	5'		Each		X	\$58.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	2-3'		Each		X	\$25.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	3-4'		Each		X	\$30.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce	5'		Each		X	\$60.00	
Norway Spruce	3-4'		Each		X	\$30.00	
Norway Spruce	5'		Each		X	\$58.00	
Concolor Fir	18-24"		Each		X	\$20.00	
White Pine	2-3'		Each		X	\$25.00	
White Pine	3-4'		Each		X	\$30.00	
White Pine	5-6'		Each		X	\$40.00	
Bareroot Evergreen Upon Request							

Deciduous Shrubs/Trees	Size		Bundles	Number Ordered		Price Each	Total
Lilac, Common Purple	2'-3'	Transplant	10			\$1.25	
Redosier Dogwood	2-3'	Seedling	25			\$1.00	
American Cranberry	2-3'	Transplant	10			\$2.00	
Other species available upon request							

Tree Order Form

[illegible]

Remit Payment to: *Cass SWCD*
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Atlantic, Iowa 50022

☐ Check # _____ Receipt # _____
☐ Cash _____ Receipt # _____

*Orders must be placed by March 1, 2013
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Annual Tree Sales

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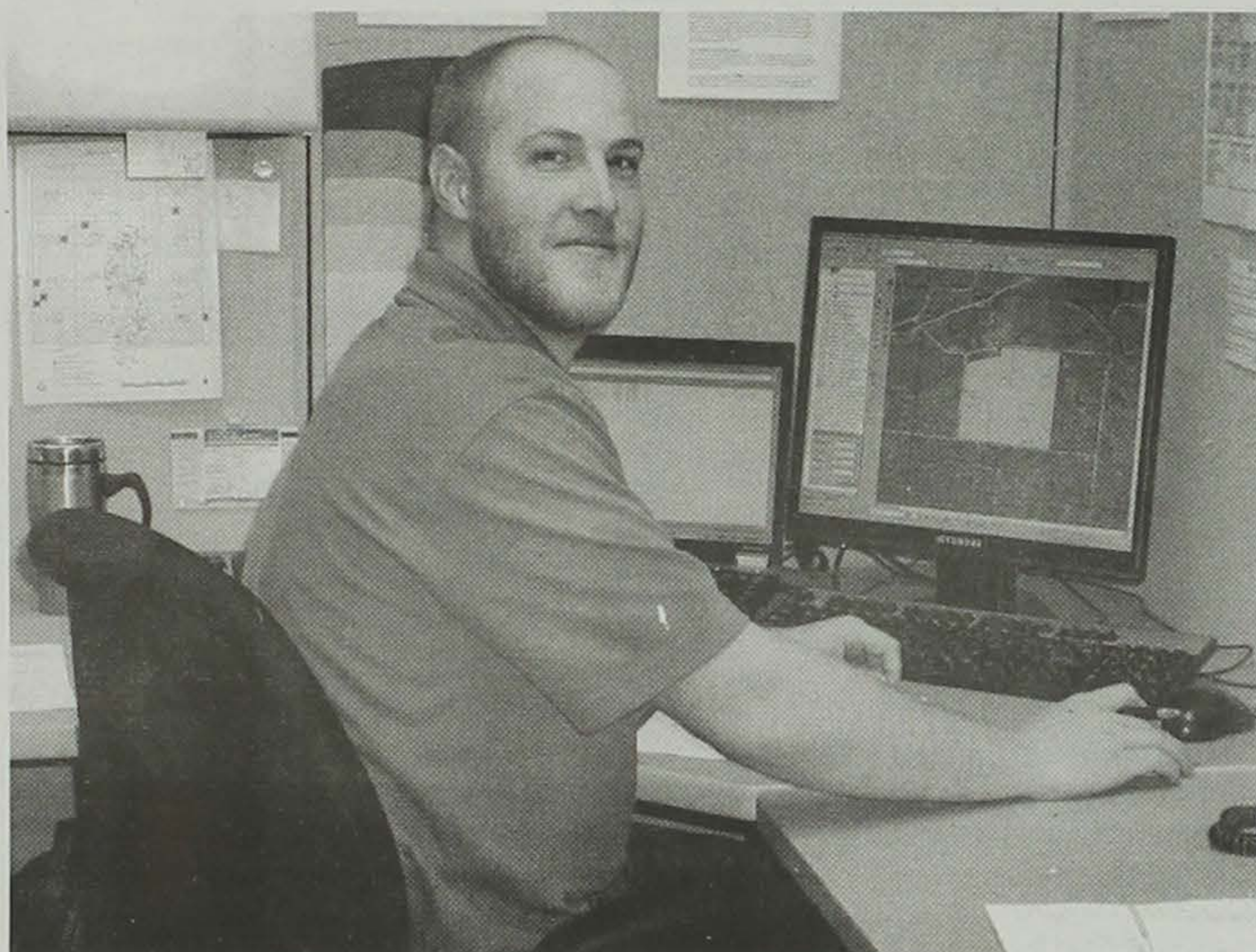
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New Soil Conservationist Joins Atlantic Field Office

Hi, my name is Justin Boersma and I'm the new soil conservationist in the Cass/Audubon NRCS Management Unit, so I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I grew up on a small farm in Sioux County in Northwest Iowa where we raised hogs, cattle, and grain crops. After high school, I attended Northwestern College in Orange City where I received a degree in Biology with an emphasis in Ecological Science. The following year I attended the University of Northern Iowa and earned a Master's degree in Ecosystem Management. In the summer of 2010, the Allamakee County SWCD offered me my first job in conservation, and I began a watershed assessment for Waterloo Creek. Before I was able to finish that project I was offered a full time position as a soil conservationist in the Jones County field office and chose to accept it. After serving in Jones County for a year and a half, I accepted a transfer to the Atlantic field office. Even though I've been here since February, I haven't had a chance to work with many people, but my experiences have been very positive. I have a deep appreciation for Midwestern agriculture and hope to be able to protect that way of life through conservation. I look forward to working with more folks in Cass and Audubon Counties and helping them with conservation. When you stop in our office feel free to introduce yourself and I'll see if there is any way I can help you.



Atlantic Field Office Staff

Pictured (from left) Jana Coughlin, Scott Breach, David York, Steve Fluckey and Randall Larsen.

Meet the Staff

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SWCD Election Results

The Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners are the governing body of the local district in Iowa, as delineated in Iowa Code Chapter 161A. This year, there were three seats to fill for the November election. Curt Behrends, Ray Wilson, and Chase Wheatley have been elected to four year terms beginning the second day of January, 2013. Assistant commissioners are also appointed at the District Organizational meeting. Fred Kay and Greg Zellmer continue their terms on board also. Greg Zellmer will serve as Chairman, Ray Wilson will serve as Vice Chairman, Fred Kay, Treasurer.

Soil Science Student Trainee

Above Right: Elyssa McFarland spent the summer in Atlantic as a Soil Science Student Trainee. Elyssa is originally from Columbus Junction, and will be graduating from Iowa State University in May 2013. She is a member of the Iowa State Agronomy Club and participates in Collegiate Soils Judging. In her spare time, Elyssa likes to go fishing, sew, read, and help out around her family's farm. Elyssa enjoyed meeting farmers across southwest Iowa and learning about soils unique to this area.



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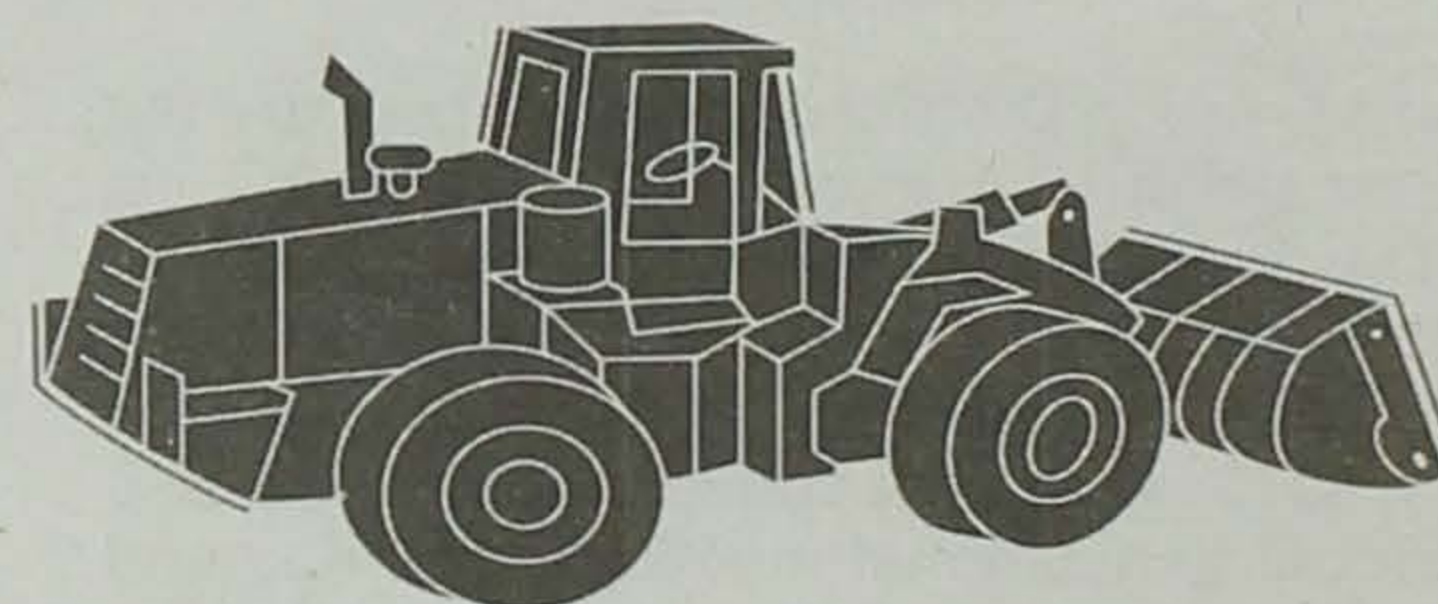


My name is Aris Anthony Harris. I'm a graduating senior at Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., pursuing a degree in Agriculture Sciences with a concentration in plant and soil sciences. I found out about the Natural Resources Conservation Service through my liaison, Allison Johnson, who interned in Iowa during her college summers. She told me about the agency and explained to me that Iowa is a great state to learn about agriculture. So Miss Johnson spoke with Mr. Shaffer Ridgeway about recruiting me to the great state of Iowa. I decided

to start my first internship in Iowa and was placed in the Waterloo/Waverly field office during the summer of 2010. I enjoyed my first summer of work experience so much that I decided to come back the next summer. The following summer in 2011, I worked in the Jefferson/Boone field office in Greene County and learned a lot more about the agency. This past summer I enjoyed working with the Atlantic /Audubon field office! Working in Iowa has given me a chance to meet some great individuals and see agriculture on a larger scale.

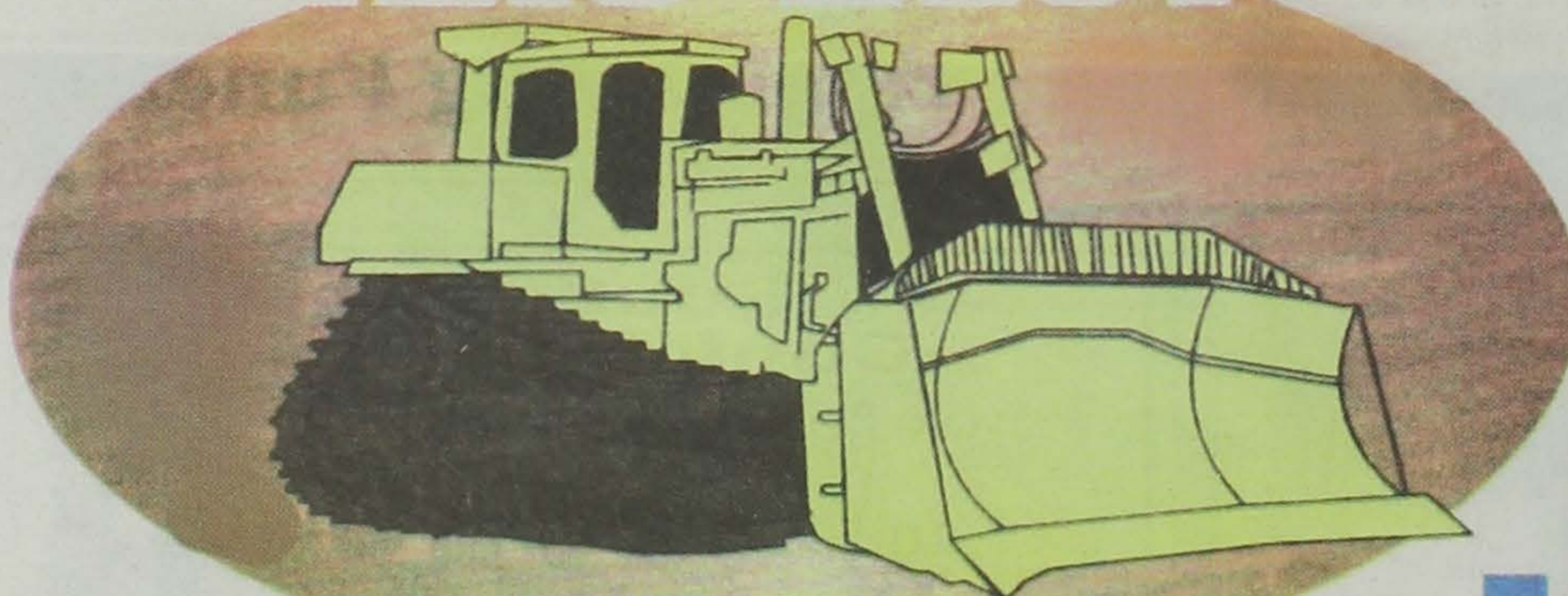
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