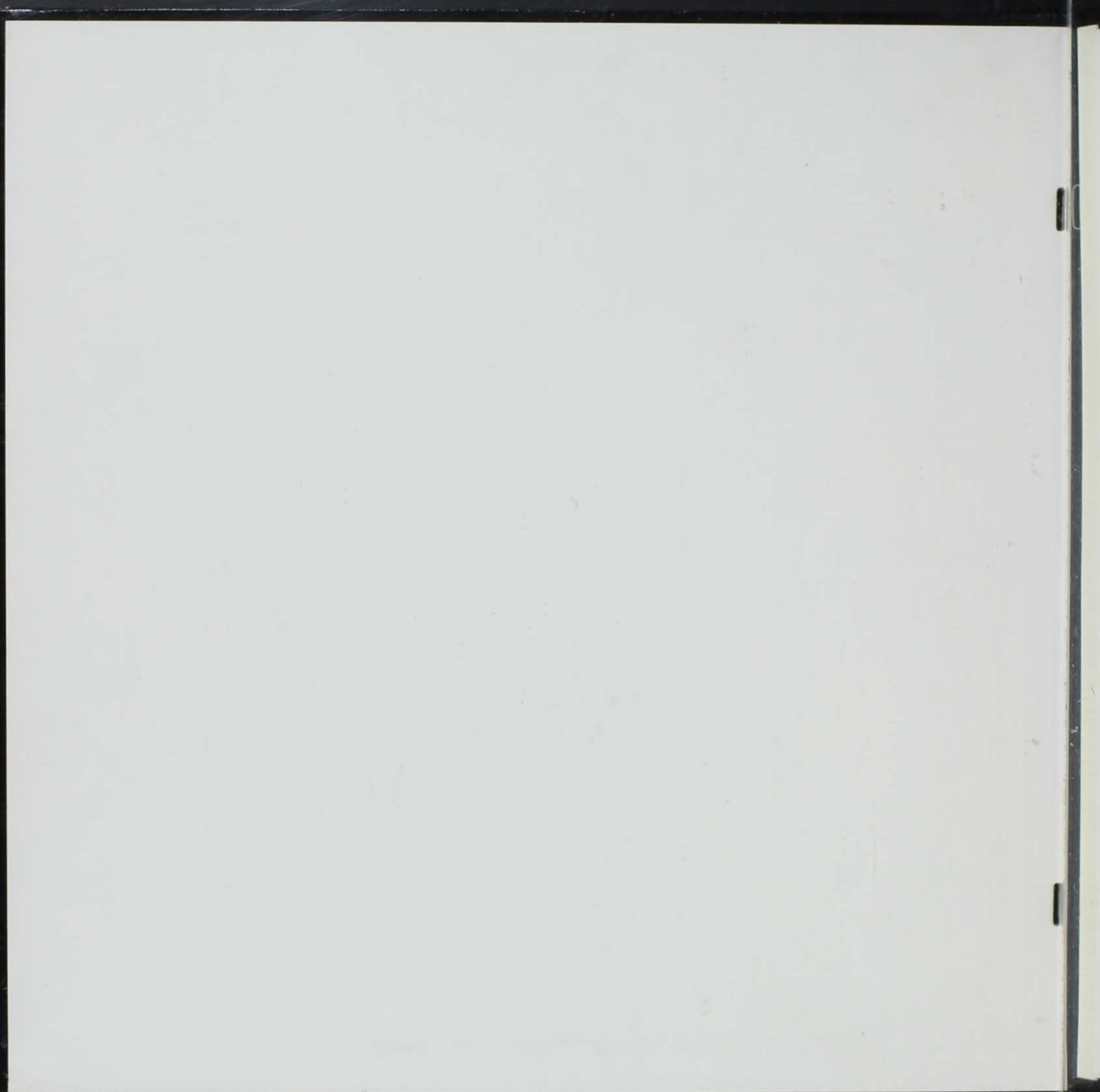






Outdoor Classroom 1994



Nutrient management improves water quality and profits

Too much of a good thing on a farm can be bad. That includes plant nutrients. John Will, Clean Water Project Coordinator for the Iowa Great Lakes, says, "You want to apply the correct amount and form of plant nutrients to optimize yields and minimize adverse impacts on water quality."

John recommends first getting a soil test, setting realistic yield goals, and crediting contributions from previous years' crops to determine crop nutrients needs for the next crop.

Then, prepare a nutrient management plan to help you apply nutrients at the proper time and rate. Nutrient sources include animal manure, sludge, legume credits, and commercial fertilizers. When manure is used, it's important to have it tested first, or at least have the nutrient content

estimated to determine its nutrient content.

The following steps reduce the potential for nutrients to go unused and wash or infiltrate into water supplies:

Choose the best application method - use broadcast, starter, surface band, irrigation, or injection.

Use a late spring nitrogen test, when corn plants are 6 to 12 inches tall.

Refrain from applying nitrogen in the fall except if the nitrogen is associated with potassium applications.

Avoid applying manure on frozen or snow covered ground if possible.

Test soils once every three years.

Establish a winter cover crop if there's a possibility of nitrogen leaching because of a poor crop yield.

As participants in the ASCS Programs (Water Quality Incentive Project and SP-53) can attest to, nutrient management plans can save money and increase yields. Many who have taken part in these programs continue to have their soil tested simply because it makes sense. The savings in fertilizer costs and increase in crop yield more than pays for the cost of the soil test, yet decreases nutrient input overall. In summary, you save money and help improve the environment.

SCS can help farmers develop a nutrient management plan. The plan is a good way to make sure your crops will have enough of the nutrients they need. But not more than can be used. The plan will also increase your profitability, an important part of farming these days.

District's 50th Anniversary

Celebrate 50 years at SWCD Open House

By LEO PRESTON,
District Conservationist
USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Two very special events will be celebrate next Tuesday during an open house sponsored by the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

1994 is the 50th Anniversary year for the organization of the Dickinson Soil And Water Conservation District (SWCD). Fifty years ago the Dickinson SWCD was chartered by the State of Iowa and charged with the restoration and conservation of the soil and water related resources of the county.

The history of the Dickinson SWCD will be featured at the open house. Pictures of past commissioners, scrapbooks showing conservation activities of the past and exhibits showing current activities will be on display.

The SWCD is governed by five commissioners elected in the

general election who serve to set local policy and direction. These officials receive technical assistance in carrying out their programs from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service.) Together this team provides help to the public in soil erosion control, water quality planning, soils information and conservation education.

The open house will also serve as a way to thank hundreds of Dickinson County Farmers for their conservation progress in protecting our productive soil and clean water. December 5-11 was proclaimed Conservation Farmer Appreciation Week by Governor Terry Branstad to show appreciation to conservation-minded farmers across Iowa. Many Counties are holding similar gatherings in observance of Conservation Farmer Appreciation Week.

Celebrate 50 years

from ANNIVERSARY, page 1

As a small token of appreciation, farm owners and farm operators attending the open house will receive an oval-shaped pewter ornament with a "thank you" engraved into a conservation scene. They will also receive an appreciation letter from Iowa senators Tom Harkin and Charles Grassley, along with a thank you card and a "proud to be a

conservation farmer" window sticker.

The open house will be held in the Community Building on Tuesday December 6th from 1 - 4 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

The celebration is open to the public. Come and celebrate 50 Years of Conservation and help say thank you to all those conservation farmers in the county.









SCS is re-named Natural Resources Conservation Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service has had a name change to the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The new agency was authorized as part of USDA's reorganization in October by Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy.

"Our new name more accurately reflects what we do," said Leroy Brown, Iowa's State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. "Our responsibilities go farther than soil conservation. they have for some time."

While the agency has focused on soil conservation for the past 60 years, it has also been the key federal agency to offer technical help on private lands for improvements to water, wildlife habitat, woodlands, grasslands, and other resources connected to the land. More recently, the agency has worked with the nation's private landowners to increase acreage of grasslands, wetlands and woodlands through USDA programs.

"More than two-thirds of the land in this country is privately owned. Those private landowners are the key to our environmental well-

being," Brown said. "We will continue to build on our 60 years of experience with a unique relationship between the federal government and those landowners, as well as the conservation partnership with local conservation districts," Brown added.

The new Natural Resources Conservation Service will continue to have responsibility for all the programs of the former Soil Conservation Service. In addition, several other programs have been transferred to it, including the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Water Bank Program, the Forestry Incentives Program, the Colorado River Salinity Control Program, and the Farms for the Future Program.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will increasingly look at all resources on private lands as its resource conservationists help private landowners on a voluntary basis. "What's done on our vast acreage of private lands encompasses so much more than the soil resource - our water, our woodlands, our wildlife, our air and our quality of life should also be considered."

1994



Front (l-r): Ann Northey, Deirdre Braband, Damarys Mortenson

Back (l-r): Leo Preston, David Kohlhaase, John Wills



Front (l-r): Mark Ingwersen, Keith Van Kleeck, Chris Hoffman

Back (l-r): Jared Herbert, Orville Berg, Maurice Dougal, Tim Hemphill

1995

1-24-95

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KEEP OUR LAKES CLEAN: DJ Kohlhasse (center) won this year's Soil and Water Conservation poster contest for grades K-1. He is Mrs. Maahs' first grade class and the son of Dave and Deb Kohlhasse of Spirit Lake. David Rodawig (left) of MHR Insurance and Mark Ingwersen, district commissioner of the SWCD presented DJ with his award. His poster will go on to the regional level where it will compete with posters from 13 other counties. This contest was sponsored by the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners and M-H-R Insurance. (Photo by Sue Laue)

Herberts named Conservation Farmers of the Year

By DORY MEARS
Staff Writer

On Thursday, April 6, the Dickinson County Pheasants Forever held their 11th annual banquet at the Expo Building at the Dickinson County Fairgrounds. Over 600 meals were served, breaking last years record.

According to Don Lamb, co-chairman of the board, a new record was also set in net profits this year as they exceeded \$36,000. The money raised this year will all be spent in Dickinson County, purchasing land for habitats. Money will also be used to buy trees.

Jared and Mary Herbert of rural Lake Park were chosen by the Soil Conservation Office as Conservationist Farmer of the Year. The Herbert's earned this award as a result of their extra efforts in soil conservation and wildlife preservation.

The organization is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of

pheasant and other wildlife populations through habitat improvement, public awareness and education, and land management

policy changes. They also propose and support conservation legislation which benefits wildlife populations at both the state and federal levels.



STEWARDSHIP WEEK

"Partners in Stewardship" was the theme of Soil and Water Stewardship Week, April 24 - May 1, 1994. The purpose of Soil and Water Stewardship Week is to create a larger awareness of our responsibilities for stewardship of the natural resources that sustain us all. Stewardship observances can also draw public attention to local resource problems, and efforts being made in the community to help solve them.

This week has become a special time to remind all people that these gifts warrant their best in creative conservation and considerate management.

The Dickinson County SWCD, which works throughout the year on soil and water conservation measures, provided church bulletin covers, program inserts, and children's educational supplements free to the churches in the county. The Commissioners also furnished literature, educational materials, and posters that describe how people are dependent upon and interact with trees.

Change comes slowly to wetlands regulations

Two victories for landowners were scored recently in the battle over wetlands regulations. One victory was an agreement naming the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as the lead federal agency for determining wetlands on farmland. The other was a decision to remove prior converted cropland from wetlands regulations.

In the late 1980s, regulatory programs designed to protect wetlands became a center of controversy. With four federal agencies involved, the enforcement of wetlands regulations became complicated, inflexible and inconsistent. The controversy caught the attention of President Clinton, who formed an interagency group to review federal wetlands policy.

A package of wetlands reform initiatives from that working group included the two victories mentioned earlier. Farmers will now be able to rely on SCS maps for determining the extent of wetlands under both the swampbuster provisions of the 1985 farm bill and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Previously, farmers participating in federal farm programs received a wetland map from the SCS for swampbuster purposes. If that farmer needed a Section 404 permit for work in wetlands, the Corps of Engineers or Environmental Protection Agency required an additional wetland determination. It

wasn't uncommon for a farmer to get different determinations from different agencies.

The change in definition of prior converted cropland is also a relief for farmers. For a time, land that had once been a wetland fell under current federal regulations for wetlands. This ruling ensures that the 53 million acres of prior converted cropland will no longer be subject to those regulations.

Despite the progress that has been made, legislation is still needed. A classification system needs to be established that rates wetlands based on function and values. Greater protection is needed for truly unique, high value wetlands, while less stringent regulations are needed for low value and marginally wet areas.

SCS is now the lead federal agency for determining wetlands on farmland.

Incentives to encourage voluntary protection of wetlands are needed. States need to assume more responsibility for wetlands protection. A simple and speedy process for landowner appeals needs to be established. And provisions need to be made for compensating landowners for the loss of economic use of private lands.

During debate on reauthorizing the Clean Water Act, common sense will need to be applied as new federal wetlands protection policies are written.

Urban clean water efforts pay off

To the editor:

The urban clean water efforts have been very helpful for cleaning up the Iowa Great Lakes. In the past 3 years, the Clean Water Project for the Iowa Great Lakes has been focusing on the farmers located in the watershed. It is true, the farmers do produce a lot of pollutants. However, pollution occurs in the cities as well, because of fertilizer application, pesticide application, and other types of pollution in the urban community.

Many urban residents, for example, may be putting up to 10 times more fertilizer per acre than a farmer. Many times the fertilizer is probably the largest problem in the urban community as far as pollution is concerned. A person can take steps to avoid unnecessary applications of fertilizer. One of the best ways to know if more fertilizer is needed is to have your lawns soil tested. The soil test will show if your lawn is deficient in Phosphorous, Potassium, or if the pH is too low or high. If you apply your fertilizer according to the soil test, you will be providing for the needs of the grass but not placing unneeded fertilizer on the ground where it may go into the lakes.

Another important step is to apply the fertilizer only according to the label instructions on the bag. By not following the label instructions you may be applying too much fertilizer on your land.

Pesticides should be applied only if needed. For example, if you have a problem with dandelions then you should treat for dandelions. Many pesticides are applied needlessly. Many times a pesticide is applied every year because that is always how it's been done. You should first identify the problem and then treat for the problem.

Another great idea is to spot spray only the problem areas. For example, if you have a problem with thistles in one area of your yard you probably don't need to spray the whole yard. You can get by with spraying just the area with the thistles.

A common problem along the lakeshore this time of the year is burning grass clippings and leaves. When vegetation is burned, a large portion of what is left over is phosphorous. Phosphorous is the largest pollution problem in our lakes, next to sediment. If you burn on the lakeshore, you are giving the phosphorous a direct access to the lake. Burning on the shore also destroys vegetation on the lakeshore which is needed to hold the bank in place. Vegetation on the lakeshore is one of the most important ways to keep your bank from sloughing off into the lake.

You can also avoid polluting the lake if you do not mow your grass into the roads or the lake. Some people also dump their bagged grass into the lake. Grass clippings carry a lot of phosphorous in their leaves. One pound of phosphorous can grow up to 1000 pounds of algae. So if there is one pound of phosphorous in that bag of grass that is dumped into the lake, around 1000 pounds of algae will grow because of that.

It all comes down to thinking before you do something. If you live near a lake just about everything you do will have an impact on that lake. There are many organizations and people in

the Lakes Region who are willing to help or offer advice. If you have a question feel free to call or visit with a professional landscaper, lawn care specialist, ISU Extension Service, or your local Lake Protection Agency.

John Wills
IGL Clear Water Project

Wetlands preserve area for future

By SUE LAUE
Editor

Restoration of nature's beauty has become a gift of many Iowa landowners. One such landowner, the Braby's, have given back to nature a parcel of land that was tillable farmland a few years ago, thanks to a conservation easement that is a part of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project.

Larry and Jean Braby own nearly 100 acres east of Lower Gar Lake. Two years ago, they entered 78 acres into the project. This year, they added 24 more. The larger area they fondly call Bear Paw, while the other located nearby, is the Timbers.

Funded in part by the Area Soil Conservation Service (ASCS), the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project is designed to turn smaller parcels of land into buffer zones protecting the area's lakes. Thanks to the efforts by the Brabys and this program, the area restored now filters 300 acres of runoff before entering Lower Gar.

Other partners involved in this project include Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District, Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund (REAP), Soil Conservation Service, Iowa Natural Heritage

Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Dickinson County Conservation Board, University of Okoboji Foundation, Okoboji Protective Association, US Fish and Wildlife, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Agriculture, the US Environmental Protective Agency and the Clean Water Alliance.

John Wills, Clean Water Project Coordinator, said four easements were completed last year, ranging from five-acre parcels to the largest, 34.2 acres. He said that they prefer to work with smaller areas in order to try to provide a broader range of project locations.

Restoration of the Braby property began with a 78-acre parcel. Although larger than most of the sites in the project, Wills explained, "the biggest reason (for a project this size) is the amount of area that drains through it. We felt it was a project well worth it. The dollars per acre was cheap compared to the amount of area we're protecting."

Braby said he got interested in the program thanks to a tile blowout. "I called the ASCS office and they came and told me what they had to offer. It sounded too good to be true," he said. "We control it, we walk around it and enjoy it, and we

own it," he added. Projects in the program have perpetual easements.

He and his wife, Jean, spend time working with both vegetative and water control management. Plans include the development of a wildlife food plot. "We've got it here, we just need to take care of it," said Jean. More than a thousand trees have been donated by Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever to provide food and cover on the site.

"Without those groups, we wouldn't have been able to do anything," said Larry.

The ASCS office works with property owners to improve wetlands in the program. "We plan to plant prairie grasses at the present location," Larry added. "We want to use the land as a learning tool for schools. It's not to be used for hunting."

Another wetland is being developed just north of Bear Paw. Two wetlands areas will be created there as well. Called the Timbers, it

is owned by Bernie Sago and the Brabys. This 24-acre area provides drainage for 100 acres.

Another area owned by them is in operation in Graettinger with seven wetland areas on site.

Wills explained there are three ways to access funding for wetland restoration, either through the Clean Water Project, U.S. Fish and Wildlife or the Wetland Reserve Program. Larry and John concur their easement works the best. Wills explained the other two are less restrictive and allow for changes to be made later in the programs.

The Clean Water Project works in a cooperative effort with the landowner to restore areas and provide wetlands for generations to come. "Water quality is extremely important," said Wills. "It's more than promoting ducks and geese.

There's a lot more value than just the wildlife."



AERIAL VIEW: This shot overlooks Bear Paw from the east. This area was tillable farmland up until three years ago. It is now a 78-acre wetland area for native wildlife.



CLEAN WATER PROJECT: Larry and Jean Braby on site at Bear Paw. Their other wetland restoration project, the Timbers, can be seen in the upper right hand portion of the photo. The Brabys really enjoy their wetland, as they have gotten to watch it transform in just two years to the beautiful area it is today. (Photo by Sue Laue)

49th Annual Conference
for Soil and Water
Conservation District
Commissioners of Iowa



Awards Banquet
Thursday, September 7, 1995
Des Moines, Iowa

49th Annual Conference
for Soil and Water
Conservation District
Commissioners of Iowa



Awards Luncheon
Friday, September 8, 1995
Des Moines, Iowa

**Ingwersen elected
to new position**

The Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners had its annual conference in Des Moines Sept. 7 and 8.

Mark Ingwersen from Dickinson County SWCD was elected Vice President. Ingwersen has served on the District Board in the county since 1988. He has been a regional director of the IASWCDC for the past two years. He and his family farm 800 acres in Spirit Lake.

Conservation farmers honored

BY MONTE SESKER

For many years WALLACES FARMER has been a tireless advocate of sound soil and water conservation practices. To support that cause the magazine has cooperated with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in recognizing the work of Iowa's outstanding district conservation commissioners.

Region 1

No-till planting and the responsibility landowners have to be good stewards of the soil are often topics Ray Folkerts, Inwood, Iowa, focuses on in casual conversation or formal presentations. He has long been a strong advocate of conservation practices and has been a district commissioner the past five years.

Folkerts uses no-till for all of his row crop acreage and practices pasture management. He has installed several permanent conservation practices including: terraces, windbreaks, contours, grassed waterways and grade stabilization ponds.

Region 2

A half-mile grassed waterway and establishment of a farmstead windbreak are recent conservation projects completed on the Tim Hemphill farm, Milford, Iowa. He also has created a wildlife habitat and a field windbreak protecting the fragile soils on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land.

Hemphill has been a commissioner for eight years. He serves as secretary for the district and on the awards committee. He and wife Linda coordinate the district's 1995 tree sale campaign.

State Winner,

Region 3

Until retiring Buford Floy, Thornton, Iowa, practiced no-till planting and conservation tillage on his farm. He installed terraces and grassed waterways to control soil erosion. Combining his interests in soil conservation and wildlife protection, Floy restored a pothole wetland and native prairie area on CRP acres to promote nesting and attract wildlife.

In 1993, Floy developed a multi-agency water quality project for Clear Lake. He now chairs the 22-member Clear Lake Enhancement and Restoration Project which has begun a three-year \$350,000 water quality project. He has been a commissioner for five years and now serves as vice-chairman.

Region 4

In 1985 Donald Schmitt, Holy Cross, Iowa, was recognized as the district's outstanding conservation farmer. He has implemented a variety of practices on his rolling northeast Iowa farm. Among these, he installed 9,000 feet of outlet terraces, 11,000 feet of waterways, three ponds, 40 acres of stripcropping, 165 acres of contoured row crop, a farmstead windbreak and two concrete manure storage structures. He also uses minimum tillage on all row crops.

In eight years as a commissioner he has served as chairperson, and is in his second term as vice-chairperson. Active in education and finance committees, he has hosted field days for college students.

Region 5

Clint Goos uses terraces, waterways, tile drainage, no-till planting and contouring on his 650 acres near Treynor in western Iowa. He has also installed a grade stabilization structure which is used by both livestock and wildlife.

Goos has been a commissioner for 23 years and has served as chairperson and vice-chairperson. He has been active in education, awards, watershed protection and legislative efforts for the district.

Region 6

Kim Bates no-till plants his corn into soybean stubble and uses minimum tillage for soybeans on his farm near Scranton, Iowa. He built and maintains a system of grassed waterways, and had an extensive farmstead windbreak until it was struck by a tornado.

During his term as a commissioner he served as chairperson and vice-chairperson and has been active in a variety of efforts. He is also a charter member of the Greene County Conservation Club which was organized in 1991 to promote conservation.

Region 7

Terraces, contours, trees, native vegetation plantings and an improved timber stand all fit the program on the Leland Roudybush farm, Muscatine, Iowa.

He serves the district education committee by promoting the tree sale program and helping local teachers prepare soil conservation lesson plans. Roudybush serves as vice-chairperson and has been chairperson during his 14 years as a commissioner.

He is also the state chairman of the Iowa League of RC&D's, chairperson of the Louisa County RC&D and serves on the Geode RC&D Board.

Region 8

Kenneth Caldwell has installed nearly 10,000 feet of terraces and two ponds on his southwest Iowa farm near Creston. He uses no-till planting and contouring to reduce topsoil loss.

In addition to farming 560 acres, he operates a weed and insect control business. Starting his second term as commissioner, he also serves as secretary for the Three Mile Reservoir Agency.

Region 9

Donald Avery, Ottumwa, Iowa, protects his corn and soybean fields with contour terraces, water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways and conservation tillage.

He is active in many district activities, especially forestry and legislative efforts. Avery is now serving as district chairperson. During 18 years as a commissioner he has also served as vice-chairperson and treasurer. He was selected to represent the District Board at the 1995 National Watershed Conference.



RECEIVES AWARD: Tim Hemphill (middle) of Milford was one of the eight regional finalists for the 1995 Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners presented during the 49th Annual meeting. Hemphill has been a commissioner for eight years and serves as secretary and a member of the awards committee for his district. Presenting the award is Monte Sesker, editor of *Wallace's Farmer* and Jeanette Winegarden, Vice President IASWDC. (Submitted Photo)

Winner: Region 2 - Tim Hemphill, Milford, Dickinson SWCD

Tim Hemphill recently constructed a half-mile grassed waterway and established a farmstead windbreak on his farm of nearly 800 acres. He also has created a wildlife habitat of native grasses and a field windbreak on his CRP acres. Hemphill has been a commissioner for eight years, and serves as the secretary and a member of the awards committee for his district. He and his wife, Linda, coordinated the District's 1995 tree sale.

Hemphill has received awards recognizing his dedication to conservation and agriculture, including: 1993 Conservation Farmer of the Year Award from Pheasants Forever; 1981 Kiwanis Farmer of the Year; and the 1975 Outstanding Young Member Award from the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

CONSERVATION MEETING: The regular monthly meeting of the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will be Thursday, Feb. 19 at 11:30 a.m. in the district office. A tentative agenda will include: approving the January minutes, treasurer's report, and bills, reviewing the mail, learning more about the Iowa Lakes RC&D from coordinator, Jeff Kestel, discussing cost-sharing applications, reviewing CRP contracts, checking on the district tree sale progress and planning the March meeting.



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM: The Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District will be sponsoring the annual sixth-grade outdoor classroom on Sept. 12 at the Kettleson-Hogsback area near Spirit Lake.



SWCD HONORED--The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District was the 1995 recipient of the Goodyear-NACD Conservation Grand Award for the Northern Iowa Division. Jack Howells (right), representing the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, presented the award to Mark Ingwersen on behalf of the District during the 50th Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners held recently in Des Moines. The award is sponsored by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and the National Association of Conservation Districts.

WANTED:

Amateur photography to be entered in a National Contest! To receive entry form and rules call: Dickinson Co. Soil & Water Conservation District (712) 336-2604. May leave a message after 5 p.m. Monetary prizes awarded in the categories of: Conservation, Education, Nature & Youth only.

**DEADLINE
DEC. 1, 1995**

1996

BUSINESS & AGRICULTURE

Over The Fence

Bruce Keenan

Ag Lender



The Farm Bill is passed. For the next seven years the government will try to get out of the farming business by paying a reduced subsidy based on corn production acres. Eligible producers will be allowed from May 1-July 20 of this year to sign up to participate in the new Farm Program. If you do not sign up during this time frame you will never have another chance to join in. At this time the payment will go with the land being enrolled so long as the farm has been in the program sometime within the last five years.

Never again will there be a disaster program that will pay producers for lost production from a natural disaster. Producers will have to own disaster insurance in the form of Multi-peril crop insurance and hail insurance protection or take the risk of going out of business when a disaster strikes.

Concern about the effectiveness of the new program runs high with those at the local levels who administer what Congress has put together. Because this bill issues payments that are not tied to price or production for the coming year these payments will very likely pass right by the producers into the hands of absentee cash rent landlords. While these landlords are not eligible to receive the payment without having an active interest in the crop production one can assume that cash rents will rise because they will know that the producer will be receiving an un-encumbered government payment and they will want some of it. Producers in there

struggling to maintain a farming base will have little choice but to pay or lose the land to someone who will.

There is every possible chance that this farm bill will go down in history as the one piece of farm legislation with the best intentions for producers with the worst outcomes. All of these payments will eventually pass through to landlords and suppliers and serve only to increase the cost of production to farmer producers.

Even so, the initial information out on this new farm bill suggests that all eligible producers should sign up because the manner of payment will not restrict production. Therefore a farm not in this program will have a definite disadvantage to a farm in the program for the next seven years. Just as a farm in the program will be able to demand a higher rent, a farm not in the program will not

even though production capabilities could be the same. Producers will have to market wisely in the future just as now to remain competitive and profitable.

Just a short report on markets: Please look back to history and notice that in the short crop years beginning with 1981, a common theory was that markets were now at a new plateau and we would not see low prices again. Each time the reasons were many as to why we would not see prices fall to low levels ever again. Each time within two years input costs had risen substantially and the markets had fallen to levels near \$2 per bushel on Corn. Sometimes those market drops were by the following fall.

We are currently looking at new crop prices at or near \$3 on corn and \$7.40 on beans. These are off the combine prices. No storage and minimum drying expense. It is time once again to look at production costs, farming goals and pre sell some of the 1996 production. What if the markets go higher? So what, you still have more to sell and if this is the lowest price you receive for any of your crop that is not a bad thing.

"Fair provisions"

by Ron Hook

ISU Extension Farm
Management Field Specialist

This is the third in a series of articles designed to explore and explain the provisions of the 1996 farm bill - "FAIR".

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (FAIR) authorizes enrollment of up to 36.4 million acres in the program.

The "early out" provision for 1996 allows withdrawal of acres that have been enrolled in CRP for at least five years. Land that is not eligible for the "early out" has an erodibility index (EI) greater than 15, CRP easement areas, field windbreaks, grass waterways, shallow water areas, filter strips, land within an average of 100 feet of a stream or other permanent body of water, bottom land on wetlands, or acreage under wetland eligibility criteria during sign up periods eight or nine.

Requests for "early out" of CRP needed to be filed at the local FSA office by May 31, 1996. If the request met the eligibility requirements as determined by NRCS the participant received a prorated CRP payment to the effective date of the request and was eligible for Market Transition Payments as well.

After 1996, producers terminating a CRP contract will be able to receive either the prorated CRP payment or the market transition payment but not both. It is possible to remove a portion of a farm from CRP leaving the environmentally sensitive land in the program. Your local NRCS staff will help you with the details of such an arrangement.

Once approval of the early release has been granted the decision to take land out of the CRP cannot be reversed. There will be future sign-up periods for enrollment in CRP but none has been announced by USDA at this time.

There was also an opportunity to extend for one year those CRP contracts that expire on September 30, 1996. Application also needed to be made by May 31 for that.

The Wetlands Reserve Program is continued with a maximum of 975,000 acres. Acreage is to be split evenly among 30 year easements, permanent easements and restoration cost share agreements.

Cost share assistance for establishing conservation practices and water quality improvement practices is available under the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP). Cost share rates range from 50 to 75 percent and interested producers should contact their local FSA office to get more details and to file an application. Application approvals will be given to those having the most impact on environmental quality and are subject to the availability of funds in the county.

Over the next six months ACP will be consolidated into EQIP (environmental quality incentive program) a program initiated in the new farm bill. EQIP was established by "FAIR" to deal with environmental and conservation improvements on farms. Funding for the program is \$130 million in 1996 and \$200 for the remaining six years of the program.

One half of the funds each year are designated to be used to address the environmental and conservation concerns of livestock operations and one half to address other conservation concerns. The program will be phased in over the next six months consolidating several environmental quality programs.

Envirothon tests students' natural resource savvy

Testing pH levels in pond water and identifying soil layers may not sound like the typical things a teenager would do on a day off from school. But, that's exactly what 13 teams of high school students recently did during the first Iowa Envirothon.

The Envirothon, held at the state 4-H Center near Madrid, challenges students to utilize their critical thinking skills in hands-on tests dealing with natural resources. The contest, created by the Association of Soil and

Water Conservation District Commissioners, focuses on aquatics, forestry, wildlife, soils and current environmental issues.

Out of 13 teams who competed in the Iowa Envirothon, the Waverly Shell Rock team was named the overall winner and will go on to represent Iowa in the national Envirothon, competition July 28- Aug. 2 near Ashland, Neb. at Mahoney and Platte River state parks. Team members include: Thea Bauman, Amber

Dilger, Anne Koenig, Laura Koenig and Julie Rick.

Practical test

Team member Julie Rick says her favorite test site was the forestry unit which required the teams to use a prism to measure the number of trees in a certain footage area, calculate tree age and determine which trees could be harvested.

She says that she has become more aware of environmental issues through the team's weekly one and one-half hour research sessions for the contest.

The team's advisor, Stacie Newbrough, who teaches sciences and conservation of natural resources at Waverly Shell Rock High School, says the Envirothon is a wonderful way to get groups of kids and their advisors together who care about and appreciate the environment.

"I hope the kids will think through some of these issues so

that when they are voters and economic voters, through their dollars, that they can make some wise decisions about the environment," Newbrough says.

Rick Robinson, director of environmental affairs with the Iowa Farm Bureau, helped organize the event and says, "It's been said that these kids are pioneers and risk-takers for participating in this contest. I know they had fun and learned a great deal about the scientific relationships between our natural resources, agriculture and the environment."

"My hope is that these kids will also pioneer an attitude among their peers that these issues can be addressed in a win-win fashion for all Iowans."

Maple Valley FFA of Mapleton won second place with team members Jason Bauer, Eric Bumann, Al Kolbum, Angie Pithan and Louis Reed. Third place

went to West Central High School in Stuart. Their team included: Nathaniel Wilson, will Druery, Jamie Clark, Chris Baudler and Dustin Lantz.

Envirothon honors

Each of the top three teams received a medallion, a certificate of participation and a plaque to be displayed in their school.

Second and third place teams also were given a monetary award. Waverly Shell Rock will have all their expenses paid for the national Envirothon competition. Every participant received an Envirothon T-shirt.

The Envirothon was underwritten with an education grant from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program.

Sponsors of the Iowa Envirothon include: The Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil conservation.

Other sponsors are: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Iowa Student Environmental Coalition, Iowa State University Cooperative Extension-4-H and Heartland Area Education Agency.



USDA advisory board

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman is soliciting nominations to the new U.S. Department of Agriculture 30-member National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board.

The board was created by the 1996 farm bill, which abolished advisory panels on food and science, users and science and technology review.

Informant theft

The Archer Daniels Midland Co. executive turned informant admits to taking more than \$8.5 million from the company, it was reported last week. The informant is involved in three ongoing grand jury investigations of alleged price fixing among ADM and its competitors.

Beef quality campaign

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has launched a nationwide advertising campaign promoting the positive impact of the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program to help assure consumer confidence in the safety and wholesomeness of beef.

The advertisement will reach 6.7 million readers and carries the headline "There are over a million reasons why Americans can trust American beef." The started running in the New York Times, USA Today, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal on April 25.

Packer grant

The United States Department of Agriculture has awarded a \$207,000 grant to help small meat packers start new meat inspection systems.

The grant, awarded to a Texas A&M-based foundation, is expected to develop the new inspection systems based on microbial testing for various bacteria. The designed system, Hazard

Analysis Critical Control Point, will replace current site-and-smell-based inspections, allowing for a more high-tech sampling of meat and poultry in packing houses.

ISA membership

Membership in the Iowa Soybean Association grew 12 percent this year reaching 7,900 members, Gary Langel of LeMars, ISA membership committee chairman, says. ISA is the largest state affiliate of the American Soybean Association.



Members named

Wythe Willey, president of the Iowa Cattlemen's Association (ICA), has announced the members of a packing industry task force. They include: Chairman Marshall King of Boone, Dave Nichols of Bridgewater, Gene Wiese of Manning, Kent Pruisman of Sioux Center, Carl Jensen of Everly, and Wayne Newton of Blairstown.

The task force will work with the city of Des Moines and Monfort to explore scenarios to reopen the Des Moines Monfort plant as well as seek other packing and processing opportunities. Willey says the ICA seeks to maintain a strong packing industry and growing fed cattle num-

PFS defaults

Premium Standard Farms defaulted on \$325 million in bonds that were due March 15. However, a spokesman said they are negotiating with their financial partners and have delayed the March payment until some issues are resolved.

Pioneer expansion

Pioneer Hi-Bred International has announced plans to purchase 25 acres in northwest Iowa for future expansion of the company's soybean seed conditioning capacity near Cherokee. Construction is expected to be completed in time for spring 1998 planting.



ABOVE: Bob Hibbs, left, a district forester for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, reviews the correct answers to the forestry unit as students retraced their steps after the contest conclusion. The Envirothon units were designed to give students hands-on experience in dealing with natural resources. In the forestry unit, the students calculated tree age, thinning and section count. AT RIGHT: Carisa Solberg, left, and Jenny Yeager, right, both of Terril High School, put their aquatics knowledge to practice during a pond water testing at the Iowa Envirothon. Teams were asked to check the pH level and dissolved oxygen levels.—Photo by Vickie Rappe.



Brannaman writes diary of farm life to help inform the public about agriculture

By Denise Sorensen

Stories of bottle feeding lambs, caring for two acres of sweet corn, marketing hogs and raising two young sons are sure to fill the pages of this year's farm wife's diary written by Carol Brannaman of Mt. Vernon.

The diary is featured in Farm Bureau's associate member magazine Family Living in Farm Country in an effort to educate people removed from the farm about agriculture.

Carol and her husband, Jim, have a diversified farm in east central Iowa with 1,600 acres of crop ground, along with a 75-ewe-herd and 500-head farrow to finish operation.

Carol says their two young sons, Michael, age 8, and Brett, age 6, take an active role in farm chores that are appropriate for their development level.

Michael says his favorite job

is feeding the sheep and bottle feeding lambs. The Brannamans finished with two lambings in mid March.

Carol and Jim work as a team on their farm. "I love working with the livestock and I'll do everything but give shots," Carol says. "I also run the tractor quite a bit and haul the grain during harvest."

In addition to traditional farm activities, Carol and the boys spend quite a few summer hours tending to two acres of sweet corn that they sell to people in the area.

"It started just because we wanted to find some way to utilize some land along the road," Carol says of their first sweet corn planting in 1985. "We just put a sign up along the highway to let people know we had it and we sold everything."

Carol uses the farm planter after all the field corn has been

planted, and plants four sweet corn crops spaced about a week apart each. By July 4, Carol and the boys will be busy picking.

Carol currently is serving as the Linn County Farm Bureau vice president. In the past she has been a campaign manager and treasurer and served on the resolutions committee. This year, Carol will work with policy development.

Carol has also been active in the Sheep Board and continues to help the Linn County Cattlemen's Association and Pork Producers with their barbecues.

Being raised on a farm, Carol says that she is very happy to be raising her kids on a farm.

"I love the freedom we have. Jim and I work together. It's not like he and I go off our separate ways to go to work and we don't see each other until the end of the day. It's really a team effort," Carol says.

Open house for cattlemen

The Iowa Cattlemen's Association (ICA) Packer/Processor Task Force hosted an open forum for cattle producers to discuss the current condition of the Iowa beef packing industry. Producers from Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois attended the forum on Wednesday, June 5, as well as representatives from Iowa's auction markets, the city of Des Moines, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the Iowa Corn Growers Association and meat processors. ICA President Wythe Willey served as moderator for the event.

"I was glad to see so many producers and interested parties in attendance," said Willey. "ICA is bringing all segments necessary to create and deliver a plan that will help cattle producers better sell and/or merchandise their beef and beef products."

The ICA Packer/Processor Task Force will continue to pursue a better Iowa beef marketing system through three avenues--traditional producer/packer relationships, producer coop network systems, and non-traditional packing relationships.

To help the ICA Packer/Processor Task Force reinforce its goals, leaders from the city of Des Moines, the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED), and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association gave presentations at the forum.

"This open forum gave us a lot of good information and feedback from producers across the upper Midwest," said Marshall King, ICA Packer/Processor Task Force Chairman. "It is really good to see that Des Moines city officials, cattle producers, corn growers, and meat processors can all sit in a room and agree that a better system for marketing a value-added agricultural product that will ultimately help the Iowa economy," said King.

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (FAIR) authorizes enrollment of up to 36.4 million acres in the program. The "early out" provision for 1996 allows withdrawal of acres that have been enrolled in CRP for at least five years. Land that is not eligible for the "early out" has an erodibility index (EI) greater than 15, CRP easement areas, field windbreaks, grass waterways,

shallow water areas, filter strips, land within an average of 100 feet of a stream or other permanent body of water, bottom land timber on wetlands, or acreage enrolled under wetland eligibility criteria during sign-up periods eight or nine. Requests for "early out" of CRP must be filed at the local FSA office by May 31, 1996. If the request meets the eligibility requirement as determined by NRCS the participant will receive a prorated CRP payment to the effective date of the request and will be eligible for Market Transition Payments as well. After 1996, producers terminating a CRP contract will be able to receive either the prorated CRP payment or the market transition payment but not both. It is possible to remove a portion of a farm from CRP leaving the environmentally sensitive land in the program. Your local NRCS staff will help you with the details of such an arrangement. Once approval of the early release has been granted, the decision to take land out of the CRP cannot be reversed. There will be future sign-up periods for enrollment in CRP but none has been announced by USDA at this time.

PROJECT REVIEW: The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District and the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project will soon present the annual review for the project FY 1996. It will be a review of what has happened in the project area over the last fiscal year. The activities of the project will be covered, what will be done in the next few years and the financial data of the project over last year. The review will take place at the Spirit Lake Public Library on Thursday Sept. 19 from 11 a.m. until a noon break. Afterward a limited number of people will be able to attend a tour of several projects that have happened since the last review. Those interested in attending should give the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District a call at 336-2604 to inform them of attendance.



CRP OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

What: Tour and Panel Discussion focusing on CRP

When: July 17, 1996 at 8:30 a.m.

Where: Dickinson County Fairgrounds Community Bldg.

The Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District has organized a series of CRP sights to tour and a panel discussion group to provide any person with an interest in CRP with a broader understanding of the options available when land is eligible to come out of CRP.

Tentative Agenda:

9 a.m. leave the Fairgrounds

9:15 ~ 11:45 Sight visit

12 p.m. Lunch

1:00 Community Bldg — Panel Discussion

David Dukes (Farmer and No-Till expert)

Paul Kassel (Crop specialist — ISU Extension)

Tom Gould (Grassland specialist — NRCS)

Dennis DeWitt (Grazing specialist — ISU Extension)

2:00 Questions & Discussion



Record crowd at banquet

By DORIS WELLE

The 12th Annual Dickinson County Pheasants Forever Banquet broke two records last Thursday night.

The largest audience ever attended the event; 618 people eating prime rib and vying for a large selection of prizes at the Expo Building in Spirit Lake. The local chapter netted \$36,520; the largest profit margin by over \$300.

"We were very pleased by the large turnout and promise to put that money to good use," said banquet co-chair Don Lamb.

Lamb and his co-chair Virg Marchand were two of the original board that began planning these yearly get-togethers 12 years ago. They are retiring from the board and were presented with appreciation gifts during the evening's activities.

Joe and Ida Estes were chosen as the 1996 Conservation Farmer of the Year. They operate 918 acres of cropland near Spirit Lake using mulch-till and no-till erosion control practices.

The Estes' were recognized because of the 6,000 ft. of waterways installed in the last six months and the nine acres of

environmental priority land placed in the Conservation Reserve Program for 1996. It will be seeded to brome to maximize wildlife habitat and minimize soil erosion.

Approximately 500 acres of the Estes land in part of the Water Quality Improvement Project currently underway in the Iowa Great Lakes Region.

The Dickinson County Chapter of Pheasants Forever is once again in the top 24 chapters in the United States; a distinction it has earned several times during the past dozen years of its existence.



A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GROWING: the spring, as a follow up to the Outdoor classroom they attended in the fall of 1996, all interested sixth grade students are presented with a Green Ash tree from the District Commissioners. A few of the students are pictured above with their environmental gift. Front row from left: Cory Watkins, Dan Boettcher and Jeff Ondler. Back row: Bill Stump, sixth grade SLMS science teacher, Kate Dreeszen, Shelly Phillips, Mark Ingwersen, district commissioner, Jerry Ingval, environmental education committee member working with the District Commissioners. Distributed for more than 15 years, many area parents have a reminder of their child's sixth year in school shading their yard.

(photo by Meredith Daggett)



Taking a walk on the wild side

Sixth-graders from all over the county got to spend last Thursday and discover nature and the wonderful aspects that help make up the Iowa Great Lakes.

This year, 235 students came to the outdoor classroom sponsored by the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District. The classroom was held at Kettleson-Hogsback, a wildlife area just north of Spirit Lake.

Students studied topics such as orphaned and injured wildlife, lines on the land, recycling, nature trails, wetlands, wild geese, fish and fisheries, bird beak benefits and a show on Indian lore.

(Photos by Sue Laue)



EPA provides funding for area wetlands

The Iowa Great Lakes are assured increased water quality protection, thanks to wetland restoration funds provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

So called "319" funds totaling \$38,600 have been expended to date in the Great Lakes watershed, for restoration and construction of wetlands designed to intercept runoff from uplands before it reaches the region's important recreational lakes.

The EPA is charged by the national Clean Water Act with assuring that nutrients and sediments are kept out of the lakes and waterways.

Working through a North American Wetlands Conservation

Act Fund grant to Iowa DNR and the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District, EPA has provided funds to restore wetlands on both public and private lands over the last year.

Public lands where work on 22 wetlands recently was completed include the Spring Run Wetlands Complex east of Arnolds Park and the Jemerson Slough and Kettleon Hogsback Wetland Complexes near Spirit Lake.

Public lands here are owned by the Iowa DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and all are managed by DNR for hunting, fishing or wildlife observation. Three additional wetlands were constructed

on private lands east of Arnolds Park.

EPA recognizes research showing that wetlands serve many functions valuable to society. Foremost among these is the ability to trap nutrients and sediments which drain from surrounding agriculture and development lands.

Ongoing studies indicate that wetland soils and plantlife may also trap certain pesticides, including known water-pollutants such as atrazine, before they can contaminate larger lakes and streams.

Additional funds are in place for more wetland restoration in the watershed next year.



National Association of Conservation Districts
recognizes

Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District

for
exceeding quota
contribution
1996



December 9, 1996

DATE

GERALD VAP, NACD President



CONSERVATION DISTRICT HONORED — The Dickinson Conservation District represented, by Mark Ingwersen, above, of Spirit Lake, has been honored as a Grand Award District in the 49th annual Conservation Awards Program sponsored by The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and The National Association of Conservation Districts.

Ingwersen represented the district during a work/study program for award winners Dec. 5-8 at the Cambelback Inn Resort in Scottsdale, AZ.

Since 1947, the Goodyear/NACD Conservation Awards Program has encouraged and rewarded local effort to protect and conserve soil, water forests, wildlife and other natural resources. Winning districts are selected on the basis of their success in developing and implementing an annual plan for delivering district programs and services.

"The success of conservation districts is vital to the protection of our country's natural resources," said Goodyear's Tom Ford, marketing director for off-the-road and farm tires. "This program assists local districts in their efforts to serve the community and recognizes those that have done an outstanding job of delivering quality conservation programs and services."

Dickinson was one of 57 local conservation districts chosen as grand award winners based on their achievements during 1995. Nearly 3,000 soil and water conservation districts nationwide were eligible for the award.

AGRICULTURE

Ahead In The Field

Larry Lago
CED



Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman recently announced a major shift in USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The focus of the proposed CRP will be to conserve and improve our natural resources. Through the proposed rule, the Department intends to enroll land that will yield the highest environmental benefits, and return to production less erodible land better suited for planting crops.

USDA is issuing a proposed rule that would expand the types of land covered by CRP, and target the most environmentally sensitive acreage for enrollment. Under the CRP, landowners who sign contracts agree to convert highly erodible and other environmentally sensitive cropland to approved conservation uses for 10 years. In exchange, participating landowners and operators receive annual rental payments and may receive cost-share assistance with respect to the establishment of the conservation use.

This major shift is intended to build upon the successes of the CRP with continued emphasis on the enrollment of acreage which would notably reduce soil erodibility, improve water quality, protect wildlife habitats, encourage tree planting, and achieve other significant conservation and environmental benefits. Controlling soil erosion is still the single largest priority of CRP because it not only protects our future ability to produce abundant food, but is also important in protecting and improving the quality of our air and water.

Provisions of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1997, effectively prohibit new extensions of expiring CRP contracts, must submit bids for their land and compete with other bids.

The proposed rule ensures that the rates for CRP land are comparable to local rental rates. Rental rates must be fair both to those entering the program and to farmers and ranchers who must compete with CRP in renting land.

USDA has already implemented a continuous sign up system which provides additional incentive payments for people who enroll their environmentally sensitive land or put their land into the highest

environmental use possible, such as by using it to grow filter strips, riparian buffers and field wind breaks.

To provide the broadest range of conservation benefits from CRP, USDA proposes to expand eligibility criteria to accept cropland wetlands. Enrolling wetlands in the CRP benefits everyone by saving soil, improving water quality and ensuring protection of one of our most important wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides producers an economically viable option to properly manage their land and makes it easier to comply with other wetland protection measures.

Some say that we must choose between modern productive agriculture and the environment. The 10 year success and popularity of the CRP among producers and the public prove otherwise. Productive agriculture and increased farm income are absolutely compatible with the concerns we all share for a clean and healthful environment.

The CRP proposed rules are an effort to strengthen "locally-led conservation assistance" to landowners. While the proposed rules establish the basic policy goals and broad criteria for the CRP, it is the producers, conservation districts, county committees, local NRCS and FSA employees and the state conservation leadership who will ultimately be the most influential in enrolling priority land.

The CRP rules were created together with the other conservation programs to maximize environmental benefits for every dollar spent as well as serve landowners simply and efficiently. These benefits will become more apparent very soon once the rules for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are announced with other conservation rules to follow shortly. To date, the Department has announced rules for the Wetlands Reserve program as well as the Wetlands and Highly Erodible Land Programs, also known as Swampbuster and Sodbuster, respectively.

Clean Water Alliance covers wide range of topics

The Dickinson County Clean Water Alliance met recently to discuss changes and additions within the county.

Ace Cory, of the Okoboji Protective Agency, talked about proposed zoning changes that the county supervisors had passed called ordinance No. 100, article five, Agricultural District A-1, section two.

Cory presented two letters that will go to the supervisors in opposition to the zoning change. The letters are from OPA and Interlake Protective Association. A lot of discussion took place on this subject with the potential of adding large amounts of septic systems to the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed as the focus.

Wayne Northey, Dickinson County supervisor, commented on the decision of the board and the language in the amendment. The language in the amendment is now the same as the language in the new ordinance that will be brought up for comment in three weeks.

David Kohlhaase commented on

the zoning change as the zoning administrator. He stated that this change in the ordinance will close some holes in the current way of doing things.

Currently, someone can buy 10 acres of land and have a farming interest and not be zoned or need a building permit because agricultural land can not be zoned.

With the amendment the county can start to control this type of building and have a say in where the buildings, septic systems, etc. are going. Kohlhaase mentioned, since there seemed to be concern about agricultural sensitive land, that there will be no building allowed on A-2 zoned lands. A-2 lands are environmentally sensitive land.

Phil Brown, OPA, commented on the ordinance and stressed that the 'main game' is to maintain the biological integrity of our area.

The Iowa Lakes RC&D has been funded. The main purpose for the RC&D is to assist groups and people with natural resource type development projects.

Brown suggested forming a group to look at solutions and partnering with the agencies that are involved. John Wills and Brown volunteered to be a part of that group.

A report on Eurasian Watermilfoil was written by Gary Phillips of the Iowa DNR. The report showed the success of the program to date. Phillips and his crew were able to spend the entire \$120,000 for control this year. There is a new bill board sign up on the east side of Spirit Lake on Hwy. 9 that warns of the dangers of EWM.

Tom Skilling, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reported that the organization will continue its private land work in the Iowa Great Lakes this year.

Doug Harr, Iowa DNR, commented on recent acquisitions and three sales pending. A 79 acre tract on Spring Run from the Kimble family, 160 acres of land from Marty Loos (there is a one year provision for repurchase from Loos), and an 80 acre tract from the Segard family one mile west of Lilly Lake.

The Fish & Wildlife Service has used all the funds from the NAWCA II grant. The DNR is planning to apply for one more grant from this funding source.

The DNR will submit the grant sometime this spring. Congress isn't allocating as much money for this grant this year. Harr asked if any organizations would be willing to partner with this grant this year. Letters of support are appreciated but a donation of a minimum of \$100 is more effective.

Those interested can contact Doug or Neil Heiser with a support pledge. The project will be a \$1.4 million dollar project - because of the rapidly rising cost of farmland in Dickinson County. On a final note Harr is serving on a multi-agency team to rate and evaluate Wetlands Reserve Program Applications.

Carroll Oskvig reported that he has been receiving a lot of interest and discussion of starting a Clean Water Project for Silver Lake. The project is shaping up to be much like the IGL Clean Water Project.

The RC&D is interested in helping to fund various projects. EQIP, a new federal program for farming, will be shaping up over the next few weeks as we go through several meetings and asking for public input for priority areas, funding cost's etc.

Larry Lago, Farm Service Agency director, reported that there are some things affecting federal programs at the national level. There are over 15,500 acres in CRP currently in Dickinson County. Over 10,000 acres are eligible to be released from CRP this fall.

Those acres will possibly go into intensive row cropping. Individuals have the option to early out of CRP at any time. An article in the *Des Moines Register* says that the government can modify or terminate CRP contracts at any time.

Glen Peterson, from the sanitary district, reported on three projects of interest. There is a \$5 million bond for new lift stations in

see, TOPICS, page 2

Silver Lake project proposed

By BOBBIE McBRIDE

Growing concerns for the environment as well as water quality has come into the limelight lately in Lake Park. At the recent Chamber of Commerce annual dinner, the guest speakers were Ann Ditsworth, Soil & Water Conservation District, Dale DuVal, NRCS District Conservationist in Osceola County, and Carroll Oskvig, NRCS District Conservationist in Dickinson County.

Their focus was for a potential water quality project, namely the Silver Lake Watershed. According to DuVal, "We are looking for just plain support from the residents of Lake Park." Financial support is necessary for the study to be completed, although there are some EPA, state, and NRCS funds available now. But funding for this project is contingent on the showing of local groups who are willing to support the project with both action and funding. It is their hope that if the citizens embrace the project and make it their own, the project will be much more successful.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) office, funding would be through a 319 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and the REAP Water Protection Fund. These funds will provide for an Environmental Specialist, the staff person who coordinates the project. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources administers the Section 319 funds.

The state-funded Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program provides cost-share for implementing water quality structures and

management measures. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation administers REAP funds. Technical assistance would be provided by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Just exactly what is a watershed? "It is all the land area that contributes runoff to a particular body of water. The contours or hills and valleys are what make up the shape of a watershed and direct the water flow towards the body of water, which in our case is Silver Lake," said Ann Ditsworth.

Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District is interested in pursuing this 15,000 acre watershed as the focus of a potential water quality project. Along with portions of Dickinson and Osceola counties is a small portion of the watershed lying in Minnesota of approximately 1,280 acres.

With the threat by sediment and nutrient runoff from both urban and rural lands, the Silver Lake Watershed has been designated a priority area for the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Runoff is causing the lake to slowly fill in and may also be responsible for excess algae growth in the lake.

Therefore, efforts are now being focused to create a plan for improvement and a grant proposal and application for funding to carry it out.

Potential projects include waterways, field and farmstead windbreaks, terraces, storm sewer stenciling, and lakeshore erosion. Deep valleys drain water into the Big Sioux and eventually into

see, WATERSHED, page 2

Governor holds the key Proposed hoglot creates concern

By MEREDITH DAGGETT
Staff Writer

The board of supervisors has taken under advisement the concerns of some of Dickinson County's residents pertaining to the swine farrowing application Carrolls Foods has submitted to the DNR and plans to respond by April 9.

According to Gregory Olson, DNR environmental specialist in Spencer, who inspected the facilities proposed site in Westport township, everything there seems to have checked out. He also said he doubted that DNR review engineers in Des Moines would have looked at the rest of the application yet. They usually wait for the complete application package which would include the supervisor's comments.

However, as the second largest pork producer in the United States, Carrolls has filed many such permits and although each is unique, they know the system and

exactly what it takes to have a permit granted. It would be very unlikely that if any mistakes in their application would be found they could not be corrected.

The Clean Water Coalition, an information sharing group put together for the protection of the Iowa Great Lakes watershed and water quality, has expressed serious apprehension about the arrival of factory farms in Dickinson County.

The consensus of representatives expressing opinions at a recent meeting is that it isn't so much the animals themselves that are the problem, it's the proposed, and by law legal, manure management plan.

Dwight Rutter, a farmer who owns land and lives just east of a Carrolls Foods operation near Everly in Clay County, said that the amounts of nitrogen they plan to apply are about double those recommended by Iowa State University Extension.

He also said that at these levels to water contamination could occur and also that the land could be rendered useless from over fertilization.

"It's not that we're against hogs if it's done right, but these people are not doing it right," he said. "What I've been trying to do is notify as many people as possible that we are literally powerless in this situation. These people can do what they want, when they want and we have to pay to clean up the mess after it happens and it will happen."

"We work with the law as it is, not the way we'd like it to be. You have to go to the source of the law, the legislature, and try to have it changed."

She also pointed out that all large producers are not irresponsible, that in the past there have been pollution problems with 'family farmers', too, and that pork

see CONCERNS, page 3

March 6, 1997

SL Bacon

March 20, 1997 SL Bacon

April 3, 1997

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Doug Harr, Iowa DNR, commented on recent acquisitions and three sales pending. A 79 acre tract on Spring Run from the Kimble family, 160 acres of land from Marty Loos (there is a one year provision for repurchase from Loos), and an 80 acre tract from the Segard family one mile west of Lilly Lake.

The Fish & Wildlife Service has used all the funds from the NAWCA II grant. The DNR is planning to apply for one more grant from this funding source.

The DNR will submit the grant sometime this spring. Congress isn't allocating as much money for this grant this year. Harr asked if any organizations would be willing to partner with this grant this year. Letters of support are appreciated but a donation of a minimum of \$100 is more effective.

Those interested can contact Doug or Neil Heiser with a support pledge. The project will be a \$1.4 million dollar project - because of the rapidly rising cost of farmland in Dickinson County. On a final note Harr is serving on a multi-agency team to rate and evaluate Wetlands Reserve Program Applications.

Carroll Oskvig reported that he has been receiving a lot of interest and discussion of starting a Clean Water Project for Silver Lake. The project is shaping up to be much like the IGL Clean Water Project.

The RC&D is interested in helping to fund various projects. EQIP, a new federal program for farming, will be shaping up over the next few weeks as we go through several meetings and asking for public input for priority areas, funding cost's etc.

Larry Lago, Farm Service Agency director, reported that there are some things affecting federal programs at the national level. There are over 15,500 acres in CRP currently in Dickinson County. Over 10,000 acres are eligible to be released from CRP this fall.

Those acres will possibly go into intensive row cropping. Individuals have the option to early out of CRP at any time. An article in the *Des Moines Register* says that the government can modify or terminate CRP contracts at any time.

Glen Peterson, from the sanitary district, reported on three projects of interest. There is a \$5 million bond for new lift stations in

see, TOPICS, page 2

Silver Lake project pro

By BOBBIE McBRIDE

Growing concerns for the environment as well as water quality has come into the limelight lately in Lake Park. At the recent Chamber of Commerce annual dinner, the guest speakers were Ann Ditsworth, Soil & Water Conservation District, Dale DuVal, NRCS District Conservationist in Osceola County, and Carroll Oskvig, NRCS District Conservationist in Dickinson County.

Their focus was for a potential water quality project, namely the Silver Lake Watershed. According to DuVal, "We are looking for just plain support from the residents of Lake Park." Financial support is necessary for the study to be completed, although there

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MANHATTAN BEACH \$103,000
No work needed to enjoy this one! A completely remodeled, cute cottage with bunk house and a storage building. You can't beat this affordable way to enjoy the Lakes Area and West Okoboji. Deep lot, plank dock and near new hoist. Call Larry Miller. A24



EAST OKOBOJI \$189,900
It's on the lake and just what you would hope for inside! The usual with 3 bedrooms, nicely done, and a lake room like no other, complete with windows galore and a floor-to-ceiling stone & brick see-through fireplace. Designed for lake living. Call Marilyn. C5



Governor holds the key

from CONCERNS, page 1

producers are not the only corporate ag concerns interested in Iowa.

Presently there are plans in the works for several dairy cattle operations coming into northwest Iowa and at least one poultry group with 500,000 to two million layers at one site with plans to build in northwest Iowa.

Dave Kohlhaase, the Dickinson County sanitarian and zoning commissioner, questioned whether anything could be done legally from a health standpoint.

Ned Bjornstad responded that various counties throughout the state have attempted through various means to assert control over hog feedlots and confinements such as the one proposed for Dickinson County without success.

"The role our office was given and the DNR was given was defined by the legislature and we can't go beyond that," he said.

Ace Cory, a long time water clean-up advocate, said that it doesn't seem right that the county has spent millions to control human waste but can't do anything

to stop even more concentrated amounts of animal waste possibly contaminating not only drinking water but the lakes as well.

"After what I've heard, this has to be directed at (Governor) Branstad on a grass roots objection basis," he said. "I think the problem started with Terry (Branstad) and I don't think bending (DNR director) Larry Wilson's ear or Jack Kibbie's or anyone else is going to do any good."

"I think Branstad has to know that Iowa is outraged with what we can't do."

Cyndy Powers, chairperson, said at their last meeting, the Dickinson County Board of Health decided to write a letter to the supervisors and DNR expressing their concerns and request a 12 month delay in granting the permit until more data could be gathered concerning the location and potential environmental damage resulting from the facility that could occur by proceeding too quickly.

They are in the process of drafting that letter now and want it added to the file the supervisors are accumulating and plan to forward to the DNR in Des Moines.

March 6, 1997

SLBacon



CONSERVATION FARMER AWARD: Spirit Lake farmer Jeff Ashland, far left, receives a plaque and wildlife print for his efforts in conservation. Presenting Ashland with the awards are Pheasants Forever board co-chairman Don Lamb, middle, and Bob Sewell, Dickinson County chapter president. The chapter recognizes farmers for their soil, water and wildlife conservation efforts. (Photo by Mike Early)

Chapter tops last year's output

By MIKE EARLY
Sports Editor

Over 600 people helped raise \$37,241 for the Pheasants Forever Dickinson County chapter last Thursday at the group's annual banquet fundraiser.

Over 100 items were auctioned off for the benefit of hunting in Dickinson County. The group works with conservation agencies in the county to provide habitat for pheasants and other wildlife in the county.

This was the 13th annual banquet for the county chapter.

At the first banquet in 1985, the group raised \$9,000 with 180 people in attendance.

Last year the banquet drew 615 people and raised over \$36,000.

"We are the largest in number of members and always in the top three or four in dollars raised (among the other chapters)," said Don Lamb, one of the founders of the Dickinson County chapter and co-chairman of the chapter board.

"All of the money raised here stays in the county," Lamb said.

"We've steadily grown every year and we're expecting to take a hit (in fundraising), but we raise more every year."

The chapter raised about \$700 more than last year.

Some of the items up for bid were wildlife prints, guns, hunting equipment, home decorations and gift certificates from area businesses.

Several items were raffled off as well in the fundraising efforts. Groceries, cash prizes and even a waverunner.

The chapter also honors area farmers for their efforts in soil and wildlife conservation at the banquet.

This year Jeff and Penny Ashland of Spirit Lake received the Conservation Farmer Award.

The couple have been active in providing windbreaks on their farmland. They planted a farmstead windbreak with approximately one acre of trees and shrubs last year and plan to add to it this year.

Ashland uses both mulch-till and no-till farming to help reduce soil erosion and integrated crop management to reduce chemical and fertilizer application.

He has also offered 10 acres of environmental priority land into the

Conservation Reserve Program in 1997.

They also will be building 450 feet of grassed waterways and he has built sediment basins in critical areas within the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed.

The Ashlands are also involved in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed Integrated Crop Management program.

This project contributes to the reduction of chemicals and fertilizers on over 2,000 acres of land in the watershed.

The Ashlands were selected for the award by the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners.



SILENT AUCTION: One of the biggest draws of the Pheasants Forever annual banquet is the silent auction of a variety of items. Items ranging from prints to watches to golf equipment help the chapter raise money to support conservation efforts in Dickinson County.

(Photo by Mike Early)

Volunteers vital to the community

The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District has announced that in honor of National Volunteer Week, April 13 - 19, volunteers who faithfully assist in the conservation efforts within Dickinson County deserve recognition.

One of the volunteers, Jim Bell of Spirit Lake has been helping with computer updating and during the CRP Sign-Up did soils digitizing.

Also assisting with the CRP Sign-up by digitizing soils was Keith Van Kleeck of Terril.

Maurice Dougal, Lake Park is planning his volunteer activities this spring and summer in the field on various projects.

Many members of the R.S.V.P. team have assisted by working on the newsletter and program announcement mailings.

According to DSWCD, these volunteers are a vital part of the district's team and are greatly appreciated for donating their time to conservation efforts.

Earth friendly projects

According to John Wills, the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project Coordinator, volunteers are being sought to participate in an environmentally sensitive, lake friendly lawn program.

Wills has also indicated it's time to start the storm sewer stenciling program.

He said several storm sewers can be labeled in as little as one hour and that each is a step toward protecting the lakes.

Anyone, groups, organizations or individuals, that would be interested in participating can call Wills at 336-2604.

Mayor proclaims a week of Soil and Water Stewardship

Soil and Water Stewardship Week is celebrated in the United States to help remind all people of their individual responsibilities to care for soil and water resources.

In part the declaration of Soil and Water Stewardship Week states that human security depends on the production of ample food, fiber and other products of the soil.

It continues to say that the quality and quantity of these products depends on the proper management and sustainable use of soil and water resources through sound conservation practices.

The roots of this observance are deep in history. For centuries, people have offered thanks to God for the priceless gifts of soil, water, air and sunshine. The world as we know it could not exist without fruitful agriculture and forestry.

More than 1500 years ago in France, bad weather, fires and earthquakes had brought crop failures and widespread hunger. The local bishop called for prayer

and penance on the three days preceding Ascension Day.

Filling a need in the hearts and minds of the people, the practice spread throughout France and then to many other countries. Over the years, the annual religious practice became widely established including in the United States.

In 1946, the publishers of Farm and Ranch magazine took on promotion of the observance. In 1954, the publishers encouraged the officers of the National Association of Conservation Districts to take on the event as a nationwide promotion.

The National Association, representing 3,000 local soil and water conservation districts has sponsored this observance since 1955.

Soil and Water Stewardship Week, timed to coincide with the end of Earth Week and the beginning of the planting season, is a time to be especially aware of the impressive responsibility farmers throughout the world face.

April 25 marked the 125th celebration of National Arbor Day - a day of tree planting by school children, neighborhoods and community groups across America.

The holiday has endured, according to John Rosenow, President of the National Arbor Day Foundation, "because young trees, newly planted, are an affirmation of the continuity of life."

Arbor Day is celebrated in many ways. Creative celebrations often happen when several groups get together.

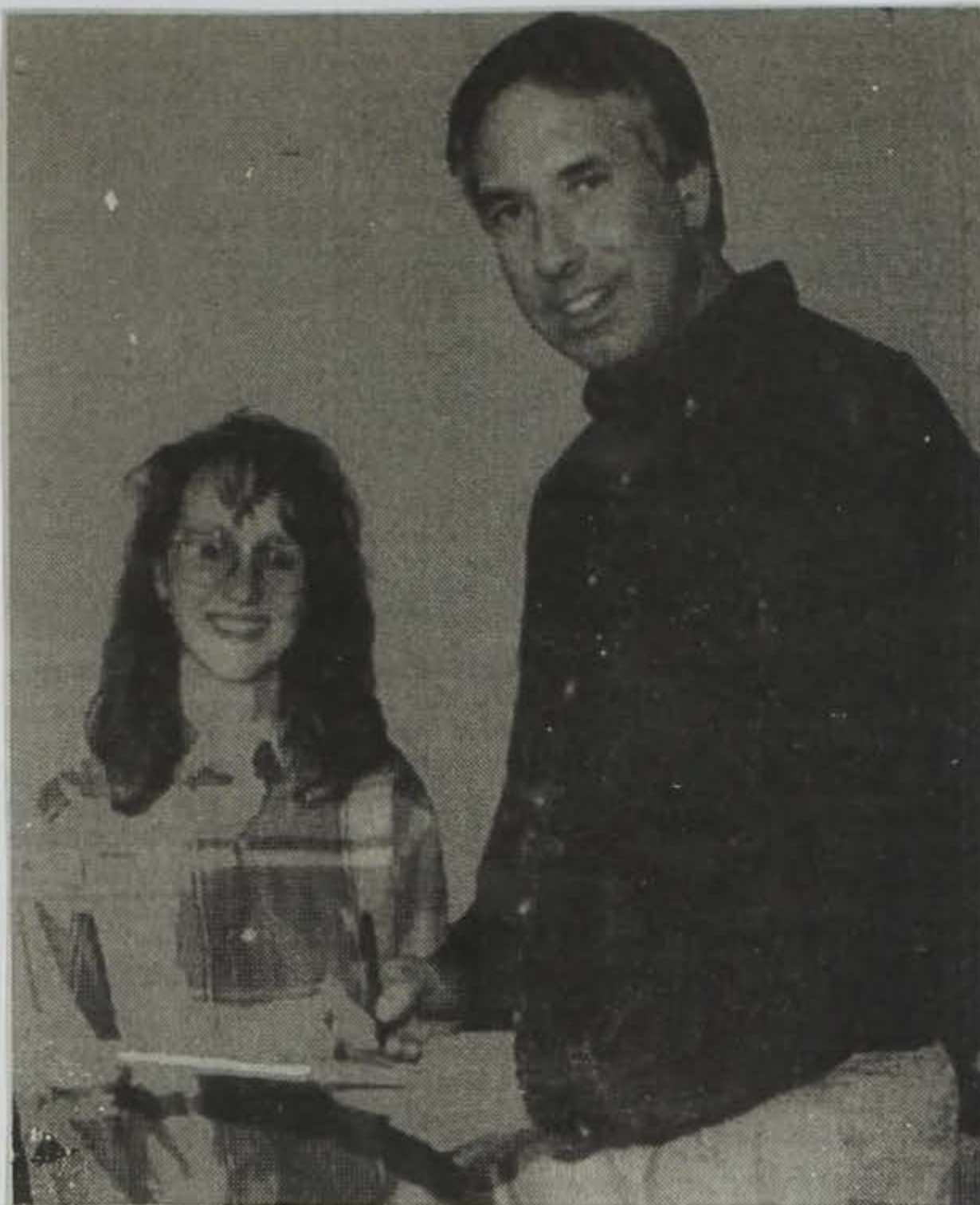
Arbor Day was the idea of J. Sterling Morton, editor of Nebraska's first newspaper, who moved to Nebraska City from Michigan in the mid-1800's. An impassioned journalist and orator, Morton held a deep personal commitment to bring new families to Nebraska. He knew this would be difficult in a place where just three percent of the prairie was wooded. There were few trees for firewood, fence posts and - a crucial commodity - lumber. His message became, "plant trees."

Morton was diligent, and in 1872, Nebraska became the first state to proclaim Arbor Day.

More than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on that day.

By 1890, Arbor Day was celebrated in every state, making it one of the oldest formalized conservation observances in the world. While many states celebrate the event on the last Friday in April, National Arbor Day, others set the date to coincide with planting season in their climate.

"Arbor Day celebrates 125 years of successful tree planting and environmental stewardship, a fitting tribute to the vision of Morton who wrote, 'Other holidays repose upon the past; Arbor Day proposes for the future,'" Rosenow said.



AN OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION: Spirit Lake Mayor Eric Nielsen shown above with Ann Dittsworth, a representative of the Soil and Water Conservation District signs the papers officially declaring April 27 - May 24 Soil and Water Stewardship week.

(photo by Meredith Daggett)

Thanks

05-13-97

to the **Middle School Students and Staff of Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, & Spirit Lake** for helping to protect **our environment**



Shore Patrol '97!!

Proud Sponsors include:

- Arnolds Park Amusement Park • Boji Bay Water Park
- Buy Rite Foods • City Meat Market • Coca Cola Bottling
- Dickinson Environmental Education Committee • Fareway
- Iowa DNR • Lake Park Chamber of Commerce
- Local Law Enforcement & City Crews • Sanifill

AROUND THE LAKES

04-10-97

'GREEN' LAWNS: The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project is looking for volunteers to participate in an environmentally sensitive, lake friendly lawn program. Volunteers will receive information and training on having good looking yards without all the chemicals and fertilizers that are so popular. For more information call 336-2604.

A QUALITY ENVIRONMENT: The regular monthly meeting of the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District will be Thursday, April 10 at 11:30 a.m. in the district office at 2412 17th St. in Spirit Lake. The tentative agenda will include reviewing the CRP-15 sign-up and discussions concerning the tree sale and MAX program.

A three ton, two acre tree

A unique and spectacular event will take place on April 25 at Kenue Park, north of the town of Okoboji.

On that day, over 1,200 students from Dickinson County's four school districts - Harris/Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake and Terril - will participate in an Earth Day/Arbor Day event. The students will be creating a giant recyclable tree on a field using thousands of bags of paper they've collected from home and school.

The 'tree' will cover two - three acres and will be viewable from a nearby trail overlooking the park. An aircraft will be flying over taking photos and live video shots of the spectacle. Students will start arriving around 9 a.m. and the

project should be completed about 2:30 p.m.

The public is invited to come and view the tree anytime during the day, however, it will be dismantled starting at 3 p.m.

The Dickinson County Environmental Education Committee, consisting of representative teachers from the four school districts, the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation district and the Dickinson County Conservation Board and the originators and promoters of this event.

Others that will be involved the day of the event include Kenny Ashland, who is providing the aircraft, the staff of the Dickinson County Conservation Board,

coordinating the tree outline construction the day of the event, and the Spirit Lake Noon Kiwanis, picking up and recycling the collected paper.

The estimated three tons of paper collected and used in the project will not only save over 50 pulpwood trees, but will heighten recycling and waste reduction awareness locally and regionally.

In addition to participating in the day's event, school children will be involved in many other conservation awareness programs at school and at home.



A PAPER TREE: In celebration of both Earth Day and Arbor Day, students from Dickinson County joined forces to build a tree. Made of paper stuffed in plastic bags, the tree was a reminder not only to recycle but also that paper is made from trees. Shown above, as the tree's outline is filled in, students marched up the hill for a look at their handiwork. The Spirit Lake Noon Kiwanis dismantled the tree for recycling.

Water Fest '97 offers day of family fun

Water, fun, and a ride on the Queen II are the word for the day. The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, East Okoboji Lake Improvement Corporation, Spirit Lake Protective Association, and the Okoboji Protective Association are sponsoring this fun activity.

Water Fest '97 is planned for August 2, at Emerson Bay State Park on West Okoboji Lake. Activities begin at 8 a.m. with a scuba diving demonstration, emphasizing Eurasian Watermilfoil awareness.

There will be many people giving information about topics which are water related. The topics include, but are not limited to, boating safety, fishing, and runoff pollution.

There will be fun and games at Water Fest '97. They will have carnival style games and booths, water balloon volleyball, and many other fun water games. The first 200 people will receive a free ride on the Queen II, hosted by Ken Lang who is knowledgeable about the ecological history of our lakes.

Prizes will be given by Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District, Boji Bay Water Park, The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, Three Sons of Milford, Queen II, and Arnolds Park Amusement Park. Prizes include passes to the parks, baseball caps, sweaters, and other gifts.

Doughnuts and coffee will be provided, so parents bring your kids and have fun with them. If you have questions or comments call John Wills at 712-336-2604, Gary Phillips at 712-362-2604, or Craig Wilson at 712-336-3671. There will be plenty of fun activities for all.

AT A GLANCE

Events:

• 8 a.m.- Scuba diving demonstration-Eurasian Watermilfoil awareness

• 8:30-10:30 a.m.- Carnival style games and booths

• 11 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.- Free cruise on the Queen II hosted by Ken Lang

Locals attend Ag Institute



Cari Dillehay and Jarrod Wallace are pictured above with Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Dale M. Cochran.

Jarrod Wallace of Spirit Lake and Cari Dillehay of Harris are two of 100 Iowa high school students selected to attend the 17th annual Iowa Agricultural Youth Institute in Ames.

Wallace, the son of Steve and Judy Wallace, and Dillehay, the daughter of Julie and Mark Dillehay, were chosen based upon their leadership activities and interest in agriculture.

"Focused around the theme, 'Iowa Agriculture: A River of Opportunities', the IAYI allowed students to gain information on water quality and agricultural careers," said Shannon Fesenmeyer, IAYI coordinator for the Iowa Agricultural Development

Authority. "We're pleased to have participated in the Year of Water Celebration, a statewide cooperative effort recognizing voluntary water protection and enhancement activities that have taken place since the Iowa Groundwater

Protection Act of 1987."

Wallace, Dillehay and the other delegates learned how farm, environmental and agribusiness groups are working together in the Raccoon River Watershed Project, a coalition aimed at serving as a model for teaching and promoting water quality throughout Iowa and the nation. They saw innovative techniques that farmers are voluntarily implementing to preserve water quality. They also saw examples of rotational grazing and demonstrations of stream bank stabilization and wildlife habitat enhancements at an Iowa Cattlemen Association members farm.

Since the Raccoon River is a water source for the Des Moines Water Works, IAYI delegates toured the facility and viewed the entire treatment process. They saw the steps involved from collecting the water from the river to distributing it as drinking water.

Students enjoy Hogsback



By EMILY URBAN
Staff Writer

On Thursday, Sept. 6 the Harris-Lake Park sixth grade students all piled on a school bus and headed for Hogsback.

The Annual Dickinson County sixth grade outdoor classroom was a nature excursion. The students learned things varying from water to geese.

At the first station Carroll Oskvig, NRCS, Clarence Call, NRCS, and Tom Koster, NRCS, illustrated the various aspects of soil by using three 'pit sites' which showed the

changes in soil types and textures.

Kathleen Leopold, DCCB, had the students following the water cycle. The activity emphasized that the cycle can vary and that clean water is 'precious and few'.

The third station was about trees. Willard Punt, NRCS, and Ned Bjornstad, Sibley NRCS, shared information about the

rings of a tree and their meaning. The students also discussed how to plant and care for the green ash trees which every sixth grade student will receive in the spring.

Walking on the nature trail, the students were shown various native plants. Tim Waltz, IDNR, and Matt McKim, IDNR, explained the unique aspects of the Hogsback area.

"Enviroscape model, what is that?" one of the students asked.

John Wills, DSWCD, explained the importance of the wetlands and illustrated it by using a Wetland Enviroscape model.

A lot of interest was shown at the sixth station. DJ Ortman, wildlife animal rehabilitator, emphasized the care and protection of domestic and wild animals. The H-LP students were able to view and interact with a parrot that Ortman had brought along.

Doug Harr, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, took the

students down to the waterline to observe the geese and learn about their habits.

Next it was lunch time, the students thought they might be able to stop thinking for a half hour, that wasn't the case.

Ann Dismuth, Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District, showed and discussed the various ways to dispose of waste without sending it to the landfills.

Before the students got all packed up, the bus to go back to the school they were challenged by J. Janachovsky, ISU Extension, to identify areas of danger on a farm. The students learned all about farm safety.

"This is a very educational outdoor classroom experience for the students. I have been taking the students to Hogsback for over 15 years and every year I think they (the students) enjoy it. I am glad that the students have this opportunity," commented John Nelson, sixth grade science teacher.

EDUCATION

Classroom covers 1,895 acres

By MEREDITH DAGGETT
Staff Writer

The Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District's outdoor classroom was Sept. 4.

The event, which brings together all of the county's sixth graders is now in its 20th year. It took place at Kettleson Hogsback Wildlife Management Area, located between Marble and Hottes Lakes.

This unique area's 1,895 acres comprise a varied terrain of grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and lakes making it an ideal place for the outdoor classroom.

Nine different classes were on the agenda for this year, each lasting about 25 minutes.

- Soils presented by Carroll Oskvig, NRCS, Clarence Call, NRCS, and Tom Koster, NRCS. Students learned about various aspects of soil by using three pit sites to observe soil types and textures.

- Water Cycle presented by Kathleen Leopold, DCCB volunteer. Students followed the water cycle and the importance for protecting our drinking water supply.

- Trees presented by Willard Punt, NRCS and Ned Bjornstad, Sibley NRCS. Students received information about the rings of a tree and their meaning with special emphasis on the Green Ash. Each student will receive a tree to plant in the spring.

- Nature Trail - a hike guided by Tim Waltz, IDNR and Matt McKim, IDNR. Students observed native plants and unique aspects of the Hogsback area.

- Wetlands presented by John Wills, DSWCD. Using the new Wetland EnviroScape model as illustrations, students discovered the importance of wetlands.

- Wildlife presented by DJ Orman, wildlife animal rehabilitator. The care and protection of animals, both domestic and wild, was emphasized.

- Wild Geese presented by Doug Harr, IDNR. Students observed Canada Geese and learned about their habits.

- Composting presented by Ann Ditsworth, DSWCD. Students learned the various ways to dispose of waste without sending it to the landfill.

- Farm Safety by Joy Janachovsky, ISU. Students learned to identify areas of danger on a farm.



Spirit Lake kids are shown with John Wills using the DSWCD's new EnviroScape model to learn about protecting wetlands.



Doug Harr is shown with a group of Okoboji and Terril kids looking for Canada Geese on Marble Lake.



A group of Harris-Lake Park kids takes their turn visiting with DJ Orman's bird and learns about wildlife rehabilitation at the same time. (photos by Meredith Daggett)

DSWCD EnviroScape premiers

Children and adults are learning how to protect their community's water, thanks to an interactive, portable watershed model that dramatically demonstrates individual responsibility for water pollution and its prevention.

The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District and the Dickinson County Farm Bureau are using the EnviroScape® models to demonstrate water pollution, wetlands and riparian issues to elementary, middle and high school students, as well as civic groups. Keith Van Kleeck, commissioner

chairperson, stated, "Sometimes water issues are hard to understand, but now we have a way to show how our water can become polluted and how we can prevent it."

Used at all levels within the school system, EnviroScape® uses 'rain' from a spray bottle to show pollution coming from urban, rural and industrial areas. The rain carries soil, fertilizers, pesticides and oil downhill to a lake, where the effects of the pollution become plainly visible. The model then shows how to prevent the pollution.

In addition to the EnviroScape® demonstrations, the Dickinson

SWCD provides educational information to the public through the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, the Environmental Education Committee, Stewardship Week, and the Annual 6th Grade Outdoor Classroom at Kettleson-Hogsback.

The District also assists the county by offering cost-share on conservation practices, approving conservation plans developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, working with farmers on a one-to-one basis, and many other county-wide projects.

Thank You To Farmers And Ranchers

Students at the Okoboji Elementary School are participating in a "Thank You" project this month to recognize farmers and ranchers for conserving our natural resources as they produce the food we eat and the fiber for our clothing. Some of the points emphasized include:

- Today, one American farmer provides food and fiber for 129 other people.

- To be a steward of the land means you are in charge of taking responsible care of the land and to do what is necessary to keep the earth healthy and beautiful.

- Today, 99% of US farms are owned by individuals, family partnerships or corporations with fewer than 10 stockholders. Only 0.4% of farms are owned by non-family corporations.

- Four out of five acres in the US are nonfederal land. Private landowners are responsible for the natural resources on nearly all that land.

- Agriculture is the nation's largest employer, with more than 21 million people working in some phase - from growing food and fiber, to selling it at the supermarket.

This project is sponsored by the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The "Thank You" project is important to us all. America's farmers and ranchers efficiently produce abundant, safe, and affordable food and fiber. But they produce much more. Healthy farms and ranches produce healthy soil, clear water, pure air, and an abundance of wildlife. These contributions lead to a pleasing landscape - benefits that all Americans treasure!



Adaptive fishing

By **MIKE JORDAN**
Correspondent

Tom Koster has developed a truly unique business venture.

Tom is a licensed athletic trainer who came back to Iowa in 1988 from Peoria, Illinois, for family and fishing. In Peoria, Tom worked in a sports medicine clinic. In Spirit Lake, Tom worked with Larry Dixon doing rehabilitation until 1995.

In April of that year he moved to Dickinson County Hospital and in June was found to have a tumor in his spinal cord. Surgery followed in July to remove the tumor at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

After surgery he was told he would be confined to a wheel chair for life. But through therapy and prayer Tom is now able to walk using a walker or crutches and drives a van with hand controls.

It was during his month stay at

St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester for rehabilitation that Tom started trying to figure out how he was going to go fishing again. Having fished since he was old enough to hold a pole, and naming it his favorite outdoor past time, Tom began to devise a plan to go fishing again and, in the process, take others with him.

Back in Peoria, Tom was involved with a Youth Sports Fest working with youth through the "Hooked-on-Fishing-Not-on-Drugs" program. He taught youngsters how to cast, tie flies, bait hooks, remove fish, as well as other basic techniques about fishing and how to share the experience with friends. His idea was to develop a similar experience for the disabled.

After a year of planning, Tom took his idea to Dick Naeve, a counselor with the State of Iowa Division of Vocational

see, **KOSTER**, page 14B

Johnson motor and a wireless remote control electric trolling motor, the pontoon can accommodate up to 13 adults comfortably.

A bimini top will be used for shade and those occasional misty Iowa summer days.

Adaptive Fishing will provide all fishing equipment and bait, life jackets and any assistance needed in baiting hooks, removing fish, or even cleaning the catch. A live

people, experienced or not. The idea is to keep the enthusiasm for fishing alive regardless of ability."

To learn more about the service, call Tom Koster at 712-336-2315 or write *Adaptive Fishing* at 2108 Hill Avenue, Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360 for a brochure. He will schedule a time for clients to fish and even pick them up at a dock if that is more convenient.

Tom says, "Fish do not see any disabilities." *Adaptive Fishing* is an idea he hopes will catch on.

Claims about farmer's role as poor environmentalist distorted

I couldn't help but note the hostility in D.K. Halling's recent letter that criticized the efforts of farmers in protecting the environment ("He questions Farm Bureau's word.")

Rather than question his credibility as he does Farm Bureau's, I'll cite specific examples to standing up for America's farmers and their care for the environment.

First, he asserts that most of the progress made by farmers to care for the environment is unsubstantiated. I beg to differ.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, crop protection product use on corn, soybeans and wheat was down 24 percent between 1982-1997. Insecticide use was down 56

percent and herbicide use down 19 percent. Those are real numbers.

Second, regarding the quality of our water, nitrogen-use efficiency of U.S. corn grain (based on five-year rolling average) is up nearly 30 percent. Last year, farmers applied an average of only a pound of nitrogen to grow a bushel of corn compared to 1.3 pounds in 1984.

Third, regarding protecting the soil, the Environmental Protection Agency finds erosion of 36.5 million acres of Conservation Reserve Program land is down 90 percent to around a ton per acre. Most soils naturally regenerate at rates of 2 1/2 tons per acre per year.

Finally, his assertion that

Farm Bureau does not support environmental initiatives is simply untrue.

Does he know that since 1986, Farm Bureau's Cooperative Well Water Testing Program has assisted more than 67,000 farm families in 24 states to test their well water for nitrate?

Heidelberg College's Water Quality Laboratory has tested nearly 55,000 of those samples. Only 4.4 percent of those samples were above the Safe Drinking Water Act standard of 10 parts per million nitrate-nitrogen.

More than 83 percent of the wells fell below 3 p.p.m.

In addition, Farm Bureau has contributed to Trees Forever, a driving force behind the

Raccoon River Watershed Project and is a proud sponsor of the low Envirothon Contest for high school students, just to name a few.

Farmers aren't perfect and there's more work yet to do. However, Halling's assertions paint an unfair picture of efforts farmers are taking to protect the environment.

It is hoped that he chooses his words more carefully before sharing his views and partaking of the bounty that comes courtesy of America's farmers.

DONALD NIELSEN

West Okoboji
Nielsen is president of Dickinson County Farm Bureau.



PHEASANTS FOREVER

Think **HABITAT**

VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

Dickinson County Pheasants Forever 1998 TREE PLANTING PROJECT

29,000 Trees and Shrubs were planted between April 14 - May 6th.

Our County Chapter spent \$25,000 on this project!



L-R: Rod Sheldon, Jim Studer, Jim Sporrer, Larry Traugher



Gene Reynolds



Front: Virg Marchand, Ron Arms
Back: LeRoy Koep, Russell Arms

Jim Studer of Milford coordinated the 15 Projects --

WEEK DAY CREW

Leroy Koep
Harvey Larson
Gene Reynolds
Virg Marchand

EVENING & WEEKEND CREW

Jim Studer
Rod Sheldon
Jim Sporrer
Virg Marchand

HELPERS

Eric Hoyer
Chad Hoyer
Dale Shoemaker
Keith McCormick
-Some Landowners

HELPERS

Dan Studer
Matt Locker
Chad Wuebker
Kris Haas
Larry Traugher
Tim VonEhwegen
Danielle Sheldon
Randie Sheldon
-Some Landowners

The evening crew loaded trailers with trees for the week day crew.

The most trees planted in one day was 4,100!

Pheasants Forever would like to thank everyone involved in this large project, all done with volunteer help. And, thanks to all of you throughout our county for your financial support at our banquet that helped make these purchases possible and helped keep us at the **Top of the State** in money spent on habitat improvement.

CLOSE TO SCHOOL
"All American" Cape Cod style home. BRAND NEW with 4 bedrooms, oak cabinets & doors. 2 1/2 baths. Full basement. Three car

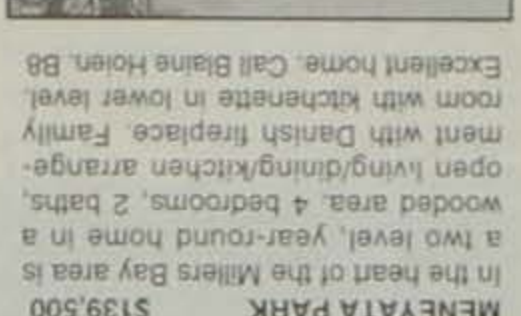
MONARCH COVE
\$245,000
Very nice, four bedroom waterfront home with 50' of lakeshore on West Lake Okoboji. You can enjoy the sunsets from your 18 x 12 front deck or from the plank dock. Lovely year-round home. Take a look with Larry Miller. A6



WEST OKOBOJI HARBOR
\$260,000
This excellent location offers 70' of West Okoboji Harbor. It is a quality home with many special features including 4 bedrooms, extra sleeping quarters, 2 fireplaces, comfortable family room with bar and immaculate throughout. Call Janet Whitney. A2



MENEVATA PARK
\$139,500
In the heart of the Millers Bay area is a two level, year-round home in a wooded area. 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, open living/dining/kitchen arrangement with Danish fireplace. Family room with kitchenette in lower level. Excellent home. Call Blaine Hohen. B8



UPPER GAR
\$124,000
115' of low bank lakeshore with 365' of depth. Older, 3 bedroom home on the roadside. Convenient Lakes Region location with access to the chain of lakes. It's very affordable. Call Marilyn Strickland to take a look at it today. C17



from, KOSTER, page 1

Rehabilitation. Dick suggested "The Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program" to him as a possible direction he might take for assistance. Tom filled out an application packet to test his idea as to the feasibility of taking disabled people fishing as a business.

Through this group, a business plan was developed which had to be approved by the program coordinators. Upon approval, Tom was provided, along with a business loan from a local financial institution, the financial assistance to establish his new business, which he calls *Adaptive Fishing*. The mission statement that appears on the *Adaptive Fishing* brochures

says, "To provide everyone with the opportunity to fish, regardless of their disability."

Being disabled himself has given Tom an insight into the barriers people face when attempting to fish. His desire is to provide a service and fill a need for those with disabilities that would otherwise be unable to fish.

Due to arrive later this month is a 24-foot Misty Harbor pontoon boat manufactured in Ft. Dodge, Iowa. The pontoon has been customized to have a layout that is user friendly to the disabled.

All three entrance gates, for example, are wheel-chair accessible with the front one equipped with a ramp for easy loading purposes. A wide, central space has been engineered into the floor plan for

ease of movement from front to back.

The boat also has interchangeable pedestal chairs and bench seating that can be flipped over to change seating direction. Two tables are also included and a grill for cooking is in the plan. Powered by a 50-horsepower Johnson motor and a wireless remote control electric trolling motor, the pontoon can accommodate up to 13 adults comfortably.

A bimini top will be used for shade and those occasional misty Iowa summer days.

Adaptive Fishing will provide all fishing equipment and bait, life jackets and any assistance needed in baiting hooks, removing fish, or even cleaning the catch. A live

well and ice chest will also be on board.

Covering all the local Iowa Great Lakes, Tom says, "Adaptive Fishing is oriented toward fishing for those who never fished before but is open to both disabled fisherman as well as able bodied people, experienced or not. The idea is to keep the enthusiasm for fishing alive regardless of ability."

To learn more about the service, call Tom Koster at 712-336-2315 or write *Adaptive Fishing* at 2108 Hill Avenue, Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360 for a brochure. He will schedule a time for clients to fish and even pick them up at a dock if that is more convenient.

Tom says, "Fish do not see any disabilities." *Adaptive Fishing* is an idea he hopes will catch on.

Claims about farmer's role as poor

I couldn't help but note the hostility in D.K. Halling's recent letter that criticized the efforts of farmers in protecting the environment ("He questions Farm Bureau's word.")

Rather than question his credibility as he does Farm Bureau's, I'll cite specific examples to standing up for America's farmers and their care for the environment.

First, he asserts that most of the progress made by farmers to care for the environment is unsubstantiated. I beg to differ.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, crop protection product use on corn, soybeans and wheat was down 24 percent between 1982-1997. Insecticide use was down 56

percent and herbicide use down 19 percent. Those are real numbers.

Second, regarding the quality of our water, nitrogen-use efficiency of U.S. corn grain (based on five-year rolling average) is up nearly 30 percent. Last year, farmers applied an average of only a pound of nitrogen to grow a bushel of corn compared to 1.3 pounds in 1984.

Third, regarding protecting the soil, the Environmental Protection Agency finds erosion of 36.5 million acres of Conservation Reserve Program land is down 90 percent to around a ton per acre. Most soils naturally regenerate at rates of 2 1/2 tons per acre per year.

Finally, his assertion that

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Musical talent

Rachaelle Larsen, granddaughter of Thomas and Marilyn Newton and great-granddaughter of Elda Lynn, all of Spirit Lake, will perform a principal flute with the Sioux Empire Youth Symphony Orchestra Sunday, April 29 at 4:30 p.m. at the Washington Pavilion of Arts and Science in the Great Hall in Sioux Falls.

She is the daughter of Pete and Vickie Larsen of Alcester, S.D.

New members

Nine new members were welcomed into the Chi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma on April 7: Phyllis Anderson, Mary Frank, Ilona Henriksen, Dianne Hickerson, Chery



PHEASANTS FOREVER

Think HABITAT

VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

Dickinson County Pheasants Forever 1998 TREE PLANTING PROJECT

29,000 Trees and Shrubs were planted between April 14 - May 6th. Our County Chapter spent \$25,000 on this project!



L-R: Rod Sheldon, Jim Studer, Jim Sporrer, Larry Traugher



Gene Reynolds



Front: Virg Marchand, Ron Arms
Back: LeRoy Koep, Russell Arms

Jim Studer of Milford coordinated the 15 Projects --

HELPERS
Dan Studer



18'10.5", placed third.

In the high jump, Josh Heikens finished fifth with a leap of 5'8". Rounding out the field events for Okobojo was Gerritt VanOtterloo who finished fifth in the shot put with a throw of 44'10".

Okobojo showed its running ability with first place performances in many events.

Brad Peter started off the evening with a first place finish in the 3200 Meter Run with a time of 10:31.27. Nick Fear also placed in

with a time of 2:14.12 in the 800 Meter Run.

The shuttle hurdle relay team finished second with a time of 1:10.91 while the 4 x 800 Meter Relay team finished with a time of 9:15.72 to take sixth.

The Medley Relay event ended with Okobojo in third with a time of 3:50.78 and the 4 x 200 Meter Relay team sprinted to a second place finish with a time of 1:34.38. The 4 x 400 Meter Relay team also



The Terril High School Envirothon team captured first place at the third annual Iowa Envirothon April 27 at the Iowa 4-H Education and Natural Resources Center in Madrid. Pictured with advisor Marc Benedict (bottom left) are team members Lance Rouse and Eric Buettel (top row, left to right), Lee Heller, Shane Brant and Nathan Man. The team now advances to the national competition in Lansing, Mich., in July. Students participating in the contest were challenged to sharpen their critical thinking skills while exploring environmental issues in five categories. These categories included aquatics, forestry, wildlife, soils and current environmental issues.

First Place In Envirothon



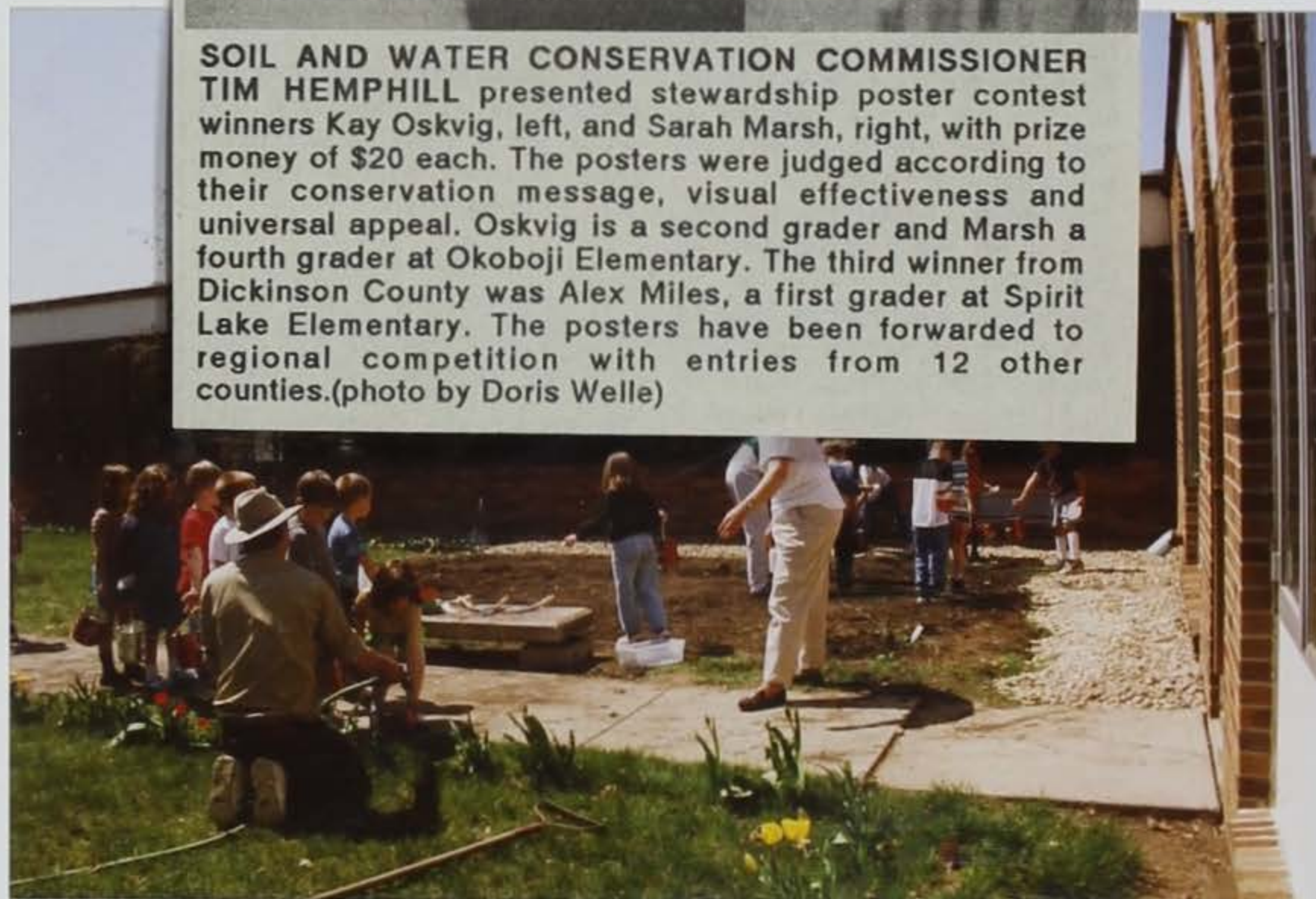


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SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSIONER TIM HEMPHILL presented stewardship poster contest winners Kay Oskvig, left, and Sarah Marsh, right, with prize money of \$20 each. The posters were judged according to their conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal. Oskvig is a second grader and Marsh a fourth grader at Okoboji Elementary. The third winner from Dickinson County was Alex Miles, a first grader at Spirit Lake Elementary. The posters have been forwarded to regional competition with entries from 12 other counties. (photo by Doris Welle)







Thanks to the Students and
Staff of the Harris-Lake Park,
Okoboji, & Spirit Lake
Middle Schools
for helping to protect
our environment!

SHORE PATROL '98

Proud Sponsors Include:

- Arnolds Park Amusement Park • Boji Bay Water Park
- Buy Rite Foods • Coca Cola Bottling
- Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District
- Iowa DNR • Local Law Enforcement & City Crews
- Local Media • Mid Continent Bottling • Sanifill



BANK MIDWEST OFFICERS CURT JOHNSON AND MARY KAY BATES watched as Okoboji Elementary third graders planted plugs and seeds in the "Wonders of Life" Wildlife School Garden at the elementary building last week. The plugs and some of the seeds were cultivated by the students last fall from the flower beds at Bank Midwest in Okoboji. Dickinson County Naturalist Rich Leopold supervised the planning and preparation of the wildlife garden which will provide an environmental learning area for the teachers, students and their families. All the kindergarten through fourth grade classes helped with one or more phases of the project from raking and cleaning the area to mulching after the planting and watering were done. (photo by Doris Welle)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Once again this year the DNR is accumulating leaves, branches and other waste materials at Gull Point State Park. It is bad enough that this unsightly pile is in our backyard and visible to the park visitors. Last winter they managed to set the woods on fire when they left the fire unattended.

The DNR should be more responsible for clean air and not be an open burning participant. As neighbors we resent the visual pollution, the air pollution and the disregard demonstrated with the unattended fire.

James R. Rossie

To the Editor:

Parks Marina has been receiving calls from irate people that live on East and West Okoboji concerning the loud exhaust on boats. We do not sell boats without mufflers. We sold some five or six years ago but we stopped because of the noise pollution caused by them.

The boats going up and down East Okoboji Lake with the loud exhausts are not from our marina, they are from another dealership on the lakes. The DNR has laws making certain levels of noise from boats against the law. The customer buying these units should be aware that they will have to muffle the level of noise or get fined. The cost involved in quieting these boats can be very expensive.

Snooki Parks
Parks Marina
Okoboji

To the Editor:

The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District along with the County Conservation Board sponsored Wonders of Wildlife School Gardens events at each of the Elementary Schools in the County during Earth Week (April 20-24). The goal of the celebration was "To establish a wildflower area that will provide habitat to butterflies, food for birds, beauty to the Schoolyard, and an environmental learning area for the teachers, students and their families."

The event was a great success and we would like to "Thank"; Bank Midwest, Ferguson's Nursery, the Administration and Teachers of the Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake and Terril Schools, Demuth

Okoboji, in the School's Courtyard in Milford; Spirit Lake, along the North-edge of the Enviroplay prairie area; and in Terril, along the walkways in front of the School.

Thanks again to all involved.

Sincerely,
Ann Ditsworth
Dickinson SWCD



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Snooki Parks
Parks Marina
Okoboji

To the Editor:

Starting today, let's put countryside conservation to work in our yard.

We usually focus on what's wrong with our environment, and especially who's to blame. But I'd like to give some credit where credit is long overdue. There are a lot of groups in the conservation busi-

ness, but there are few who have done it as well, day-in and day-out, as farmers and ranchers.

It doesn't make the headlines, but in the past 10 years alone (thanks to new conservation techniques such as conservation tillage) erosion rates on cropland have dropped more than 30 percent. This makes our nation's farms not only the most productive in the world, but also the most protected.

The project, titled Backyard Conservation, takes smaller-scale conservation practices that have been used on American farms for decades -- terracing, tree planting, composting, wildlife habitat planting, nutrient and pest management, and wetland and pond development -- and demonstrates how urban residents can use them in their backyards. Through these practices, backyard conservationists can provide important wildlife habitat while saving soil and water -- just like their counterparts in the country.

The responsibility for taking care of our planet begins at home, in our own backyard -- whether that backyard is a 500 acre farm or a flower box on an apartment balcony.

Make a commitment to make a difference. It's easy to get started. A Backyard Conservation Starter Kit is available for check-out from each City Library in Dickinson County. It's simple to use, helps the environment and can bring a lot of satisfaction to living.

Together, we truly can make our environment a better place to live, one yard at a time!

Mark Ingwesen
Chairman, Dickinson Soil
and Water Conservation
District

08-26-98
"Four or five hours go by fast."

Landscape & Design, Local media, and the many volunteers who aided in site prep and maintenance.

If you haven't had a chance to visit the Gardens, you will find them in the following locations: at Harris-Lake Park, across from the School's Playground in Harris; Okoboji, in the School's Courtyard in Milford; Spirit Lake, along the North-edge of the Enviroplay prairie area; and in Terril, along the walkways in front of the School.

Thanks again to all involved.

Sincerely,
Ann Ditsworth
Dickinson SWCD

Stevens, Voss, Bjornstad win

By DORIS WELLE
Milford Mail Editor

Greg Stevens, a high school teacher from Milford, unseated Congressman John Greig, a farmer from Estherville and Iowa's State Representative from District 7 in Tuesday's election by a mere 27 votes.

Stevens, a Democrat, beat Greig in Dickinson County by a slightly larger margin, 3028 to 2966.

Two county incumbents were defeated. Democrat Linda Voss defeated Treasurer Marie Barrett 3457 votes to 2559. Voss was very happy about her victory. "I was hoping and my dreams came true! I worked very hard going door to door and people were very kind and gracious to listen to me."

Voss says she respects Barrett, for whom she has worked in the Treasurer's office for many years. "I commend Marie for her many, many years of good service to this county and I will try to follow in those footsteps."

Barrett was gracious in defeat. "I congratulate Linda on her campaign and winning. I will work with her on the transition to Jan. 1. I also want to thank all who supported me."

Assistant County Attorney Ned Bjornstad defeated County Attorney Bethany Brands 3169 to 2798. He credits part of his victory to the law enforcement segment of the county. "I commend the assistance from law enforcement. I really appreciate all they did for me."

"Bethany ran a nice clean campaign and I am impressed with the way she handled the campaign," he added. "I think I have learned from this election that residents want us to focus our attention more on criminal and juvenile prosecution and less on civil matters. I intend to follow their direction in this."

In what was expected to be a tighter race, incumbent County Supervisor Dave Gottsche defeated his Republican and Reform Party opponents easily. He garnered 1289 votes to 607 for Marvin Anderson and 75 for Vernon Wittler.

"I really appreciate the support I received from the constituents of District #3 and the vote of confidence. Now tomorrow morning I can get up and continue on with the work we have started. I really appreciate everyone's help and commend my opponents on a clean campaign," Gottsche said.

County Recorder Jan Bortscheller, a Democrat, was unopposed and won with 4634 votes. Earl Maahs and Mark Fisher were elected to the Dickinson County Hospital Board of Trustees while Orville Berg and Bill Northey won the spots in the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Those elected to the Agricultural Extension Council included Ricky Baish, Sue Boettcher, Mark Ingwersen, Nancy Radcliffe and Susan Reiser. Alfred Klein and Jerry Roskammer will serve as trustees

see ELECTION, page 2A



1999

DICKINSON COUNTY SWCD MEETING:

The regular monthly meeting of the Dickinson SWCD will be Monday, Jan. 4, 1999 at 11:30 a.m. in the District office. A tentative agenda will include: Oath of office for Bill Northey and Orville Berg, election of officers and officer appointments, approving the November minutes, Treasurer's report, and bills, reviewing the mail, receiving NRCS and Watershed Project reports, reviewing the Fall Regional and Backyard Conservation Marketing Competition Information, and planning the February meeting. The SWCD Foundation monthly meeting will also be on the 4th.

REAP will meet in Arnolds Park March 21

One of the state's premier natural resource protection programs will be the focus of 18 public meetings scheduled across the state this winter. The meetings, called Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Assemblies, are held every other year to help define and direct the program for the next two years. They are designed to share information with the public and collect input and ideas for the future. The assemblies outline what REAP has accomplished since its inception in 1989 and where its funding was spent. It also gives citizens the opportunity to identify potential REAP projects in their area.

The REAP meeting for Dickinson, Buena Vista, Clay, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto and Sioux counties will be held March 21 at Arnolds Park City Hall.

For further information, call Kevin Szcudronski, (515) 281-8874, or Alan Foster, (515) 281-8874.

CRP sign-up period Jan. 18 to Feb. 11

USDA Farm Service Agency officials announced the Conservation Reserve Program general sign-up will be held during a four-week period from Jan. 18 through Feb. 11.

CRP is a voluntary program that offers landowners annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term resource-conserving covers on eligible, environmentally sensitive croplands for a 10- to 15-year period.

"For landowners with CRP contracts expiring in September of 2000, and for those whose CRP bids which were not accepted during the previous general sign-ups, and also for those landowners considering entering land in CRP for the first time, this is another excellent opportunity to offer to enroll your most environmentally sensitive land into this cost-effective, voluntary program," said Bob Soukop, state executive director for the Farm Service Agency.

Land bid into CRP which offers the highest protection to natural resources for the lowest cost to the taxpayer is generally the land USDA will accept. The Environmental Benefits Index scoring system, in place for

the 20th sign-up, is very similar to the EBI used for last year's sign-up, allowing points to be given for positive environmental effects on soils, wildlife, water, air and pristine lands. The EBI system is used to determine the most desirable land for the purposes of the CRP. The USDA will continue to evaluate and rank eligible offers throughout the sign-up period. However, the EBI cut-off will be decided after sign-up ends.

The following offers examples of actions that may enhance the acceptability of offers submitted:

- Offering only the most environmentally sensitive acreage for enrollment.
- Planting an approved mixture of covers that benefit wildlife.
- Enhancing the existing seeding to provide an approved mixture that benefits wildlife.
- Lowering the offer amount below the maximum payment rate.
- Developing a permanent water source for wildlife on acreage offered.
- Restoring wetlands on the site.
- Establishing wildlife food plots.
- Establishing cover that will provide

enduring benefits past the life of CRP.

Declining available cost-share funds. CRP contracts accepted under this 20th sign-up period will become effective on Oct. 1, 2000. The USDA is authorized to maintain enrollment of up to 36.4 million acres of land in the CRP. In Iowa, this program has helped protect over 1.5 million acres of environmentally sensitive land on an annual basis. In addition, over 171,000 acres have been enrolled in the Continuous CRP program throughout Iowa.

Iowa producers and landowners should carefully review all the facts and alternatives before making any final decisions. Producers and landowners are highly encouraged to visit with USDA representatives at the Service Center Office to find out ways to maximize their EBI points and increase the chances that their land will be accepted.

The CRP is administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency with technical assistance provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. For more detailed information, contact your local USDA Service Center.



HARRISON SWCD

000 TREE SALES ORDER FORM

ZIP: _____

QUANTITY TOTAL

\$

\$

\$

\$

\$

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\$

Brandon Griffin (left) of Spirit Lake and Kay Oskvig of Milford were first-place winners in the Region 2 Soil Conservation Poster Contest sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company. Brandon received a \$35 cash award in the division 1 (grades K-1), while Kay received a \$35 cash award in the division 2 (grades 2-3). The topic of the poster contest was "In The Children's Hands." The contest was open to all students in grades kindergarten through 12. Posters were judged on the entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal. Representing Dickinson SWCD were Mark Ingwersen (left) and Orville Berg.



PHOTO BY MINDY BAKER



East Pottawattamie
SWCD
Tree sales order form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Evergreens	Size	Price	Quantity	Total
Colorado Blue Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____
Norway Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____
Black Hills Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____
Scotch Pine.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____
White Pine.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____
Concolor Fir.....	18-24"	\$17.00	_____	_____
Red Cedar.....	15-18"	\$13.00	_____	_____

(Deciduous and shrubs are all bareroot)

Deciduous

Green Ash.....	2-3"	\$1.00	_____	_____
S Red Oak.....	2-3"	\$2.00	_____	_____
Black Walnut.....	2-3"	\$2.00	_____	_____
V Red Maple.....	3-4"	\$2.00	_____	_____

Shrubs

c Cotoneaster, Centennial.....	2-3"	\$1.00	_____	_____
n Redosier Dogwood.....	2-3"	\$1.00	_____	_____
n Common Lilac.....	2-3"	\$1.00	_____	_____
d American Cranberry Bush.....	2-3"	\$1.00	_____	_____

Sub Total: \$ _____
6 % sales tax \$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____

Make checks payable to East Pottawattamie SWCD. Deposit of 50 percent due with each order.
Remainder due at pick up time. You will be notified when to pick up your trees.

"Prairie Jewels." The first in a series of
articles on Dickinson County wetlands
restoration projects.

64-28-99

Brabys BLESSINGS

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED
by

GREG DREES

During any season, they bless the land with their special significance. Now, with springtime branded into the landscape, they lend poise to the prairie, sparkling among the plains grasses like no other gems on earth. They are prairie wetlands, jewels so rich that their beauty is implausible. Look closely at them, and you will see why their restoration is truly a resurrection of treasures, why their preservation is the lifeline of our natural world.

If you are drawn to wild places, then surely wetlands are a part of your journey. Like the ducks and geese that are lured to their seductive charms, you know that wetlands are a part of a larger mystery. Whatever vestiges of wildness remain in this world, wetlands are a part of it.

The people who watch over them are also cut from a select cloth. Larry and Jean Braby, whose lives have been fashioned by their love of the outdoors, are stewards of wetlands that have enriched their affinity to the good earth.

In pristine Iowa, prairie wetlands were an important and prolific part of the landscape. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and intense agricultural practices, virtually all of our marshes fell to the tile, as popular opinion viewed wetlands as "waste areas" that could be drained and used for row crop production.

Later in this century, as common sense and science began to rediscover the virtues of wetlands as beneficial to wildlife and water quality, private and public efforts began to surface for their restoration.

In Dickinson County, the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project and Clean Water Alliance, an action group of conservation organizations and governmental agencies dedicated to protecting the Iowa Great Lakes watershed, have restored and permanently protected an impressive number of wetlands and grassy uplands within the region.

When Larry Braby was teaching biology at Pocahontas High School back in the '60's, he introduced environmental education when it was not yet chic to do so. Having grown up in the time-honored traditions of hunting and fishing along the Des Moines River near Rutland, Braby's life revolved around the natural world.

When he met his wife, Jean, they began to share many outdoor experiences. "I didn't grow up in a hunting and fishing family like Larry," Jean recalls, "but his love of the outdoors opened a whole new aspect of my life that I have come to cherish."

In 1968, he became involved in the insurance and finance business and juggled that burgeoning profession with his teaching duties until 1979, when he retired as an educator and devoted himself to business.

After buying a vacation cottage on Lake Minnewashta in 1984 and becoming integrated into the Great Lakes way of life, the Brabys began to look for land in the vicinity where "we could walk and ease into the country life," as Jean put it.

In 1990 that opportunity arose in an 80-acre parcel of farmland east of Minnewashta. After several heavy spring rains blew out the tile on the property, Braby sought the advice of the local Soil Conservation Service, now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, on how to solve the problem. "The end result was that our land was the first to be enrolled into the wetlands program under the IGL Water Quality Project," explained Braby. "It became economically feasible for us to realize a marvelous wetland and

surrounding switchgrass uplands on our

"Prairie Jewels." The first in a series of articles on Dickinson County wetlands restoration projects.

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In 1990 that opportunity arose in an 80-acre parcel of farmland east of Minnewashta. After several heavy spring rains blew out the tile on the property, Braby sought the advice of the local Soil Conservation Service, now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, on how to solve the problem. "The end result was that our land was the first to be enrolled into the wetlands program under the IGL Water Quality Project," explained Braby. "It became economically feasible for us to realize a marvelous wetland and surrounding switchgrass uplands on our property." The couple named the property "Bear Paw" because from an aerial vantage point the one large and three tiny wetlands form the image of a bear's paw.

Buoyed by the transformed aesthetic beauty of their property and the immediate benefit to wildlife, the Brabys bought 160 acres in Palo Alto County that they named "Five Marsh" because of the original existence of five wetlands on the property. With help from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there are now seven marshes on the land, with an eighth to be added this summer.

As the Brabys became even more consumed with the wonders of these natural areas on their land, they added a third parcel, an inside 96-acre tract north of Bear

Past and present estimates of wetlands and riparian areas vary greatly, but suffice it to say that the country has seen the demise of most of its once-natural wetlands, due primarily to agricultural practices.

In 1800, Iowa (to use a safe estimate) had at least five million acres of wetlands. By 1922, a USDA inventory showed that those acres had been reduced to 930,000. In 1980, only 422,000 acres of wetlands remained in Iowa. Only Ohio and California have lost more wetlands over the years than Iowa.

These are sobering figures. However, the last two decades have seen renewed interests in wetlands restoration and preservation. And nowhere in Iowa have efforts been more impressive than in Dickinson County within the Iowa Great Lakes watershed. The IGL Clean Water Alliance is the product of highly dedicated persons, groups and agencies that have made wetlands restoration in this region a national standard.

Wetlands are very diverse and complex ecosystems that reduce and remove pollution from the environment by acting as efficient filters and sponges. They reduce and remove pollution that enters them, thereby allowing water that enters to leave in a much cleaner condition. Wetlands can remove 90% of all contaminants that enter them, and are thus highly important elements within the watersheds of lakes, improving water quality all the way around.

Wetlands have been proven to be some of the most productive natural areas of land in the world — 93% of all animals will, over the course of their life cycles, use them for food or water.

By early summer in this part of the country, wetlands are virtual biology labs, teeming with life of all kinds and sizes. From tiny invertebrates and other aquatic life to the larger birds and mammals that exist on and around these environments, wetlands are an essential link to the preservation of our natural world.

With three parcels of land under their ownership, the Brabys began to enhance each property with tree plantings and extended CRP contracts that have enriched the surrounding uplands in brome and switchgrass.

"I would guess that we have planted about 4,000 trees and shrubs on our three properties," Braby explained. "Each planting creates a wildlife area." The land tracts are enhanced with blue spruce, white spruce, red stick dogwood, nine bark, wild plum, sand cherry and walnut trees.

An integral part of the Brabys' commitment to preserving wetlands and uplands is the privilege of sharing the benefits with family and friends. "It delights us when people are able to observe the natural world on our land," Braby said. The properties are hunted, but Larry keeps daily journals to measure pressure, and none are over-exploited. "The bigger pleasure is the total outdoor experience that can be gained from interaction on the land," he explained.

Iowa State University students, under the auspices of Lakeside Lab, are allowed to do research upon the properties, which enhances their studies in wetlands and flora/fauna/wildlife relationships that exist there. The Brabys' three daughters and their grandchildren savor invaluable experiences on the land, and will eventually inherit these priceless properties.

Larry participates in as many wetlands seminars as he can possibly attend, and is quick to expound to anyone interested the boundless benefits of marshes and uplands. The Brabys' commitment to protecting the watershed of the Iowa Great Lakes chain is deeply seeded. Their "Bear Paw" and "Timber" properties are in the heart of the Spring Run Wetlands complex, all within the regional watershed. "The water quality of our lakes is a complex issue," Braby explains, "but it only makes sense to take care of the land in the watershed to ensure cleaner water."

Although he will probably never retire from the Central Financial Services in Pocahontas that has helped him build a successful career and outside amenities, Larry hopes that the future will allow him even more time with Jean to enjoy the natural wonders on their land.

Their stewardship is a shining star of conservation. They would rather leave a legacy of wetlands than a treasure chest of jewels.

Braby's restored "Bear Paw" wetland and lush surrounding uplands.

The Clean Water Alliance is an action group of conservation organizations and governmental agencies dedicated to protecting the Iowa Great Lakes through a wide range of special efforts, among them the restoration and protection of wetlands and grassy uplands in critical drainage areas within the watershed.

Among the groups and agencies that have participated in dozens of restoration projects within the Iowa Great Lakes watershed are:

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Ducks Unlimited
- Pheasants Forever
- Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund (REAP)
- University of Okoboji Foundation
- Okoboji Protective Association
- Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Dickinson County Conservation Board
- ... and private individuals.

Dozens of projects, begun with the Anspach Memorial Wetland in 1987, have enhanced the Okoboji Wetland Complex on public and private lands.



Larry and Jean Braby

Paw that was christened "The Timber" because of the two-acre stand of hardwoods at the back end of the property. Two wetlands have been established on this land, with two more to be restored this summer. In addition, a 20-acre tract of prairie has been seeded on this land, with more planned.

"The Lakes Area, which had already been special to me, became even more intriguing as I discovered the deep conviction of the people to the natural resources," Wills said. "I developed some lasting friendships with some of these people."

That connection to the land loomed large when the Loess Hills Alliance came courting Wills' talents this spring. "I was flattered when they asked me to apply for the job," he explained, "but I felt too attached to my job to consider leaving." But when Shirley Frederickson of Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development became insistent upon her pursuit of Wills, he began to give it more consideration. "I decided that if ever I was to leave my work here, now was the right time," he said. "I am confident that I've left the program in good shape for the right individual to step in and carry on the job."

As coordinator of the Loess Hills

Alliance, Wills will focus on a seven-county area along the Missouri River floodplain. He will work with more than 70 different conservation groups whose mission is to protect and preserve the cultural and natural resources of the Loess Hills. He views the move as a step toward his goal to get involved in bigger environmental challenges. "The Loess Hills are a unique and geographically diverse area that are in need of protection," he explained. "When I hiked to the crest of one of the ridges there and experienced the different habitats and wildlife, my decision to take the job was made."

"The Loess Hills are a unique and geographically diverse area that are in need of protection."

—John Wills

The Iowa Great Lakes, however, will never be far from Wills' mind. He plans to return often to see friends and enjoy the area that has held such importance to him for so long. The good things that he has endowed to the land—the sparkling wetlands, the flowing prairies and the clean water—will last forever.

sparkling wetlands, the flowing prairies and the clean water—will last forever.

Some busi- and lube service center, tire center, other services too. An automotive oil departments, Wal-Mart has added deli, produce, meat and bakery departments. Wal-Mart first came here. Fig- uring out how to work with them has created advantages for some individual businesses. Now offering a full line of products and services, Wal-Mart is plenty of room for parking... not only for cars from places like California and New Jersey, but from Iowa.

Personality Profile

Who: John Wills

Occupation: Project Coordinator, Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, a program supported by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds from the DNR with a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Career Change: Soon to be the Loess Hills Alliance Coordinator in Oakland, Iowa, in conjunction with Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development

Career Highlights: Taking the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project to the height of respectability; the creation of incomparable conservation easements in Dickinson County with wetland and upland restorations; the dramatic improvement of water quality within



the Iowa Great Lakes watershed; considerable gains in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-ups within the county.

Slogan: "Let's get one thing perfectly clear.....water."

A closer look at the Welch Lake Wetlands

By Doug Harr

DNR WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

If you've driven north on Iowa Highway 86 from its junction with U.S. Highway 71, west of Spirit Lake, you may have noticed new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) boundary signs along farmland north of the railroad crossing. These green-and-white "Waterfowl Production Area" signs mark the boundary of new lands acquired by USFWS last year.

Approximately 316 acres were purchased by USFWS, linking together nearby lands already owned by that agency or the Iowa DNR. The former Okoboji Orchards site at the south end now is owned by DNR and is called Applejack Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

At the north end lies another USFWS property with wetlands restored in 1996. This area is immediately south of DNR's Welch Lake. On the west side of Highway 86 are additional USFWS properties housing several wetland basins restored in 1998. And at the far northwest corner of these lands is a recently acquired 64-acre tract of DNR land.

This large area, now collectively called the Welch Lake Wetlands Complex, encompasses some 991 acres of public lands and waters.

Iowa DNR is manager of the entire complex, through a letter of understanding with the USFWS. While the federal agency purchases small Waterfowl Production Areas across north central Iowa,

they have agreed to let DNR conduct development and management of their lands, making better use of both agencies' time and money.

The DNR currently is developing plans to restore several more wetlands on the 316 acres of new USFWS property, completing wetland development activities begun on the rest of the complex.

Drainage engineers with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and a local private engineering firm have been secured to design a system of restoring old, drained marsh basins without causing any harm to neighboring private lands.

Once the draft is completed, agency officials will discuss with surrounding landowners any potential unknown pri-

ivate drainage tiles or other concerns that might result in wetness problems on neighboring lands. The system then will be modified to alleviate these concerns and a final plan presented to the trustees of Drainage District 26, within which the complex resides. Upon trustees' approval, work might then begin on the actual restoration work.

It is expected the entire process could take two years or more before wetland restoration might be completed. Additional work will be done to seed down all erosive lands with mixtures of grasses and prairie wildflowers, while leaving a few smaller crop fields for planting wildlife food plots. In the interim, an existing tenant will continue to farm all tillable lands.

The entire project should result in wildlife habitat, open for public hiking and other compatible, non-time, grassy uplands and restored filter for surface runoff and tile Lake below the old orchard.

Water from 4 square miles of p will be cleansed of much of its natural chemicals, resulting in a much lake. It's a project from which the Lakes watershed will benefit, and to happen to West Okoboji in year

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There are no plans to remove and sufficient larger trees may be predatory birds.

Wildlife WANDERINGS



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Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Evergreens	Size	Price
Colorado Blue Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00
Norway Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00
Black Hills Spruce.....	15-18"	\$13.00
Scotch Pine.....	15-18"	\$13.00
White Pine.....	15-18"	\$13.00
Concolor Fir.....	18-24"	\$17.00
Red Cedar.....	15-18"	\$13.00

(Deciduous and shrubs are all bare)

Deciduous	Size	Price
Green Ash.....	2-3"	\$1.00
Red Oak.....	2-3"	\$2.00
Black Walnut.....	2-3"	\$2.00
Red Maple.....	3-4"	\$2.00
Shrubs		
Cotoneaster, Centennial.....	2-3"	\$1.00
Redosier Dogwood.....	2-3"	\$1.00
Common Lilac.....	2-3"	\$1.00
American Cranberry Bush.....	2-3"	\$1.00

Make checks payable to East Pottawattamie SWCD. Deposit
Remainder due at pick up time. You will be notified when to p



"Prairie Jewels." The first in a series of
articles on Dickinson County wetlands
restoration projects.

64-28-99

Brabys BLESSINGS

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED
by
GREG DREES

During any season, they bless the land with their special significance. Now, with springtime branded into the landscape, they lend poise to the prairie, sparkling among the plains grasses like no other gems on earth. They are prairie wetlands, jewels so rich that their beauty is implausible. Look closely at them, and you will see why their restoration is truly a resurrection of treasures, why their preservation is the lifeline of our natural world.

If you are drawn to wild places, then surely wetlands are a part of your journey. Like the ducks and geese that are lured to their seductive charms, you know that wetlands are a part of a larger mystery. Whatever vestiges of wildness remain in this world, wetlands are a part of it.

The people who watch over them are also cut from a select cloth. Larry and Jean Braby, whose lives have been fashioned by their love of the outdoors, are stewards of wetlands that have enriched their affinity to the good earth.

In pristine Iowa, prairie wetlands were an important and prolific part of the landscape. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and intense agricultural practices, virtually all of our marshes fell to the tile, as popular opinion viewed wetlands as "waste areas" that could be drained and used for row crop production.

Later in this century, as common sense and science began to rediscover the virtues of wetlands as beneficial to wildlife and water quality, private and public efforts began to surface for their restoration.

In Dickinson County, the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project and Clean Water Alliance, an action group of conservation organizations and governmental agencies dedicated to protecting the Iowa Great Lakes watershed, have restored and permanently protected an impressive number of wetlands and grassy uplands within the region.

When Larry Braby was teaching biology at Pocahontas High School back in the '60's, he introduced environmental education when it was not yet chic to do so. Having grown up in the time-honored traditions of hunting and fishing along the Des Moines River near Rutland, Braby's life revolved around the natural world.

When he met his wife, Jean, they began to share many outdoor experiences. "I didn't grow up in a hunting and fishing family like Larry," Jean recalls, "but his love of the outdoors opened a whole new aspect of my life that I have come to cherish."

In 1968, he became involved in the insurance and finance business and juggled that burgeoning profession with his teaching duties until 1979, when he retired as an educator and devoted himself to business.

After buying a vacation cottage on Lake Minnewashta in 1984 and becoming integrated into the Great Lakes way of life, the Brabys began to look for land in the vicinity where "we could walk and ease into the country life," as Jean put it.

In 1990 that opportunity arose in an 80-acre parcel of farmland east of Minnewashta. After several heavy spring rains blew out the tile on the property, Braby sought the advice of the local Soil Conservation Service, now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, on how to solve the problem. "The end result was that our land was the first to be enrolled into the wetlands program under the IGL Water Quality Project," explained Braby. "It became economically feasible for us to realize a marvelous wetland and

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A natural crusader moves on

08-14-99

• After improving the water quality within the Iowa Great Lakes watershed, John Wills has accepted an even greater challenge—to help preserve the Loess Hills of western Iowa.

By Greg Drees
PUBLISHER

His work has been a labor of love, and as he moves on this week to pursue even greater environmental challenges, John Wills' legacy will be marked in the wetlands and uplands of Dickinson County. For the past six and a half years, as head of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, Wills has crusaded to improve the regional watershed through the wise use of natural resources. Next week Wills will be heading to work from his new home in Avoca, Iowa, as the newly created coordinator of the Loess Hills Alliance. The move is a bittersweet one for Wills, who built strong friendships and a distinctive conservation ethic while he was here.

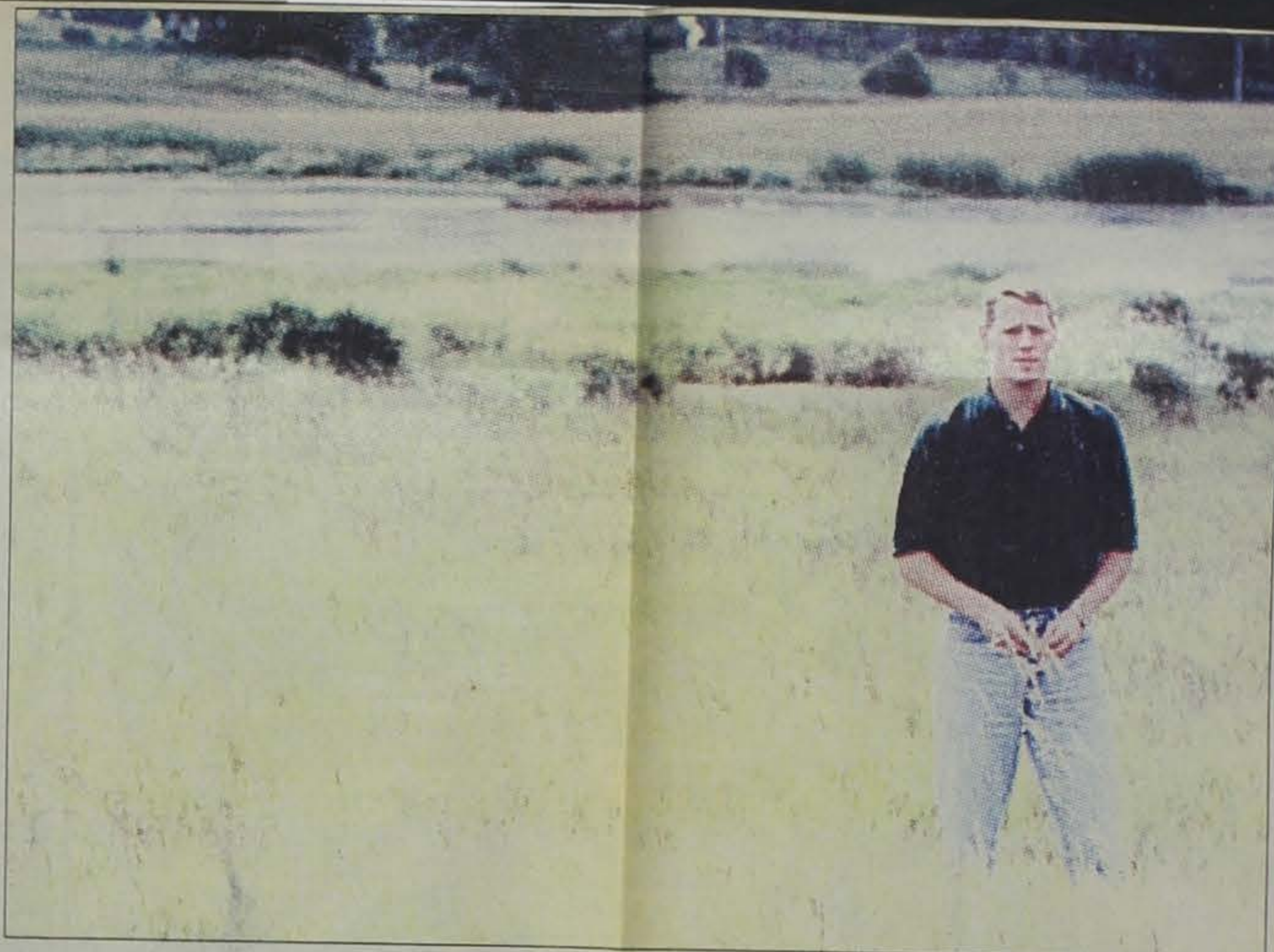
A native of Sibley, Wills spent a great deal of time in the Lakes Area and nurtured an early affinity for the region. "Okoboji and Spirit Lake were like a second home for me at a young age," he recalls. "I began to pursue hunting and fishing and other outdoor interests, so the lakes held a natural attraction for me."

Buoyed by a growing fascination for the natural world and influenced by such mentors as DNR wildlife biologist Doug Harr, Wills pursued a degree in environmental studies at ILCC and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in biology at Northwestern College in Orange

Resources Conservation Service and a local private engineering firm have been secured to design a system of restoring old, drained marsh basins without causing any harm to neighboring private lands.

Once the draft is completed, agency officials will discuss with surrounding landowners any potential unknown private drainage tiles or other concerns that might result in wetness problems on neighboring lands. The system then will be modified to alleviate these concerns and a final plan presented to the trustees of Drainage District 26, within which the complex resides. Upon trustees' approval, work might then begin on the actual restoration work.

It is expected the entire process could take two years or more before wetland restoration might be completed. Additional work will be done to seed down all erosive lands with mixtures of grasses and prairie wildflowers, while leaving a few smaller crop fields for planting wildlife food plots. In the interim, an existing tenant will continue to farm all tillable lands.



John Wills, who spent the last six and a half years as coordinator of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project, stands near one of the many wetlands he helped restore.

PHOTO BY GREG DREES

City. Armed with knowledge of life and physical sciences as well as chemistry, he entertained thoughts of teaching in the environmental field, but abandoned that idea after some soul searching.

"The environmental field is a tough one to crack," Wills explained, "and I spent three years as a microbiologist for a swine vaccine company in Sioux Center, wishing all the while for a chance to work outdoors." That opportunity arose when he was asked to interview with the Iowa Department of Agriculture Land Stewardship, a division of the Soil Conservation Service in Spirit Lake. Word had already spread through conservation circles that Wills had foresight and a flair for getting things done.

Wills was hired in May 1993 as coordinator of the IGLCWP, a watershed pursuit that had begun two years earlier that had gotten off to an ambitious start but had lost momentum. Wills was at the right place at the right

time, returning to a place of endearment in a job custom fit for his enthusiasm and expertise.

Within six months Wills had acclimated himself to the county and organized a list of priorities that defined the sub-watersheds he thought could be substantially improved. Wills quickly earned a reputation as an astute grant writer, enabling the IGLCWP to operate efficiently. He educated private landowners on the benefits of wise land use practices and began to establish conservation easements on critical watershed parcels. His ability to restore wetlands with native grass upland buffers became his trademark. Wills' work on private lands, coupled with aggressive public wetland restorations by the DNR and other conservation agencies brought distinction to Dickinson County.

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This large area, now collectively called the Welch Lake Wetlands Complex, encompasses some 91 acres of public lands and waters. Iowa DNR is manager of the entire complex, through a letter of understanding with the USFWS. es small Waterfowl Production

Wildlife
ANDERINGS

Retired; yet full of resources

08-18-99 by Greg Drees
PUBLISHER

He has walked up the steps of the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery every morning at 7:20 for 41 years, and when he does so tomorrow morning it will be for the last time. Wally Jorgensen's career with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources has been a long and distinguished one, and when he steps down as the hatchery

biologist on Thursday the state will be losing its longest tenured fisheries technician and one of its finest individuals.

Born and raised on a farm near Clarion in central Iowa, Jorgensen was influenced at an early age by a family whose interests and livelihood revolved around natural resources. So it was no wonder that when an uncle who worked for the Conservation Commission urged him to

pursue work in that direction that Jorgensen responded with conviction. The district supervisor from the Spirit Lake fisheries management office visited Jorgensen in 1958, to encourage him to take a Labor 1 position at the hatchery. Already married two years to his wife Sherry and settled in a machinist job in Clarion, Jorgensen struggled with the decision to uproot his young family. "In

my heart I felt it would be the right move," he recalls, "but they couldn't even promise full-time employment." Nevertheless, the 21-year-old Jorgensen rented a U-Haul, packed up his entire possessions and, with the blessing of his bride and in the company of his newborn

JORGENSEN

Continued on Page 2A

JORGENSEN

Continued from Page 1A

son, Brian, moved to Spirit Lake to take an \$8-a-day job that he dreamed would develop into a career. The gamble, and the aspiration, would pay off.

One year later, Jorgensen was on the Conservation Commission's permanent payroll and beginning to feel comfortable with his decision. When a foreman's position at the hatchery opened in 1965, he applied for and was granted the job, further enhancing his confidence. However, armed with only a high school diploma, Jorgensen grew somewhat apprehensive about the Commission's growing expectancy upon its applicants for secondary education skills. The state, viewing Jorgensen's enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge, began to send him to different states to attend a wide variety of classes taught by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Academy, providing the in-service training that he would need to advance in his career. "I was very fortunate in that respect," Jorgensen recalled, "because the state paid the bill to further my education and I was able to enhance my livelihood without the formal degrees that are mandatory today."

A further advancement came in 1968 when Jorgensen was promoted to a supervisor capacity in the management team of the hatchery. Five years later, his dream of becoming a managing biologist came true when he was named to head the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery. His entire career has been spent there, which is also unusual among DNR employees. "I have loved the Iowa Great Lakes Area since I first laid eyes upon it," Jorgensen recently said, "and I have been blessed to spend more than 40 years here working and living in a special environment."

Four decades in the same surroundings can lend itself to some astute observations, and Jorgensen has seen his share of changes, both within the DNR and the state of natural resources in the Iowa Great Lakes Region. Some things, however, have remained remarkably the same. "For instance, the gathering of walleye eggs is basically the same today," he said. "We have increased the percentage of the hatch, but still the fish are collected in gill nets. The system has been refined, but few changes have occurred over the years."

The most dramatic changes that have occurred over the years? "The construction of the new fish hatchery in 1963 and the conversion from live minnows to dry food in the feeding of muskie and walleye stock," Jorgensen said. The latter is a process that he promoted in the '80s as a much less expensive alternative for the state's hatcheries. Jorgensen published a paper on the process and delivered it in a speech at a national symposium in LaCrosse, Wis. To this day, he receives letters and phone calls from fisheries departments in other states requesting details on the procedure.

As a lifelong fisherman and hunter, Jorgensen has also witnessed firsthand the condition of the regional environment over the years. "We have been successful enough in our programs to maintain good fisheries within the Iowa Great Lakes over the years," he commented. "Conditions are often cyclical, and there have been some ups and downs, but for the most part our lakes are as productive today as they were 40 years ago."

From an environmental standpoint, Jorgensen feels equally as encouraged. "In the last 15 years we have seen a resurgence of interest in the health of our natural surroundings," he said, "and interest in such things as the protection of our Great Lakes watershed is at an all time high."

As an outdoorsman, he has experienced the evolution that a lot of years in field and stream yield to a person. "I take more time now to appreciate the aesthetic values of being outdoors," he said, "because we all reach different plateaus in the experience of the natural world."

And how will he spend his time in retirement? "I'll hunt and fish more, of course, but I also look forward to spending more time with my family—my wife, children and grandchildren," he said. Jorgensen is not a man to stand around and watch the world go by. As a longtime runner, it is not in his nature. He will also continue to be active in the community, including his role as fire chief in Spirit Lake.

And perhaps he will walk up the stairs at the fish hatchery again, this time as a visitor, and probably a little later in the morning.



DNR fisheries biologist Wally Jorgensen retires tomorrow after 41 years of service.

PHOTO BY GREG DREES

Personality Profile

Who: Wally Jorgensen

Home: Spirit Lake, IA

Occupation: Soon to be retired fisheries biologist, DNR, 41 years of service.

Family: Wife Sherry; Children: son Brian; daughter Becky Rodawig and her children Olivia and Alexa.

Career accomplishments: The maintenance and progression of the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery as the premier fish-raising station in the state, as well as a place of education in fisheries procedures for youngsters and adults; the introduction of the dry feeding method for muskie and walleye brood stocks; assistance to the Washington State Department of Wildlife in the education of gathering of walleyes for reproductive methods.

Honors: Employee of the Month in 1985, selected among all state bureau employees; member of the Dickinson County Historical Society board of directors; 35 years of service with the Spirit Lake fire department, the last six years as chief; appointed by DNR director Larry Wilson to the board of the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary District; four year zone chairman for Ducks Unlimited in northwest Iowa.

Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, running.



THROUGH THE YEARS

Wally Jorgensen's career with the DNR has spanned four decades.



Retired; yet full

08-18-99 by Greg Drees
PUBLISHER

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ball. He was a member of the USD football and track teams.

Sharing high school physical education duties will be Abby Goodlaxson. She will also be head volleyball and assistant girls basketball coach. Captain of the Morningside college girls basketball team this past year, she is from Emmetsburg.

Lori Stoltenberg has been an Okoboji Middle School special education aid for some time while she completed her degree at Buena

JORGENSEN

Continued from Page 1A

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As a lifelong fisherman and hunter, Jorgensen has also witnessed firsthand the condition of the regional environment over the years. "We have been successful enough in our programs to maintain good fisheries within the Iowa Great Lakes over the years," he commented. "Conditions are often cyclical, and there have been some ups and downs, but for the most part our lakes are as productive today as they were 40 years ago."

From an environmental standpoint, Jorgensen feels equally as encouraged. "In the last 15 years we have seen a resurgence of interest in the health of our natural surroundings," he said, "and interest in such things as the protection of our Great Lakes watershed is at an all time high."

As an outdoorsman, he has experienced the evolution that a lot of years in field and stream yield to a person. "I take more time now to appreciate the aesthetic values of being outdoors," he said, "because we all reach different plateaus in the experience of the natural world."

And how will he spend his time in retirement? "I'll hunt and fish more, of course, but I also look forward to spending more time with my family—my wife, children and grandchildren," he said. Jorgensen is not a man to stand around and watch the world go by. As a longtime runner, it is not in



DNR fisheries biologist Wally Jorgensen re



PHOTO BY GREG DREES

Picture perfect milestone

Corbet Butler of Spirit Lake was awarded top honors in the Pre-K through 8th grade category of the All Iowa Arts Contest: A Conservation Farm is a Thing of Beauty. Butler won \$100 for a photo display of Duane and Esthela Wheeler's "High Grove and Oakdale" farm by Peterson, Iowa where Butler's grandfather, Richard Kracht, works. The photos were on display at the Agricultural Building gazebo at the Iowa State Fair on August 18. The contest was sponsored by the Conservation Milestones Campaign with the assistance of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs in recognition of \$100 million in state funds that have been used for conservation on private lands and matched dollar for dollar by private landowners. Conservation Milestones at the Millennium is a celebration of the conservation efforts of Iowa's private land owners and the many local, state, and national agencies which support their work. Butler's contest entry was in Region I, which covered 19 northwest Iowa counties.

Retired; yet full

08-18-99 by Greg Drees
PUBLISHER

He has walked up the steps of the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery every morning at 7:20 for 41 years, and when he does so tomorrow morning it will be for the last time. Wally Jorgensen's career with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources has been a long and distinguished one, and when he steps down as the hatchery

biologist on Thursday the state will be losing its longest tenured fisheries technician and one of its finest individuals.

Born and raised on a farm near Clarion in central Iowa, Jorgensen was influenced at an early age by a family whose interests and livelihood revolved around natural resources. So it was no wonder that when an uncle who worked for the Conservation Commission urged him to

pursue Jorge The Lake Jorge take Alree Sheri Clari decis

ball. He was a member of the USD football and track teams.

Sharing high school physical education duties will be Abby Goodlaxson. She will also be head volleyball and assistant girls basketball coach. Captain of the Morningside college girls basketball team this past year, she is from Emmetsburg.

Lori Stoltenberg has been an Okoboji Middle School special education aid for some time while she completed her degree at Buena

JORGENSEN

Continued from Page 1A

son, Brian, moved to Spirit Lake to take an \$8-a-day job that he dreamed would develop into a career. The gamble, and the aspiration, would pay off.

One year later, Jorgensen was on the Conservation Commission's permanent payroll and beginning to feel comfortable with his decision. When a foreman's position at the hatchery opened in 1965, he applied for and was granted the job, further enhancing his confidence. However, armed with only a high school diploma, Jorgensen grew somewhat apprehensive about the Commission's growing expectancy upon its applicants for secondary education skills. The state, viewing Jorgensen's enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge, began to send him to different states to attend a wide variety of classes taught by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Academy, providing the in-service training that he would need to advance in his career. "I was very fortunate in that respect," Jorgensen recalled, "because the state paid the bill to further my education and I was able to enhance my livelihood without the formal degrees that are mandatory today."

A further advancement came in 1968 when Jorgensen was promoted to a supervisor capacity in the management team of the hatchery. Five years later, his dream of becoming a managing biologist came true when he was named to head the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery. His entire career has been spent there, which is also unusual among DNR employees. "I have loved the Iowa Great Lakes Area since I first laid eyes upon it," Jorgensen recently said, "and I have been blessed to spend more than 40 years here working and living in a special environment."

Four decades in the same surroundings can lend itself to some astute observations, and Jorgensen has seen his share of changes, both within the DNR and the state of natural resources in the Iowa Great Lakes Region. Some things, however, have remained remarkably the same. "For instance, the gathering of walleye eggs is basically the same today," he said. "We have increased the percentage of the hatch, but still the fish are collected in gill nets. The system has been refined, but few changes have occurred over the years."

The most dramatic changes that have occurred over the years? "The construction of the new fish

stium in LaCrosse, Wisc. To this day, he receives letters and phone calls from fisheries departments in other states requesting details on the procedure.

As a lifelong fisherman and hunter, Jorgensen has also witnessed firsthand the condition of the regional environment over the years. "We have been successful enough in our programs to maintain good fisheries within the Iowa Great Lakes over the years," he commented. "Conditions are often cyclical, and there have been some ups and downs, but for the most part our lakes are as productive today as they were 40 years ago."

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DNR fisheries biologist Wally Jorgensen re



DNR Officer Tim Waltz talks tall grass prairie

On Sept. 17, the entire sixth grade class of the Spirit Lake Middle School participated in the annual outdoor classroom event sponsored by the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District at Kettletons Hogsback. Students took part in activities and information gathering at seven different stations throughout the day. Here DNR officer Tim Waltz explains to a group of students the differences between various tall prairie grasses growing in the area. (photo by Mike Jordan)



Picture perfect milestone
Corbet Butler of Spirit Lake was awarded
first place in the Pre-K through 8th grade cate

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGN

The USDA, Rural Utilities Service has received an application from Clay Regional Water. The proposed project consists of a distribution system and tower serving parts of northeast Dickinson County (as shown on the map), using water from the Clear Lake. The project passes through several important farmland, wetland, and areas where there will be no direct conversion due to construction.

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Service has assessed the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and determined that the proposal will not have a significant effect on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be required. One of the findings of this determination is that the proposed project will not require the construction of an elevated tank. The area will be returned to its original condition and avoid or minimize any adverse environmental impacts. The applicant will be required to incorporate the following into the proposed project's design.

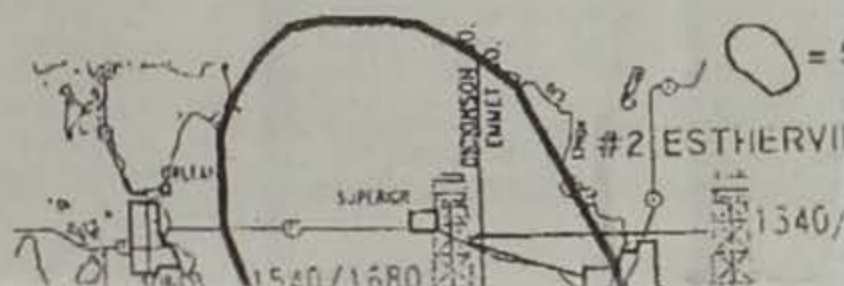
Floodplain areas have been identified. A policy will be established to prevent any new construction in floodplains identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map.

Potential wetlands have been identified. If a new service is to be provided on a previously undeveloped parcel/lot which is identified as a potential wetland, the applicant will be asked to make an on site visit and wetland determination. If the site is a wetland, any action that plans to convert a wetland to a different use by the date of this publication will result in denial of water use. The date of this publication will result in denial of water use if the site is a wetland. The date of this publication will result in denial of water use if the site is a wetland.

Threatened plant species have been identified in the area. Copies of the Environmental Assessment can be reviewed at the following address:

USDA Rural Development Field Office
1100B 12th Street SW,
LeMars, IA. 51031.

For further information, Please contact
CDM Mitchell J. Sabin at (712) 541-1111.
A general location map of the proposal is shown on the next page.



Lawmakers listen to woes of local farmers

By DORIS WELLE
STAFF WRITER

Dennis Hastert visited Iowa Thursday.

It was his first visit here since being elected Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives. He conducted an agricultural round table with U.S. Rep. Tom Latham (R-Alexander) at the Lyle Overmiller farm southeast of Milford.

Clay and Dickinson County farmers, ag lenders and business representatives sat down under a shade tree with

two years we have appropriated \$500 million for export enhancement. The Administration hasn't used it. It is very, very frustrating."

Latham added, "I am on the appropriations committee. We worked to be sure those funds were there. The final result, however, is that the Administration has not used the tools Congress gave it."

Joe Simington of Milford voiced concern about the diminishing free enterprise system. "You will see one independent grocery store and one independent pharmacy in Milford as you pass through on your way to the lakes tonight. Free enterprise is losing. The bundling system scares me. Monsanto is an example. And in the long run the consumer is not benefiting either."

Hastert and Latham voiced concern about the corporate upsizing. They agreed with both on the need for congressional hearings on monopolies. "But we need to enforce the laws already on the books first and then look at passing a law forbidding packers to produce. The justice department, our enforcement agency, is not doing its job," Latham emphasized.

Jim Christensen pursued the matter. "The system we are seeing built is a repeat of history. Serfdom is returning. Soon we farmers will be like the serfs were. Large corporations will tell us what chemicals and types of seed to use, how to plant it and we won't be able to free-market our products. Something must be done," he emphasized.

Steve Hanson from Terril voiced his concern with the timing. "I realize politics takes a long time. But we farmers don't have deep pockets to wait for the government to do something."

-Steve Hanson,
Terril Farmer

"I realize politics takes a long time. But we farmers don't have deep pockets to wait for the government to do something."

Hastert and Latham near a field of corn that is turning brown prematurely due to lack of rain. But the lack of moisture was not the topic of conversation.

Monopolies, marketing strategy and enforcement of the law were key issues addressed to the congressmen by the members of the round table discussion.

Hastert told them, "I realize most farmers want government off their backs so they can produce but the markets have to be there. We've got lots of competition south of us. Brazil and Argentina are able to produce our products and that really concerns me."

"Times are hard but people need food. Perhaps because we haven't been as aggressive in our marketing so others got their foot in the door," the Speaker said.

Bill Northey of Spirit Lake asked if more money would be made available for market assistance. Hastert replied, "We've got the money. Over the past



Patty Judge to speak

The Iowa Secretary of Agriculture will be the featured speaker at the annual Farm Expo and Field Day on Wednesday, Sept. 8 (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.), at the Iowa Lakes Community College Farm Laboratory, located five miles west of Emmetsburg on U.S. Highway 18.

Patty Judge is slated to speak shortly after noon. Also, the college is honoring alumni

from the agricultural programs at college. Other dignitaries and friends of the college will be in attendance as well.

The event begins at 10 a.m. and a free lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. Lunch and event sponsors include: Ag Alumni of Iowa Lakes; Ag Processing, Inc.; Rhone Poulenc Agrow; Brenton Bank; Sioux Nations Ag Center; J.B. Mertz and Sons; Ag Partners, ILLC, Joe

Neary Sr. Veterinary Royal Bui Iowa; W Company; Cenex lawn; and Several will be featured at the event. Attendance is free. The day ends at 8:30 a.m.

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Soil & Water District meet at 7:30 district office. agenda includes member minutes, reviewing the applications, Watershed Tree Sale and other meeting.

LATHAM

Continued on Page 2A

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The USDA, Rural Utilities Service has received an application for financial assistance from Clay Regional Water. The proposed project consists of a rural water distribution system and tower serving parts of northeast Dickinson and northwest Emmet Counties (as shown on the map), using water from the City of Estherville. The project passes through several important farmland, wetland, and floodplain areas, however there will be no direct conversion due to construction.

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Rural Utilities Service has assessed the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and has determined that the proposal will not have a significant effect on the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. The basis of this determination is that the proposed project will consist of buried water lines and an elevated tank. The area will be returned to its original condition. In order to avoid or minimize any adverse environmental impacts, the Rural Utilities Service will require the applicant to incorporate the following mitigation measures into the proposed project's design.

Floodplain areas have been identified. A policy will be established to deny water service to any new construction in floodplains identified on the environmental map.

Potential wetlands have been identified. If a new service is requested on a previously undeveloped parcel/lot which is identified as a potential wetland, NRCS will be asked to make an on site visit and wetland determination. If NRCS determines the site is a wetland, any action that plans to convert a wetland or converts a wetland after the date of this publication will result in denial of water service, unless the conversion of the wetland is authorized by a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit.

Threatened plant species have been identified in the area. These will be avoided. Copies of the Environmental Assessment can be reviewed at the

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For further information, Please contact:
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**DORIS WELLE
STAFF WRITER**
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Heather Raveling / DCN

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C event

uture Farmers of America students who have been invited to attend a soil judging workshop hosted jointly by the college and the Palo Alto IRCS. Participants are invited to stay after the workshop to join in the expo and field day.

For more information, contact the Iowa Lakes Community College Farm, 4145 360th St., Emmetsburg, IA 50536, or call (712) 852-3027.

DSWC to meet

The Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners will meet at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 15 in the District office.

The tentative agenda includes approving the September minutes, Treasurer's report, reviewing the mail, cost-sharing applications, receiving NRSC & Watershed Project reports, 1999 Tree Sale and planning the November meeting.

Laboratory, located five miles west of Emmetsburg on U.S. Highway 18.

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sponsors include: Ag Alumni of Iowa Lakes; Ag Processing, Inc.; Rhone Poulenc Agrow; Brenton Bank; Sioux Nations Ag Center; J.B. Mertz and Sons; Ag Partners, ILLC, Joe

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Several agriculture exhibits will be featured throughout the event. Attendees will be eligible to register for door prizes.

The day will start earlier (8:30 a.m.) for more than 100

7-31-99

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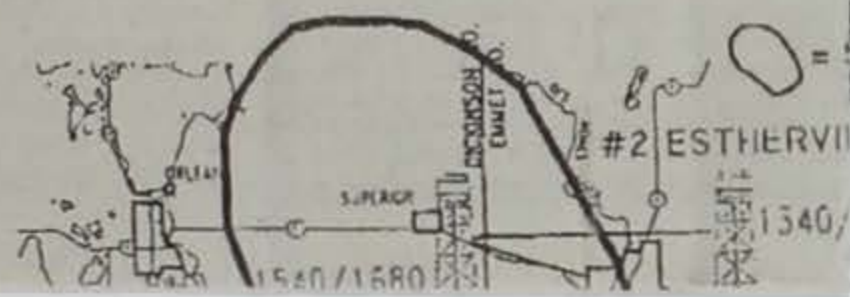
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By DORIS WELLE
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09-08-99 Patty Judge to speak at ILCC event

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Several agriculture exhibits will be featured throughout the event. Attendees will be eligible to register for door prizes.

The day will start earlier (8:30 a.m.) for more than 100

Future Farmers of America students who have been invited to attend a soil judging workshop hosted jointly by the college and the Palo Alto NRCS. Participants are invited to stay after the workshop to join in the expo and field day.

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Loess Hills Alliance coordinator begins work

by Joyce Bohnker

The Loess Hills. We've heard their story. How the wind formed them centuries ago, heaping layer after layer of rich loess soil that was left behind on the river bottoms after the glaciers retreated to the north. Most of us drive through the hills on a regular basis, only rarely stopping to appreciate their unique beauty.

John Wells is the new Loess Hills Alliance Coordinator. It is his job to make us all start appreciating them a bit more often. Appreciate them enough to make sure they don't just vanish.

As geology books tell us, there is only one other spot on the globe where nature formed these mounds of rich loess soil and that is in China. As Wells points out, we can be pretty sure that not many steps are being taken to preserve those hills. So it may be up to Iowans to ensure that at least one such formation remains in the world.

Wells hopes to do just that, but he also emphasizes that he hopes to do it in an economically viable way. "The mission of the alliance is to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of the Loess Hills and ensure economic viability," he said.

Wells began his new job in August. He is working in a seven county area, including Harrison and West Pottawatomie to coordinate the day to day activities of the alliance. The Iowa Legislature set into law and funded the formation of the alliance. It was set up for one year, but will most likely continue for more.

Wells has several projects already in the works. He plans to have a regular newsletter sent to every landowner in the Loess Hills. That mailing list includes 6,500 people. He will also include on his circulation list others who have indicated an interest in his mission.

He is planning a logo contest

with a \$500 prize to the winner. He is hiring a part time media specialist who will specialize in news releases and public relations projects. Wells is also putting together a brochure on the Loess Hills.

He is hoping to put together a land protection packet, listing every program from every possible agency that can assist farmers looking for economic ways to preserve their land.

"I'm hoping farmers will be able to pick up a brochure and find a program to fit their needs and call that agency," Wells said.

His first priority in his new position is to educate people. He believes that once people understand the mission of the alliance and that its purpose is not to prevent people from farming their land, he will gain a lot of support and cooperation.

He hopes to be able, with the grant money from the state, to provide all seven Soil and Water Conservation Districts within the alliance with enough money to hire a part time employee. The employee's job would be to contact Loess Hills landowners and work with them to implement whole farm plans.

"A whole farm plan is a step higher than compliance," he said. "It would involve pasture management, wildlife, timber, native grasses and more, things the districts don't have time to do right now."

Iowa Envirothon:

The following is a sample question from the aquatic portion of the Iowa Envirothon test. Do you know the correct answer? If not, the answers are on page 16.

4. Which best describes an aquifer?

- It is an underground lake where water moves freely and rapidly.
- A geographic area in which all the water drains to the lowest point in the landscape.
- An underground area that contains and yields enough water for wells.
- A surface body of water that supplies drinking water.

Wells grew up in Northwest Iowa and received a degree in biology from Northwestern College in Orange City. Before accepting his new position, he was with the Iowa Great Lakes Project in Spirit Lake.

He says he drove through the Loess Hills often as a child and later came to appreciate them, especially after he studied their origins. "They grow on you," he added.

When he talks about preserving the hills, Wells admits that the textbook answer that there are only two of them in the world may not be enough to impress people of the need to preserve them.

"The more real answer," he said, "is go out and take a look at them for yourself. Drive through them, take a walk. They really are one of a kind."

He emphasizes repeatedly though that his mission is not to save the hills on the back of the farmers and landowners who depend on them for their income. "Farmers have to be able to make money. We want a happy medium where everyone wins. The land is protected and the farmers make money."

Wells is enjoying his work and looking forward to meeting more people as he gets to know the area better. "I've been here more than two months and I've had no bad days on the job," he says.



John Wells

Where Your Food Dollar Goes

Advertising	\$.04
Transportation	\$.04
Repairs & depreciation	\$.05
Fuel, electricity, rent	\$.07
Packaging	\$.085
Interest, taxes, other	\$.105
Labor	\$.38
Farmers & ranchers	\$.23

In Spirit Lake and Tiffin.

Also, we would like to thank Mindy Baker and the Dickinson County News for stopping out and spending some time with us on such a beautiful day.

Maxine Butler,
State Secretary

wetland protection. The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance and the Department of Natural Resources — to name just two — have teamed to restore these prairie jewels in great numbers, which has dramatically improved the watershed and the water quality in area lakes.

But trouble looms on the horizon. On Aug. 31, Doug Harr of the DNR held a meeting with area landowners and tenants of Drainage District 21. He explained how the construction of wetlands on the Pottoff Tract of Hales Slough Wetlands Complex would proceed in compliance with a Wetlands Reserve Project (WRP) contract. Two landowners with property downstream from the project were quite vocal in their objections. Josephine Gruhn,

boundaries of the Pottoff tract and also the other half of the Sandbar Slough, contended that the WRP project diminish the effectiveness of Sandbar Slough by diverting water to the new wetlands. She expressed a desire to see the entire area with wildflowers and trees.

Both Gruhn's and Estes' contentions, a probably based on honest beliefs, are not erroneous. It is a well documented fact that a drainage system into a lake or chain of best served by guarding the watershed with system with as many purifying wetlands as possible. A simple observation of the

Watershed

and on the west boundary of the watershed, also half of the existing watershed. It is contended that the latter is enough to support the Big Spirit River and that the Pottoff tract and the Sandbar Slough should be added to her watershed. The additional area would be established by the State Secretary, Maxine Butler, and on the southwest boundary of the Pottoff tract and also the other half of the Sandbar Slough, contended that the WRP project diminish the effectiveness of Sandbar Slough by diverting water to the new wetlands. She expressed a desire to see the entire area with wildflowers and trees.

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Loess Hills Allia

Page 12

305 McKenzie Ave., Suite 1, Cou

by Joyce Bohnker

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Maaske brings soil,



Rich Maaske is the urban coordinator for southwest Iowa. He brings his knowledge of conservation to the city.

Iowa Envirothon

The following question is a sample forestry question from the Iowa Envirothon competition. Do you know the answer? Answers are on page 16.

3. Which of the following are benefits of riparian buffers?
- a. They reduce erosion
 - b. They improve fisheries habitat.
 - c. They improve water infiltration.
 - d. All of the above are benefits.
 - e. a and c are benefits.

Native Grass Seeds - Wildflowers - Custom Seed Cleaning

County SWCD to meet Thursday

The monthly meeting of the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District will be held 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 19, in the district office.

The tentative agenda includes approval of July minutes, the treasurer's report, bills, and discussion of NRCS watershed project reports.

Many made outdoor classroom a success

To the editor:

The Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and the Natural Resources Conservation Service would like to take this opportunity to thank the participants of the 1999 Dickinson County Sixth Grade Outdoor Classroom which was held Sept. 16 at the Kettleon-Hogsback Area.

Our presenters and their programmers were: Jane Shuttleworth and Hank Miguel of the Iowa Lakeside Lab, water quality testing; Barbara Tagami, Dickinson County Conservation Board and Iowa Lakeside Lab, farm wildlife; Linda Hinshaw, orphaned and injured wildlife; Tim Waltz and Maury Muhm, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, nature trail; Doug Harr, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, waterfowl; Tom Koster, assistant commissioner, back-

yard conservation; Tim Moran, NRCS; Paula Koster, native grasses and forestry; and Carroll Oskvig, NRCS, soils.

We would like to issue a special thank you to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for their willingness to help us with the outdoor classroom. We also appreciate the cooperation of the teachers, students and school districts of Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake and Terril.

Also, we would like to thank Mindy Baker and the Dickinson County News for stopping out and spending some time with us on such a beautiful day.

Maxine Butler,
State Secretary

wetland protection. The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance and the Department of Natural Resources — to name just two — have teamed to restore these prairie jewels in great numbers, which has dramatically improved the watershed and the water quality in area lakes.

But trouble looms on the horizon. On Aug. 31, Doug Harr of the DNR held a meeting with area landowners and tenants of Drainage District 21. He explained how the construction of wetlands on the Pottoff Tract of Hales Slough Wetlands Complex would proceed in compliance with a Wetlands Reserve Project (WRP) contract. Two landowners with property downstream from the project were quite vocal in their objections. Josephine Gruhn,

boundaries of the Pottoff tract and also the other half of the Sandbar Slough, contended that the WRP project diminish the effectiveness of Sandbar Slough by diverting water to the new wetlands. She expressed a desire to see the entire area with wildflowers and trees.

Both Gruhn's and Estes' contentions, probably based on honest beliefs, are not erroneous. It is a well documented fact that a drainage system into a lake or stream is best served by guarding the watershed with as many purifying wetlands as possible. A simple observation of the lay of



Watershed

and on the west boundary of the Pottoff tract and also half of the existing Sandbar Slough. She contended that the latter is enough to provide for the needs of the area.

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Improving the watershed is a goal of the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District. The district is working to improve the watershed by restoring wetlands and protecting the water quality in area lakes.

by Joyce Bohnker

The Loess Hills. We've heard their story. How the wind formed them centuries ago, heaping layer after layer of rich loess soil that was left behind on the river bottoms after the glaciers retreated to the north.

Most of us drive through the hills on a regular basis, only rarely stopping to appreciate their unique beauty.

John Wells is the new Loess Hills Alliance Coordinator. It is his job to make us all start appreciating them a bit more often. Appreciate them enough to make sure they don't just vanish.

As geology books tell us, there is only one other spot on the globe where nature formed these mounds of rich loess soil and that is in China. As Wells points out, we can be pretty sure that not many steps are being taken to preserve those hills. So it may be up to Iowans to ensure that at least one such formation remains in the world.

Wells hopes to do just that, but he also emphasizes that he hopes to do it in an economically viable way. "The mission of the alliance is to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of the Loess Hills and

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Rich Maaske is the urban coordinator for southwest Iowa. He brings his knowledge of conservation to the city.

Iowa Envirothon

The following question is a sample forestry question from the Envirothon competition. Do you know the answer? Answers are on page 16.

3. Which of the following are benefits of riparian buffers?

- a. They reduce erosion
- b. They improve fisheries habitat.
- c. They improve water infiltration.
- d. All of the above are benefits.
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Native Grass Seeds - Wildflowers - Custom Seed Cleaning

County SWCD to meet Thursday

The monthly meeting of the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District will be held 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 19, in the district office.

The tentative agenda includes approval of July minutes, the treasurer's report, bills, and discussion of NRCS watershed project reports.

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Drainage vote watershed event for local conservation

Dickinson County has the remarkable distinction as the home of more restored prairie wetlands than any place in Iowa. I have already written extensively about the bountiful marshes that grace this very special part of the state. So much so that my staff gives me a hard time about it, remarking something like, "How many wetlands can there be in this county?" each time I feature one.

A unique coalition of people and organizations have pooled their talents and energies into this wetland protection. The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance and the Department of Natural Resources — to name just two — have teamed to restore these prairie jewels in great numbers, which has dramatically improved the watershed and the water quality in area lakes.

But trouble looms on the horizon. On Aug. 31, Doug Harr of the DNR held a meeting with area landowners and tenants of Drainage District 21. He explained how the construction of wetlands on the Pottoff Tract of Hales Slough Wetlands Complex would proceed in compliance with a Wetlands Reserve Project (WRP) contract. Two landowners with property downstream from the project were quite vocal in their objections. Josephine Gruhn,

who owns land on the west boundary of the Pottoff tract and also half of the existing Sandbar Slough, contended that the latter is enough protec-

tion for the Big Spirit Lake watershed and that too many Canada geese would depredate her cropland if additional wetlands were established. Arlene Estes, who owns land on the west and southwest boundaries of the Pottoff tract and also the other half of the Sandbar Slough, contended that the WRP project would diminish the effectiveness of Sandbar Slough by diverting water to the new wetlands. She also expressed a desire to see the entire area planted with wildflowers and trees.

Both Gruhn's and Estes' contentions, although probably based on honest beliefs, are nonetheless erroneous. It is a well documented fact that a drainage system into a lake or chain of lakes is best served by guarding the watershed within that system with as many purifying wetlands as possible. A simple observation of the lay of the land

northeast of Big Spirit Lake shows an obvious drainage toward the lake. Any wetlands upstream of the natural drainage will add filtration advan-

tages and improve downstream water quality. In other words, we could never have enough wetlands within the Great Lakes watershed. And as for the geese — I'm afraid, Mrs. Gruhn, that they are already there. When I drove into the proposed wetlands area

from the north the other morning, a flock of Canadas rose from one of the grassland fields. The overall numbers of geese in the area, based upon DNR data, are down from past years. Concentrations from the regional flock in any specific area fluctuate due to feeding and disturbance factors. But believe me, having lived in areas with few geese, this area is blessed to have them. Their majestic flight and comforting music are the things of a healthy environment.

And Mrs. Estes, based upon the historic work of the DNR in this county, you should trust that the

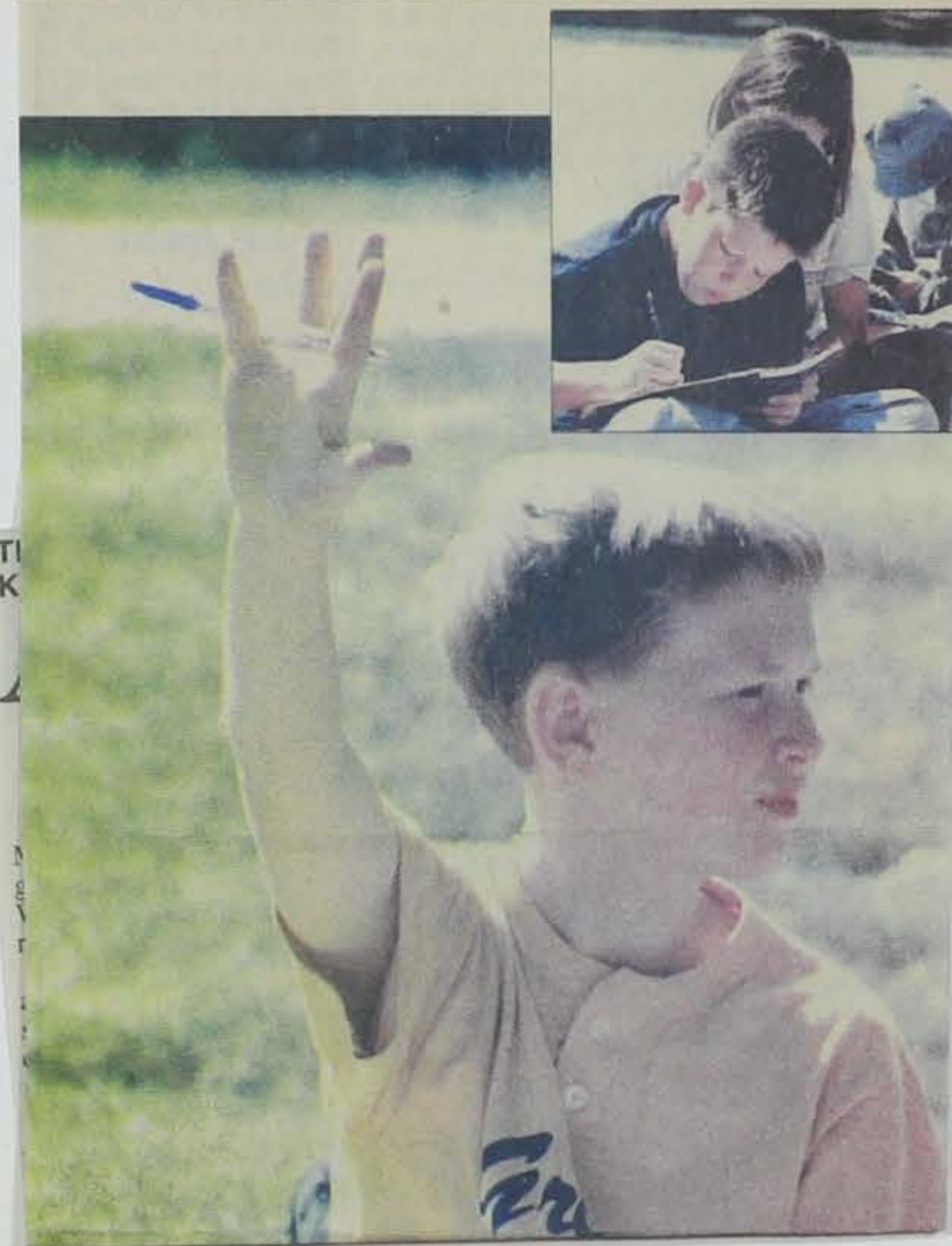
WRP project on the Pottoff tract would greatly enhance your beloved Sandbar Slough. Doug Harr has spent his entire career transforming the Dickinson County countryside into something of great beauty. Let him do his work in your neck of the woods and you will be forever grateful.

The uplands surrounding the new wetlands will thrive in a prairie environment and be a wonderful place for school children to learn about nature.

There should be absolutely no hesitation or objections to this project from landowners or, most certainly from Supervisor Goldman — whose history of good judgement in matters of natural resources may be impaired on this issue. June, this is a project that will only make more beautiful our already renowned Great Lakes Area and make our water cleaner.

Doug Harr will again present the project proposal at the Sept. 28 county supervisors' meeting, at which time they will take formal action to accept or deny a drainage district agreement. Seems to me that a strong public attendance in favor of the wetland project at this public forum would speak volumes as to how we feel about our natural places.

Greg Drees is publisher of the Dickinson County News.



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But these sixth-grade students pay attention during the Outdoor Classroom at the Kettleon-Hogsback Wildlife Management Area.

A walk on the wild side

by MINDY BAKER
FEATURE EDITOR

On Thursday, the Kettleon-Hogsback Wildlife Management Area was home to dozens of local sixth-grade school children during the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District's annual Outdoor Classroom.

"They've been holding the Outdoor Classroom for a little over 20 years," said Maxine Butler, the state secretary for the Dickinson County soil and water conservation district. "I just started in June, so this is my first one."

Butler was a legal secretary in Dickinson County

prior to accepting the job at the soil and water conservation district.

"I was looking for a change. I like the position. It is an opportunity to work with people in the Dickinson County area and with anyone who does conservation," added Butler. "This outdoor classroom is fun. For a lot of kids it is their first experience of the Kettleon-Hogsback area."

During the all-day classroom, the children study subjects such as backyard conservation, native grass,



PHOTOS BY MINDY BAKER

09-18-99

WILD SIDE

FARMERS' PLIGHT

Harvesting Ho

by DUANE WINN
EDITOR

State Sen. Dennis Sexton turned 68 last week. He's already seen enough hard times to turn his jet-black hair prematurely gray.

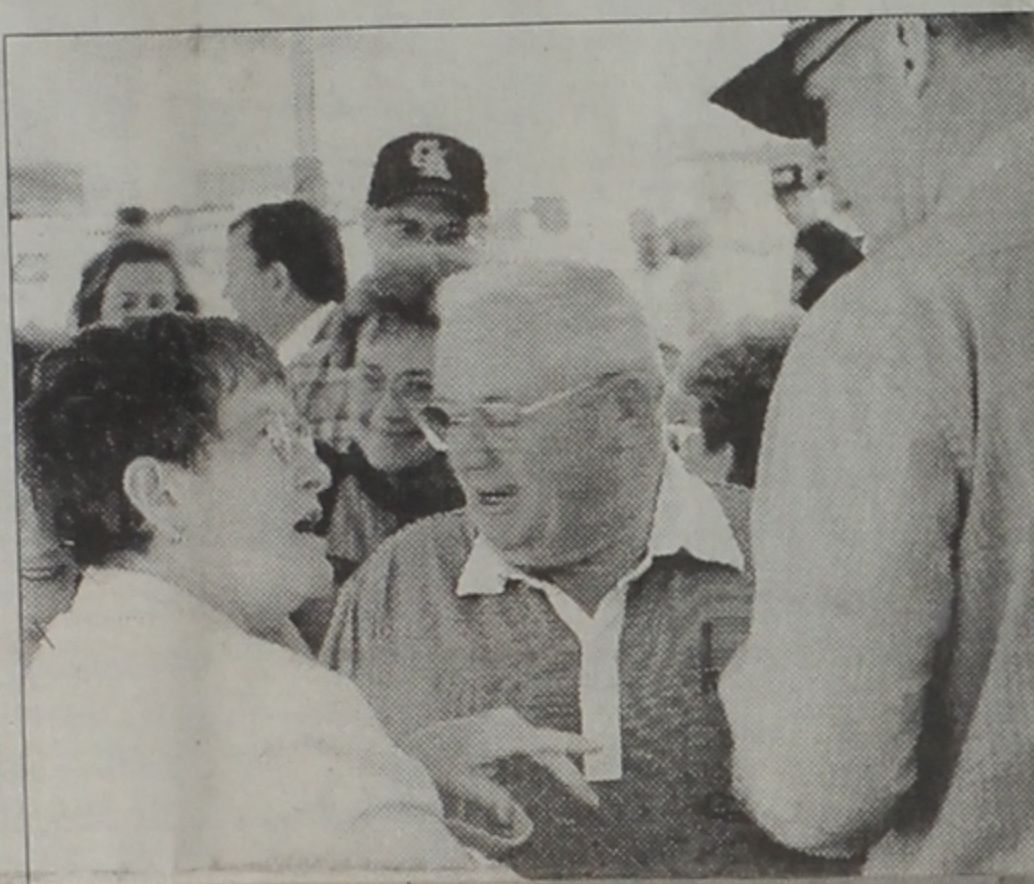
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"People come up to me and say, 'Senator, that's exactly what's happening to us now. We're going through that now. We're reliving your story.'"

Farmers are currently facing historic low prices for commodities. Metropolitan taxpayers are tiring of paying subsidies to farmers. Farmers are being blamed for odors, dust, toxins and poor water quality by an increasingly suburban population. The high cost of food produced in America, compared with the costs in poorer countries, is pushing more and more American products out

munity College in Cedar Rapids. The forums are designed to drawing farm crisis — and remind lawmakers of bickering between political parties in thing.



Sowing New Ideas

by MINDY BAKER
STAFF WRITER

The current farm crisis and identity of the family farm ideal has several different causes, and no easy cures, according to Don Hofstrand, agricultural economist for the Iowa State Extension office in Mason City.

Today's farmers face a plethora of difficulties and concerns unheard of in previous generations. There has normally been a cycle of boom and bust to farming, with an extreme low during the Great Depression, and high during the 1940's.

However, today's farmers face international competition, volatile weather factors, higher costs and lower profits.

The Freedom to Farm act that eliminated government control of farmers' yields did not create the problem. Previous to the "Freedom to Farm" act, the government controlled surplus and excess grain prices higher while additionally paying farmers to keep fields fallow.

In this way, the normal flow of the farming economy were evened out.

"In the old program we would restrict, for example, soybean production. That would force up soybean prices," stated Hofstrand.

"That would be the incentive for Brazilian farmers to expand soybean production. So they were displacing our production here."

"Then some people were saying the government is telling us

what to do, and that we should be on the free market. Then the 'Freedom to Farm' bill was introduced, and for the first two-to-three years after that there was really a shortage of grain. The prices were really very good, and the farmers said 'At last, we got the government out of things now, and things will be the way they should.' Hofstrand pointed out. "Then we moved into a period of excess production, and that's what we have now, which brings the price down."

"The same people who were talking how great 'Freedom to Farm' was at three- and four-dollar corn, are complaining at a dollar-and-a-half corn."

Hofstrand says now the discussion is whether or not to continue with no involvement, or go to a very limited involvement by the government. He points out if the government attempts to restrict production again, it would once again only help the international market.

Hofstrand isn't sure what options are left.

"There is going to be a lot of public debate. Number one, how much should we help farmers. Obviously, we don't have government payments to the stores downtown. The other question is, if we are going to do something, what are we going to do? How are we going to help someone in the long term?" Hofstrand continued.

"One of the concerns that I have about all the money we're talking about giving the farmers right now is—what are you really going to solve?"

"It's no longer a progression of making something and trying to find a buyer, but finding out what the buyer wants. When you get into the foreign market, you not only have to deal with economic instability, but also cultural differences."

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trand said.

The Dakota Growers Pasta Co-op packages pasta under their own name, packages under store-name brands, and sells their product for

NEW IDEAS

Continued on Page 11A



This farmer works into the evening harvesting soybeans on Hwy. 86 on Wednesday.

PHOTO BY MINDY BAKER

NRCS study: Conservation tillage declines

A recent survey indicates that efforts to protect soil and water resources in Iowa may be waning.

The survey, conducted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Technology Information Center shows a 12 percent decrease in total conservation tillage methods and a 25 percent drop in the use of no-till from 1997 to 1998 in Iowa. A subsequent study conducted by Monsanto, Inc., in 1999 reveals no statistical change from 1998 to 1999.

The recent surveys results are particularly disturbing because soil erosion is still considered to have the biggest negative impact on water quality in Iowa, according to the Department of Natural Resources.

As a result of the recent trend away from conservation tillage practices, a new partnership, the Iowa Residue Management Partnership, has been formed to address the concerns. IRMP members include Conservation Districts of Iowa, Inc., Conservation Technology Information Center, the Division of Soil Conservation for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Iowa DNR, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, Iowa State University, Monsanto, Inc., Novartis Crop Protection, Inc., Soil and Water Conservation Society, Inc. and the NRCS.

Survey results show that the drop in no-till farming was statewide, with 77 of the 99 counties showing a drop and 44 having a decline of 25 percent or more. There were 22 counties where no-till increased and the counties with the highest percentage of no-till acres remains in the southern portion of the state.

Overall, about 51 percent of the corn and soybeans produced in 1998 utilized conservation tillage systems with at least 30 percent of the soil covered with residues after planting in Iowa.

The goal of the IRMP is to encourage Iowa farmers to leave more residue in fields this fall by encouraging them to consider economic and environmental implications of fall tillage. The group is currently developing a producer survey to determine why producers have discontinued or

CONSERVATION TILLING

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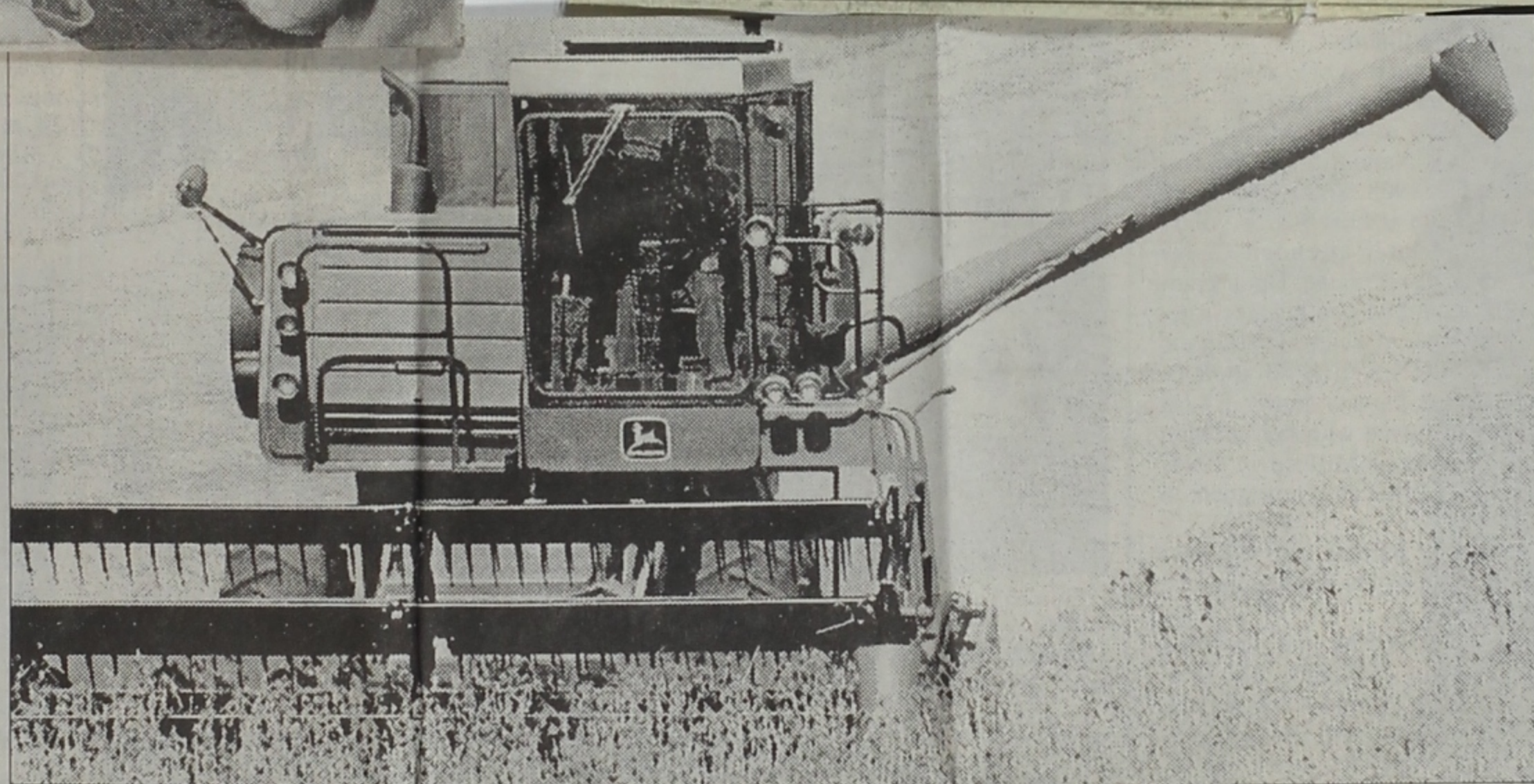


PHOTO BY GREG DREES

A GREAT BLUE HERON stands in a reflective vigil on Hales Slough.

09-11-99

Harvesting Ho

by DUANE WINN
EDITOR

State Sen. Dennis Sexton turned 38 last week. He's already seen enough hard times to turn his jet-black hair prematurely gray.

In 1986, he witnessed all his father's possessions go on the auction block.

As he travels across the state, telling fellow farmers that cautionary tale, it's an infrequent gathering indeed when one of them doesn't stop the Calhoun County farmer after this personal tale of emotional suffering.

"People come up to me and say, 'Senator, that's exactly what's happening to us now. We're going through that now. We're reliving your story.'"

Farmers are currently facing historic low prices for commodities. Metropolitan taxpayers are tiring of paying subsidies to farmers. Farmers are being blamed for odors, dust, toxins and poor water quality by an increasingly suburban population. The high cost of food produced in America, compared with the costs in poorer countries, is pushing more and more American producers out

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NEW IDEAS

Continued from Page 10A

institutional use.

"In this type of integrated system, the farmers are the owners and are involved all the way through production to the consumer," Hofstrand said. He points out that type of co-op has been popular in Minnesota and the Dakotas, but has not caught on in Iowa or Nebraska. "It's by no means a sure thing. It's big business and can fail."

Hofstrand also points out that there is help out there for someone who is willing to take on a project and lead it.

"There is a lot of assistance people can get from the extension office, from commodity organizations. The shortage is leadership. That's the key. You need a champion, someone willing to take the program and push it," Hofstrand said. "There is technical help, money, all kinds of grants. It just needs someone in the area to have an idea."

Hofstrand went on to say that previously, business used to be "If we make it—they will buy it," while now producers need to make what consumers want to buy.

"It's no longer a progression of making something and trying to find a buyer, but finding out what the buyer wants," Hofstrand said. "When you get into the foreign market, you not only have to deal with economic instability, but also cultural differences."

Hofstrand pointed out that a big difference between foreign and domestic buyers is the genetically modified grains, such as Round-up-ready soybeans.

"The genetically modified grains are accepted

here, but there is still a resistance to them overseas," he said.

Hofstrand pointed out that he doubts there will be a return to the good ol' days of farming.

"There is incredible pressure on farmers to expand," said Hofstrand. "If a farmer needs \$30,000 to live on, he needs that regardless of if he farms 500 acres or 5,000 acres. The difference is he only needs to get a profit of \$6 an acre versus \$60."

"That's one of the major reasons why farmers are continually trying to expand. But, when somebody expands, somebody else has to contract, or leave. So this pressure for expansion tends to push others out of business."

Hofstrand also pointed out that the pressure to expand produces a lucrative market for farmland leasing.

"Farmers will bid aggressively against each other on higher cash flow land. The landlord is in a pretty good position," added Hofstrand. One expansion-controlling factor, according to Hofstrand, is that banks are less likely to loan to farmers looking to expand when grain prices

are low.

"In addition, during the old days, farmers had hogs, cattle on their farm. They would use the manure to fertilize the corn, and cultivate to keep the weeds down. All a lot of things that didn't need farmers to write a check out. Now it's buy the fertilizer, buy the herbicide, write a check for all of that. The yield is higher, but so is the cost of production," he said.

The road to the future will not be easy for today's small farmers. Teamwork and leadership will be needed to take family farming into the new millennium.

"One of the concerns that I have about all the money we're talking about giving the farmers right now is—what are you really going to solve?"

-Don Hofstrand

Combining farming and conservation



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by DUANE WINN
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Economists say moderate-size farms will suffer a 42-percent drop in net income by 2002. Cash receipts over the next three years are estimated at barely above the dismal 1998 level.

But Sexton refuses to be a fatalist, although he remained mum on whether he has encouraged his two sons to follow their grandfather and father into Iowa's largest business.

"There's a lot of us farming now who went through the trial of the 1980s," he said. "We're still here. We're going to lose a few people again and it's sad. But we're going to survive this and look back on these times and say to one another, 'Well, that was tough. But we made it.'"

"That's what farmers are made of. It's what is in our hearts. We have to remember, inside of us, that the job we're doing won't earn us recognition or a plaque, but we know that we're feeding this country."

Sens. Thurman Gaskill and Jack Kibbie, along with Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Patty Judge, also served up an overwhelmingly positive message Wednesday afternoon, to go along with the generous helpings of ribs, potato salad and baked beans, at Iowa Lakes Community College's annual Farm and Expo Day near Emmetsburg.

Ever since the present farm crisis has escalated, events like these have become increasingly predominant on Gaskill and Kibbie's agenda. Both men were part of a Five-State Farm Price Crisis Forum Tuesday at Kirkwood Com-

munity College in Cedar Rapids.

The forums are designed to draw national attention to the ongoing farm crisis — and remind lawmakers, even themselves, that bickering between political parties isn't going to accomplish anything.



PHOTOS BY DUANE WINN

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Patty Judge, (above and right) on Wednesday, Sept. 8 in Emmetsburg, is shown talking to area farmers in bringing a message of hope.

lawmakers, long used to looking to the federal government for answers to farm problems, will have to take a larger role.

Kibbie said the reason why the Grain, Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is looking at mandatory price disclosure is that lawmakers from Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and Iowa agitated for reform.

"The federalists don't want to deal with every state," he said.

Judge, who farms between Albia and Ottumwa with her husband, John, said farmers are looking beyond the question of whether family farms are going to weather all these different pressures. They're more concerned that the next generation

will be scared off the farm and flee to metropolitan areas.

This pessimism pervading family farms has even led some farmers to suggest that Iowa policymakers should rethink the state's

"We went to Washington, D.C. to ask for a safety net for farmers, and we were fairly well-received," said Kibbie. "It's going to be up to our federal lawmakers to help farmers over the next few months."

Kibbie said federal attention will have to be focused on the rising number of mergers creating giant agribusiness conglomerates, which cut into competition in the farm economy and threaten the existence of America's family farming tradition.

"The USDA has done so little in the face of this continuing price crisis," said Kibbie, of the Anti-Trust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

This means that state

legislation to keep agricultural markets free, fair and open to independent family producers of grain and livestock.

And Iowans have to refine their marketing techniques to keep apace. Seventy percent of raw materials produced in the state, according to Judge, leave Iowa borders untouched by any manufacturing process.

"We need to be putting our effort toward value-added products before we ship them out of the state," Judge said. "And we need to get producers more involved in this."

But the acid test of most farmers' survival, she predicted, may be just how willing farmers are to get involved in emerging global markets like organic food and horticulture, two bright spots in agriculture that are relatively untapped by state farmers.

"Some of these things are a radical departure, I know," said Judge, "but these may be needed in the future for farmers to remain profitable."

Judge said she and her husband examined their choice of profession a decade or longer ago. When she feels down now, she looks at a refrigerator magnet her mother gave to her during the zenith of the farm crisis in the 1980s. Its inscription: "Tough times don't last; tough people do."

The IOWA Family Farm



What IS the FUTURE?

emphasis on agriculture and perhaps concentrate more on other non-related enterprises.

"My answer to them is that we have to do what we do best and that's agriculture," said Judge. "That's what we did 150 years ago and that's what we're going to do 150 years from now. You don't walk away from a multi-billion dollar industry that feeds 20 percent of the people in the state."

"I can assure that there will be independent, family farms in Iowa in the future," she added, which garnered the most rousing applause of the day. "I say that knowing full well that we've got some work to do."

Judge said farm forces need to compel federal lawmakers to concentrate on





Mark Ingwersen

11-17-99

Dickinson SWCD's honored for conse

SWCD TO MEET: There will be a monthly meeting of the Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District, SWCD, at 11:30 a.m. Nov. 19 in the District office. The tentative agenda includes receiving NRCS and Watershed Project reports, discussing who will attend the Fall Regional, the Clean Water Project agreement and the Iowa Carbon Storage Project and planning the January meeting. A SWCD Foundation meeting will also be held Nov. 19.

Integrated crop management conference at Spirit Lake

An integrated crop management conference will be held Wednesday, Jan. 5, at the Dickinson County Community Building in Spirit Lake. The event begins with registration at 9:15 a.m. and concludes at 4 p.m.

The cost is \$10 for registrations postmarked by Dec. 27. After that date, participants are not guaranteed a noon meal. The fee covers conference handouts, a noon lunch and refresh-



Husbanding open spaces

The national conservation summit meeting held in Ames on Tuesday was revolutionary in its scope, with all of the speakers, politicians and dignitaries in accord of the mission: To involve agriculturalists at the forefront of our nation's natural resources management.

Over the last century, our conservation landscape has largely reflected the farming practices of the times. During the Soil Bank and Conservation Reserve Program years, for instance, several million acres of Iowa land was set aside from relentless row crop production and grown in grasses that lent substance as wildlife cover and water purifiers. Other periods of the millennium were less kind to the earth and the wildlife that seeks refuge there, reflecting the fencerow-to-fencerow tilling philosophy that our Congress basically handed to our farmers.

Conservationists have turned more and more to agricultural political policy as the means to a kinder natural resources end. We have come to realize that the language of the farm bills that are passed in the halls of Washington largely dictates the condition of the nation's conservation efforts.

The atmosphere of this week's summit — which was attended by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman and 500 other conservation and political delegates — embraced this philosophy. Glickman, for instance, noted that we have paid farmers for decades to grow crop and livestock commodities, a policy protected by federal subsidies. Why not learn to pay farmers to plant trees and prairie grasses through federal and state programs that make it economically feasible to do so? The nation's farm policy, he implied, needs to be overhauled to deal with escalating soil erosion, water pollution and the country's dwindling open spaces.

Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin echoed the sentiments of the political representatives in attendance by saying that more emphasis must be placed on conservation when national farm policy is debated. He also said that more money must be implemented for natural resource development rather than commodity growing within the agricultural legislation.

The vision of the summit leaders is to develop an attitude in the country that land stewards

should be trustees of the American landscape and not just agriculturists concerned with making a living. A noble theory, indeed, but conceivable only if legislators change their historical outlook on national farm policies. If conservation incentives can be built into ag legislation with realistic financial opportunities for farmers, there is great hope for the future of private land stewardship.

If national farm policy continues to subsidize failing ag efforts to the tune of \$22 billion, like this year, then conservation of natural resources will never be an important issue among the country's farmers.

The fact that the summit's participants focused on the farm bill is significant, because never before have agricultural practices taken a front seat in conservation talks. It is particularly appropriate for Iowa, since an incredible 95 percent of our land is privately owned. Who better, then, to dictate the health of our environment than the people who own the land?

Iowa farmers are linked to the land with a special intimacy. And given half a chance and a monetary incentive to do so, most would be wonderful stewards of property supporting rich habitat and wildlife. We must remember that farmers are business people just

like the rest of us. Like it or not, the condition of our natural resources is linked to money — the money that farmers could be making by planting buffer strips, reintroducing wetlands, and nurturing shelterbelts.

It is quite simple. The future of rural America and its environmental health is dependent on the wise authorship of future farm bills, just as the conservation summit determined. The conference was a monumental step toward refashioning the way conservation laws are written. It is time to wed agricultural and natural resource guidelines. Long gone should be the days when the Department of Natural Resources is expected to manage our natural world while ag bills are constructed in direct contrast. I hope all legislators take heed, and author the next farm package with clean water and switchgrass — not corn and soybeans — in mind.

Greg Drees is publisher of the Dickinson County News.

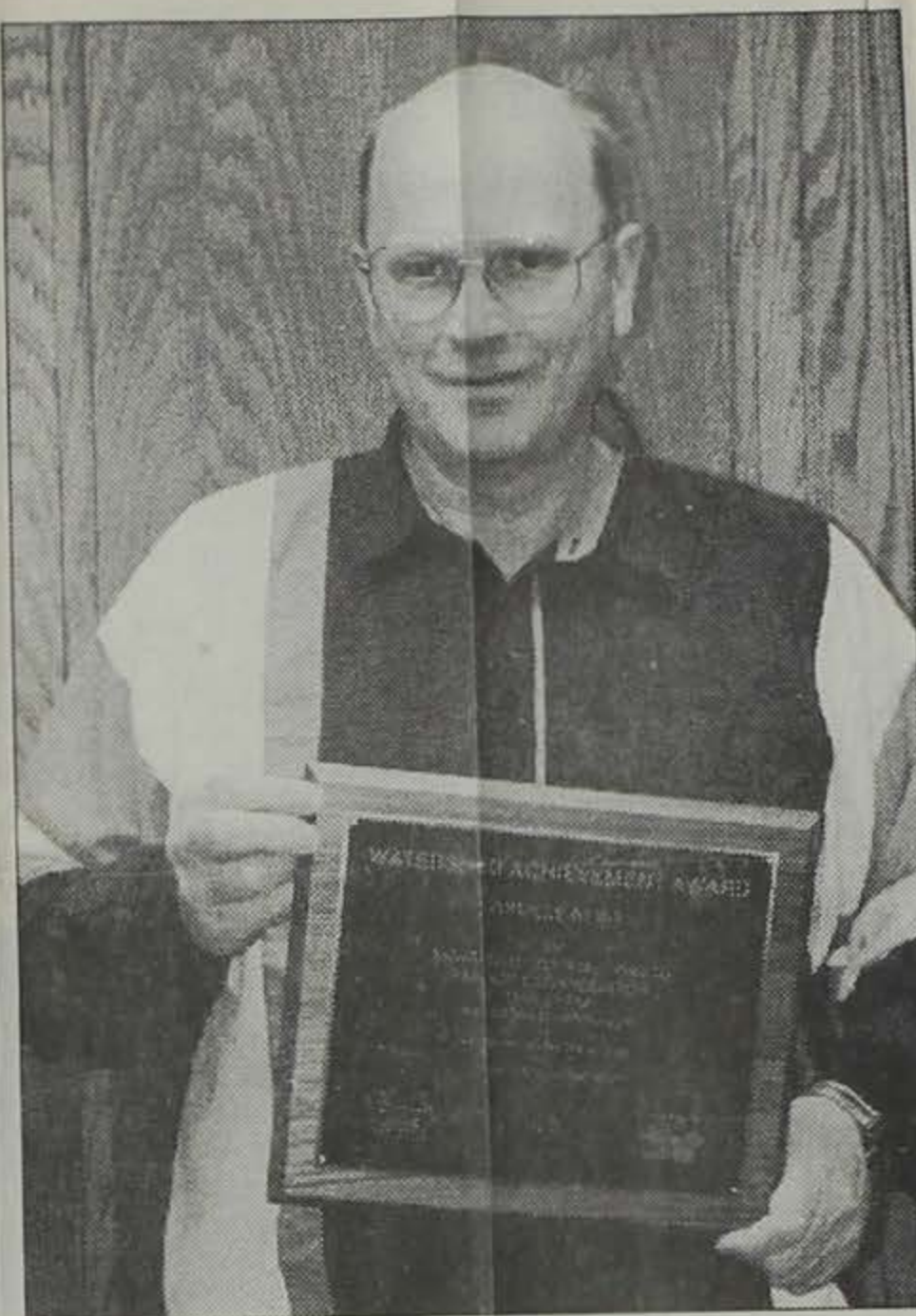
Impressions WITH GREG DREES



12-11-99



Mark Ingwersen



Orville Berg

Dickinson SWCD's Ingwersen, Berg honored for conservation efforts

Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District announces that Mark Ingwersen and Orville Berg were recipients of awards at the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) annual meeting held last month in Des Moines.

Ingwersen was not only named the Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner of Region 2, but also received the Commissioner of the Year Award.

A commissioner for over 10 years, he is also the chair of the Dickinson County SWCD. Previously, he has been vice-president of the CDI.

Ingwersen has been very active on both the national and state level in the promotion of conservation. He was one

of the founders of "Iowa Watersheds," which was organized to promote water quality and information sharing. He also was among the founders of the Dickinson County SWCD Foundation, which was formed to ensure long-term environmental benefits for the county.

He and his wife, Kim, farm 1,000 acres on which they produce both corn and soybeans. Their conservation practices include no-till, mulch-till, sediment control basins, waterways and a farmstead windbreak. He also participates in the Farming for Maximum Efficiency Program. The couple lives east of Spirit Lake with their three children.

Berg was the recipient of the Watershed Achievement Award. He has been

instrumental in the application and organization of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project and the Clean Water Alliance. He has chaired the alliance since 1990. Currently, over 30 organizations are partners in the Clean Water Alliance.

Berg operates a courier service in Dickinson County. In addition to the Clean Water Alliance, he is the treasurer of the Dickinson County SWCD and has served on the CDI state board. He also has played a key role in the establishment of the Dickinson County SWCD Foundation. He represents the SWCD and chairs the Iowa Lakes RC & D Board. He is a member of the Iowa Great Lakes Rotary. He and his wife, Kay, live in Okoboji.

Spirit Lake

An integrated crop management conference will be held Wednesday, Jan. 5, at the Dickinson County Community Building in Spirit Lake. The event begins with registration at 9:15 a.m. and concludes at 4 p.m.

The cost is \$10 for registrations postmarked by Dec. 27. After that date, participants are not guaranteed a noon meal. The fee covers conference handouts, a noon lunch and refresh-

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Open spaces

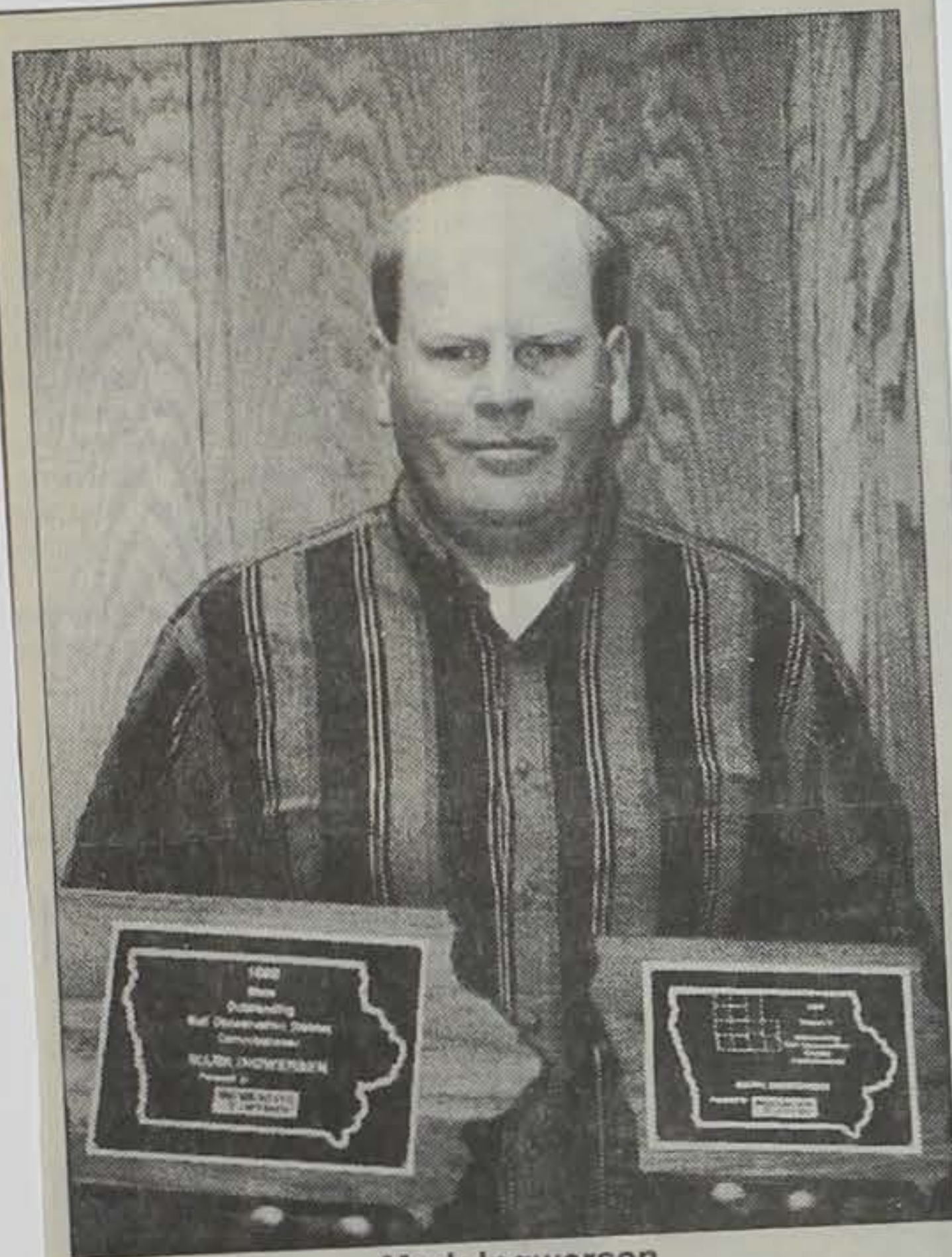
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PHOTO BY GREG DREES

"Gull-able" to drought

Migrating gulls, which have been using area wetlands for a sustained period, are adapting daily to diminishing water levels in the marshes.

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Iowa DNR, landowners flush out agreement on drainage

by MIKE JAV
STAFF WR

After several discussions at previous meetings, in a public hearing, on the District No. 21 an agreement was reached between the Department of Natural Resources and the property owners regarding creation of a wetland in the drainage district.

The drainage district next to Snodgrass Slough the northeast corner of Spirit Lake will add to the new agreement an earthen dike and a pelt will eventually comprise six acres.

Details of the plan include the toe of the dike being at least 75 feet from adjacent landowner lines and the DNR six-inch drainage tile dike between it and the fence line.

In moving the dike from 25 feet, as initially proposed to 75 feet, per agreement, the actual dike will create ending 125 feet from the landowner's fence line.

Landowners in the area voiced concerns about the wetland and creating a dike on their bordering property during periods of high water.

The supervisors noted that the DNR write to each of the adjacent property owners stating in writing the terms of the new agreement.

They are to have those letters at the Dickinson County Auditor's office for the landowners to review and sign.

Don Eckert, Dickinson County engineer, discussed the future of two gravel pits in the Moberly area of the county with the supervisors.

The supervisors decided to consider open bids at a future date to sell the Christopherson Pit. They also decided to take bids for a three-year lease on the Leath Pit. Advertising for those bids are to also take place in the near future.

The supervisors approved the doing of Level B roads in the county, as requested by Eckert.

In additional roads were added to those already designated Level B roads by the supervisors, Level B roads receive less maintenance than other county roads and during the winter snow season receive no snow removal.

Courthouse maintenance priorities were discussed by the supervisors, as well as by Don Reed, the new custodian and several department heads during the meeting.

Primary concerns voiced on maintenance issues related to worn carpets, heat and ventilation problems, hot water inadequacies, as well as windows, weatherproofing and phone system problems at various locations throughout the building and its annexes.



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by MIKE N STAFF

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Foundation scholarships for area high school seniors

The Dickinson SWCD Foundation announced two \$500 scholarships which will be presented to Dickinson County graduating high school seniors to be used to further their education at the college level who are pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or the environment.

One of the scholarship recipient's application will also be submitted to the Conservation Districts of Iowa and its Auxiliary for consideration of one of their three scholarships in the amounts of \$800, \$400 and \$200.

High school seniors must submit their typed applications in duplicate to the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District no later than March 1, 2000.

Applications can be obtained from the high school counselors at Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake or Terril high schools, or by contacting the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Spirit Lake at (712) 336-3782, ext. 3.

12-15-99

Bell

saluted

The Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service would like to salute Jim Bell, Tom Koster, Maurice Dougal, Clarence Call and the RSVP Newsletter Crew for the invaluable work they provide to the District throughout the year.

Bell was recently presented with the Top Award in the Iowa NRCS, he is the Earth Team Volunteer of the Year.

The Earth Team Volunteer

Volunteer of the year



(photo by Mindy Baker)

12 - -

Manns receive award

Bob and Shirley Mann received an Izaak Walton Windbreak Award from Orville Berg, Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioner. The Manns were submitted for this award by the Dickinson SWCD in recognition of the outstanding windbreak they have established. The windbreak is helping to protect the Spirit Lake Watershed from runoff pollution, conserve energy, and enhance wildlife habitat.

2000

New environmental officer has long trail of accomplishments

01-22-00

By MIKE JORDAN
STAFF WRITER

On Jan. 7 Tim Terrill took over as the environmental specialist for Dickinson County.

Terrill, originally from Kansas City, Kan., holds a bachelor of science degree in biology from Winona State University, Winona, Minn. He received an associate of science degree from Rochester Community College prior to his attending Winona State.

Upon graduation from college Terrill co-owned a painting business in Winona, where he became certified in lead abatement procedures.

Terrill also worked at a water testing facility in Storm Lake and was the green coordinator for Wal-Mart there.

As green coordinator for Wal-Mart, Terrill learned much about environmental concerns. He started his own programs and funded them through grants.

Through his efforts, Wal-Mart was able to

donate \$1,200 to Storm Lake's aeration system for the lake.

Terrill said: "Working as a volunteer and with other volunteers helped me learn to work with people. It has enriched me as a person to be a volunteer. I want to pass that experience on to others."

As an environmental specialist, Terrill sees his work as being a threefold job. First of all, he sees the work started on the source water protection project as being very important to the area. Identifying

ing sewer systems that do not run anywhere, wells that may be uncapped and finding other potential pollutants to the watershed are of utmost importance to Terrill.

Secondly, he sees public relations as an equally important component of his job. Helping Ducks Unlimited, the Issac Walton League and other conservation groups with their activities are things he plans to devote much of his time to.

He sees the third aspect of his job as working with farmers in the watershed on conservation projects such as terracing, as well as urban community conservation projects.

Terrill worked successfully in Storm Lake on a project to help control the spread of the purple loose strife in wetlands there.

The three-year project involved the introduction of European beetles to the purple loose strife plant, in an effort to control the spread of this prolific variety.

According to Terrill: "One purple loose strife plant can produce 2 million seeds. Not only that, but the seeds pro-

TIM TERRILL

Continued on Page 2A



Photo by
MIKE JORDAN
Tim Terrill, pictured here in front of a map of the Lakes Region watershed he will be working to protect, took over as Dickinson County environmental specialist Jan. 7.

tion project as being very important to the area. Identifying

Conservation program scheduled

Those interested in water conservation efforts are encouraged to attend Watershed Works, a program to build leadership and facilitation skills for effective local involvement in watershed planning.

The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Trees Forever, is sponsoring the program.

"Agriculture is facing a serious regulatory challenge with respect to water quality," said Rick Robinson, director of environ-

mental affairs for Iowa Farm Bureau. "It is imperative that farmers become actively involved in watershed protection efforts."

Watershed Works consists of two sessions: "Getting Started" and "Keep it Going." Session one will include an overview of the locally-led planning process, working on watershed basis and building an effective planning team. Session two includes more in-depth training on the leadership and facilitation skills.

The seminar is open to all those interested

in watershed resources. To make your reservations, call Carla Ruckels of Trees Forever, (800) 369-1269, or register on the Internet, www.ifbf.org. Program cost is \$10 per person for each session.

The Buena Vista University Conference Center (Storm Lake) is the site of a session one class Wednesday, Feb. 16 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.). A session two class will be held there June 21, also from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

02-02-00

...been volunteering through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

EQIP sign-up period conducted until March 24

A priority area Environmental Quality Incentives Program sign-up has been announced for three priority areas in Dickinson and Osceola counties. The sign-up began Monday and will conclude March 24. The three priority areas are:

- * The Iowa Great Lakes Watershed in Dickinson County.
- * The Silver Lake Watershed in Dickinson and Osceola counties.
- * One mile on either side of the Little

Sioux River and one mile on either side of the west fork of the Little Sioux River in Dickinson County.

Farmers who have land located in the priority areas shown above may apply for such cost-share practices as rotational grazing systems, integrated crop management, terraces, organic crop production, livestock waste systems, grade stabilization structures, stream bank stabilization, grassed waterways, wildlife upland habitat manage-

ment, wetland restoration, ponds, farmstead windbreaks, field windbreaks, livestock waste systems and sealing abandoned wells.

Cost share of up to 75 percent or incentive payments are available to producers who participate in EQIP.

For more information, contact the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake, 336-8782, or the USDA Service Center in Sibley at (712) 745-2111 for more information.

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Madge Voss, volunteer, is shown Mark Ingwersen, chair of DCSWC

One of our "A" students reports that ticket sales for the March 20 performance of the Count Basie Orchestra at North Kossuth High School are "sluggish." That's probably being kind. The band director at NKHS took a huge chance bringing such a great group to a small northwest Iowa town.

For more information, call 362.7962.

Steve March
March 20
Count Basie Orchestra
North Kossuth High School
March 20

Grab Sheldon Contest

Show Choir Fest
High School in S
and family are en
It's not what
ya know, so we
Last week, after
received an e-ma
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At the top of t
I Miss You If You
Sheldon



Continued from Page 1

duced stay viable for 20 years. In other words, they can remain dormant for 20 years and still become a plant in the right environment. The plants are also tall and fibrous. They can grow in ditches and have flourished along the ditches of many of the interstate highways in Iowa. They grow close together and are very difficult to walk through. They eventually overshadow other plant life in a wetlands if not controlled.

"In Storm Lake they were becoming a problem. We introduced the European beetle to the plants in Little Storm Lake initially. The beetles, although tiny, are ferocious eaters. In two days we saw results. Many of the plants that had been fully leafed were reduced to stems, no longer able to photosynthesize."

Terrill's beetle project was a success. He hopes to survey the Lakes Region this summer to see if any of the plants are in evidence. He likened the purple loose strife to milfoil, only this plant

is present above the water line rather than sub-surface.

"I hope to gain the insight and wisdom to see what works and head off problems before they start. I believe community involvement is the key."

-Tim Terrill

Terrill plans to concentrate on learning his job and views it in two parts.

He continued: "As well as environmental specialist here I am also the project coordinator of the Clean Water Alliance."

"In addition to working with those presently involved in the alliance, I hope to encourage others to volunteer to help keep our waters clean and identify potential pollu-

tants in the Iowa Great Lakes watershed while doing city mapping."

Terrill believes the next five years will bring more emphasis on

Service (NRCS).

the restoration and enhancement of wetlands. He also hopes to see the towns come together on projects so he can coordinate their efforts through joint meetings.

Terrill concluded: "Once I learn this job and all its responsibilities, I would like to become proactive rather than re-active situations."

"I hope to gain the insight and wisdom to see what works and head off problems before they start. I believe community involvement is the key. In five to 10 years we will be able to see positive results for our efforts now."

Terrill still lives in Storm Lake with his wife, Michelle, a self-employed home health care provider, and their 3-year-old daughter, Abryella Christian. The Terrills plan to move to the Lakes Region in the near future, after the winter season.

He attempted to establish a

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we roll over and long even is

Volunteer files with smiles

04-15-00

Madge Voss has volunteered hundreds of hours of her time to the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD). However, after just more than a year there, she will be stepping down from her position.

"It's National Volunteer Week, and we would like to recognize our 'Earth Team' as we call them," explained Mark Ingwersen, chair of the DCSWCD. "But especially we want to thank Madge for all of her hard work."

Madge had been volunteering through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (R.S.V.P.) managed by Joanne McCulloch and the Voluntary Action Center (VAC).

Madge has enjoyed her work at the Conservation District. She started in April 7, 1999.

"There are a lot of nice people here. I like to work, and I have fun," explained Madge, whose position was clerical, mostly filing and helping out. She will finish her volunteerism at the end of April.



Madge Voss, volunteer, is shown here with Mark Ingwersen, chair of DCSWCD.

2000

New environmental long trail of accompl

01-22-00

By MIKE JORDAN
STAFF WRITER

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Photo by
MIKE JORDAN
Tim Terrill, pictured here in front of a map of the Lakes Region watershed he will be working to protect, took over as Dickinson County environmental specialist Jan. 7.



Punt receives awards

Photo by MIKE JORDAN

Willard Punt (pictured on the right above) received two awards March 16 from Mark Ingwersen, Soil and Water District Chairman for Dickinson County.

Punt received a 20 year service award and a special performance award from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The special performance award of \$300 was given to Punt for his work while the NRCS searched for a new environmental specialist for the county.

Punt began working for the Soil Conservation Service in 1959, in Sioux County. He worked there for over 17 years.

In 1960 the Soil Conservation Service became the Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD), according to Punt.

Punt left the service for a time beginning in 1978 to operate his own hog farm.

When his children had grown Punt left the farm and managed the Christian Retirement home in Sheldon.

Later he moved to Colorado and worked for a national retirement home company, Holiday Retirement Corp.

He attempted to establish a retirement home in Orange City but returned to the NRCS in 1996.

Punt is a conservation technologist with the NRCS. He works with people on food plots, animal waste plans, waste storage facilities and vegetation controls through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

Punt would like to remind the public that sign up deadline for EQIP is March 24.

Conservation program s

Those interested in water conservation efforts are encouraged to attend Watershed Works, a program to build leadership and facilitation skills for effective local involvement in watershed planning.

The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Trees Forever, is sponsoring the program.

"Agriculture is facing a serious regulatory challenge with respect to water quality," said Rick Robinson, director of environ-

mental affairs for Iowa Farm Bureau. "It is imperative that farmers become actively involved in watershed protection efforts."

Watershed Works consists of two sessions: "Getting Started" and "Keep it Going." Session one will include an overview of the locally-led planning process, working on watershed basis and building an effective planning team. Session two includes more in-depth training on the leadership and facilitation skills.

The seminar is open to all those interest-

EQIP sign-up period conducted u

A priority area Environmental Quality Incentives Program sign-up has been announced for three priority areas in Dickinson and Osceola counties. The sign-up began Monday and will conclude March 24. The three priority areas are:

- The Iowa Great Lakes Watershed in Dickinson County.
- The Silver Lake Watershed in Dickinson and Osceola counties.
- One mile on either side of the Little

Sioux River and one mile on either side of the west fork of the Little Sioux River in Dickinson County.

Farmers who have land located in the priority areas shown above may apply for such cost-share practices as rotational grazing systems, integrated crop management, terraces, organic crop production, livestock waste systems, grade stabilization structures, stream bank stabilization, grassed waterways, wildlife upland habitat manage-

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Volu

04-15-00

Madge Voss has spent hours of her time at the County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD), more than a year

ping down from her position. "It's National Volunteer Week, and we would like to recognize our 'Earth Team' as we call them," explained Mark Ingwersen, chair of the DCSWCD. "But especially we want to thank Madge for all of her hard work."

Madge had been volunteering through the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (R.S.V.P.) managed by Joanne McCulloch and the Voluntary Action Center (VAC).

Madge has enjoyed her work at the Conservation District. She started in April 7, 1999.

"There are a lot of nice people here. I like to work, and I have fun," explained Madge, whose position was clerical, mostly filing and helping out. She will finish her volunteerism at the end of April.



Madge Voss, volunteer, is shown next to Mark Ingwersen, chair of DCSWCD.

Edible lawn food is lake saver 7-0-1

By MIKE JORDAN

STAFF WRITER

Although at first glimpse Lake 'N Lawn Saver 7-0-1 sounds like an advanced course in how to save lakes and lawns, it isn't. What it is, however, is a course that many may wish to take to beautify their lawns and save their lakes.

Lake 'N Lawn Saver 7-0-1 is a 100 percent chemical free natural soybean meal lawn fertilizer that will be available in the Lakes Region next week.

Developed by the Resource, Conservation and Development Corporation, a non-profit organization that helps people protect and develop their economic, natural and social resources, Lake 'N Lawn Saver is under the direction of Tom Koster, program coordinator for the project.

Koster explained, "The reason we started working on the fertilizer was primarily for protection of the lakes. This fertilizer is 100 percent natural.

It is a soybean meal fertilizer that is lake friendly.

"It is 100 percent safe for the environment. It will not harm wildlife, fish, children or pets. It is a water insoluble product that slowly releases fertilizer into the soil. It provides a longer lasting lawn feed, will not burn a lawn and does not leach like other fertilizers do."

The soy bean granulated meal fertilizer is a by-product of soybean oil production. It is the result of an extrusion process that uses no chemicals to extract the oil from soybeans.

The product is manufactured at the Terril elevator. It is bagged in plastic lined paper bags that are manufactured in Sibley at the International Paper Company.

Koster continued, "My part in this initially was the research and ground work. The Clean Water Alliance

04-15-00

LAKE 'N LAWN

Continued on Page 2A

Terril to compete in Envirothon contest

by MINDY BAKER

FEATURE EDITOR

Sixteen teams throughout Iowa have advanced to the fifth annual Iowa Envirothon contest, to be held Thursday, April 20, at the Springbrook State Park located north of Guthrie Center.

Students competing in the contest will test their knowledge of aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and environmental issues at several stations throughout the park. In addition, the teams will give an oral presentation on wetlands as part of the competition.

Terril Community School is returning to the Envirothon contest for their fifth year in a row.

"We've always done very well there," explained Mark Benedict, science teacher at TCS. "Two years ago we were the state champions."

Benedict is proud of his teams, pointing out that unlike athletic competition, there are not school size classes.

"We compete against Des Moines schools, other large schools, and we always place in towards the top," he added.

He had taken two teams to regional competition. Each team has five students. The team that advanced in districts has Devan McGranahan, Alex Langner, Crystal Yeager, Matt Fairchild and Jeremy Langner.

McGranahan, who is planning a career in biology enjoys the hands-on learning experience.

"The competition is all outdoors," he explained.

"They provide the tools, and we actually have to know how to use them. In regionals, they just ask what we would do."

He used the example of computing a Basal area of a stand of trees.

"It's to determine how much of a total area is covered by tree trunks. That's used to understand the management design, whether you need to thin out trees or not."

The team will get two copies of the test while at Springbrook, and will divide their team based on individual strengths. They will only get 25 minutes to finish the tests, and meet back to agree on results.

Awards will be given to the top three teams, with the first-place team representing Iowa at the National Envirothon to be held in Nova Scotia in July.

Cooperating agencies and organizations include: Conservation Districts of Iowa and local Conservation Districts, Iowa Farm Bureau, Natural Resources Conservation Service, IDALS Division of Soil Conservation, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Education, and local chapters of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

Financial support for this year's program comes from the Iowa Farm Bureau, Environmental Protection Agency, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, local soil and water conservation districts and Conservation Districts of Iowa.

04-19-00

annual meeting at the Maritime Museum.

Donna Buell, president, welcomed DCTA members and the public and introduced Des Moines attorney Dick Ramsay (now a full-time Spirit Lake resident) who discussed the new Iowa Water Quality District (WQD/ district) law which becomes effective July 1.

"A WQD is a way for people who live on and near a body of water to help pay for water quality improvement," Ramsay explained. "It's similar to a rainage district, water district, lighting district, etc. Think of as a home owners association" he said. "A WQD is the st method of creating a local dependent entity dedicated to a single purpose of improving ter quality in the district."

the plat state and federal funding," Ramsay said. Orville Berg, Dickinson Soil and Water Commissioner and Chair of the Clean Water Alliance Committee, agreed: "We need money to attract matching funds."

properties by a road or public land, can elect to form a WQD. The district can purchase materials, create grass waterways or wetlands, and employ personnel — generally, any activity to improve water quality in the district. It can levy a tax on first and second tier properties in the district of not more than 25 cents per \$1000 of assessed valuation.

A WQD can not pass laws, issue regulations, adopt ordinances, exercise police powers, condemn land, or tax agricultural land.

The process of establishing a WQD begins when either 25 percent of all first and second tier owners, or 25 individuals in the proposed district (whichever is less) vote to petition.

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straws and connectors activity and finding shapes in paintings. Part of the learning involves games based on art. One activity has the children matching a colored ball to a color in a painting. Potter explained, "I take the children right into the museum. They have a bucket of balls in front of each painting. They are to match the color of the ball to the color they see as the predominant color in the painting. They also learn the etiquette of museums. I ask them how colors make them feel too. How colors talk? What is the first color they see? They love it. They really like the games. Head start has no art class or their pre-schools once a month."

e-school art

STAFF WRITER
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LAKE 'N LAWN

Continued from Page 1

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The value-added ag product is of food grade. It is edible. It provides a continuous long-lasting feed for lawns. The slow-release nature of the fertilizer means it remains in the soil in a form that is available for the grass to use as it needs it. That steady flow of nutrients means a lawn may need fertilizer but three times all year - once in the spring, once at mid-summer and again in the fall.

Lake 'N Lawn Saver fertilizer will be available next week at the Dickinson County Soil Conservation District Office.

Anyone wishing to purchase the new fertilizer can also ask about its availability from their favorite lawn care provider.

Terril to comp Envirothon con

by MINDY BAKER
FEATURE EDITOR

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Water District proposed to DCT

by Phil Brown
STAFF WRITER

On May 11, Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack signed the Water Quality District bill (SF 2438). On June 9 the concept was presented to the Dickinson County Taxpayers Association's (DCTA) annual meeting at the Maritime Museum.

Donna Buell, president, welcomed DCTA members and the public and introduced Des Moines attorney Dick Ramsay (now a full-time Spirit Lake resident) who discussed the new Iowa Water Quality District (WQD/ district) law which becomes effective July 1.

"A WQD is a way for people who live on and near a body of water to help pay for water quality improvement," Ramsay explained. "It's similar to a drainage district, water district, or lighting district, etc. Think of it as a home owners association" he said. "A WQD is the best method of creating a local independent entity dedicated to the single purpose of improving water quality in the district."

A WQD undertakes such activities as public information dissemination, lake or stream bank stabilization, water treatment and monitoring activities, watershed protection activities on lands outside the district which affect water quality with-

in the district, and other activities to improve stream, river, and lake water quality.

Under the law property owners whose land touches a lake, river, or stream, ("first tier") and adjacent ("second tier") land owners whose properties are separated from first tier properties by a road or public land, can elect to form a WQD. The district can purchase materials, create grass waterways or wetlands, and employ personnel - generally, any activity to improve water quality in the district. It can levy a tax on first and second tier properties in the district of not more than 25 cents per \$1000 of assessed valuation.

A WQD can not pass laws, issue regulations, adopt ordinances, exercise police powers, condemn land, or tax agricultural land.

The process of establishing a WQD begins when either 25 percent of all first and second tier owners, or 25 individuals in the proposed district (whichever is less) vote to petition the county board of supervisors to hold a public hearing on the matter. The petition must include (1) a statement of need for the district, (2) a description of the district to be included, and (3) the approximate number of families in the district.



PHOTO BY PHIL BROWN
Dick Ramsey speaks to DCTA.

After receiving the petition supervisors must hold a public

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e-school art

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LAKE 'N LAWN

Continued from Page 1

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Taxpayer

Continued from page 1

meeting within 30 days to determine (1) if a district should be formed, (2) the district's boundaries, and (3) whether or not the boundaries should be changed to exclude land that is not likely to benefit from the district.

With supervisor approval the district is established 10 days after the first hearing. Supervisors also appoint an engineer to provide specific information about the district: (1) An outline of the district (plat), (2) A list of the land parcels and owners in the district, and (3) The assessed value of those properties. Farm land is not included in the district.

Next, supervisors hold a second hearing to approve the district boundaries as set by the engineer. They have 10 days to approve or disapprove the plat and demographic information.

With supervisor approval of the district's boundaries, district property owners are able to vote to set the district tax levy and choose the three trustees (who must be property owners in the district). Thereafter one new trustee is elected every year. And every eight years district voters must vote to continue the district and re-approve the tax levy. Trustees transact business for the district and receive no compensation for their trustee services.

General discussion followed attorney Ramsay's presentation. It was suggested that water quality protection activities and cost should be a greater

community concern than a residential concern. "The merchants on Main Street are the ones who benefit the most from clean water in our lakes," said Darryl Halling of Milford. "They're the ones making money from the lakes' (as a valuable) asset."

A similar inference was offered by another attendee: "The whole Lakes Area should become a WQD so that the (1) tax levy would be relatively smaller for each taxpayer and because (2) shop owners and service providers should pay their fair share of the cost for keeping the lakes clean so tourists would keep coming and they (merchants) could continue making money."

"The WQD is a way to get local seed money to qualify for state and federal funding," Dick Ramsay said. Orville Berg, Dickinson Soil and Water Commissioner and Chair of the Clean Water Alliance Committee, agreed: "We need money to attract matching funds."

Jane Shuttleworth, Environmental Coordinator at Lakeside Lab, said, "we need funding for water quality improvement education. Sometimes ignorance of the subject (water quality improvement) is more damaging than the pollutants."

Another attendee, Tim Terrill, Environmental Specialist for the Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District agreed with Shuttleworth, asserting, "There needs to be more emphasis on informing urban area people who might not

understand the importance (to the Lakes Area) of improving and maintaining lakes water quality. It's important that the whole community, not just those who live around the lakes understand that the lakes are all in one watershed system and that all of us need to help keep them in good condition if we're to continue to grow and prosper."

Garnette Anderson, Arnolds Park city council member, added, "The Clean Water Alliance has done a lot, but we need to step up the pace if we're going to protect these lakes. And the question is not how bad are the lakes, but how long can we keep them sustainable. Even if they're good quality, are they going to be that way 80 years down the road? And what are we doing today that will harm them (the lakes) so they won't be clean 80 years from now?"

"We need to find out. To me, that's the heart of it. It's going to be up to the community to decide if it (maintaining water quality of the lakes) is important to them or not. If the local people don't treasure them and take care of them you're going to lose them (the lakes) — you're going to lose your people and and your towns and the whole 'shebang'. That's the heart of what this is all about," she concluded.

Taxpayers Association members took no action on the WQD proposal, but in other business elected DCTA directors for the year.

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336-8939
Professional Eye Health Examinations
or questions you may have.
Contact Dr. Bob with any concerns

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PHOTO BY P
Dick Ram

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Lake 'n Lawn Saver 7-0-1 is a percent chemical bean meal lawn fertilizer available in the Lake 'n Lawn Saver 7-0-1 week.

Developed by the Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District, a non-profit organization that helps people protect their economic, natural resources, Lake 'n Lawn Saver 7-0-1 is under the direction of program coordinator.

Koster explained that he started working on the program primarily for protection. This fertilizer is 16 percent



DSWCB district winners

The Dickinson Soil & Water Conservation District announces two district level winners of the Soil & Water Conservation Poster Contest, co-sponsored by Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the Auxiliary of the Conservation Districts of Iowa. This year's themes were "In the Children's Hands" or "Community Waters".

Dana Potter, daughter of Stuart and Lissa Potter of Okoboji, is a first grade student at Spirit Lake Elementary. Dana's poster was chosen from entries received in the Kindergarten to First grade division.

Kay Oskvig, daughter of Carroll and Martha Oskvig of Milford, is a fourth grade home schooled student. Kay's poster was chosen from entries received in the Fourth to Sixth grade division.

Dana and Kay were presented with District Level First Place Certificates and a "Community Waters" tee-shirt by Commissioner Orville Berg. Assistant Commissioner Tom Koster, Poster Contest Judge was not available for photo. The Dickinson Soil & Water Commissioners would like to thank all the children who participated in this year's poster contest.

The two posters will be sent on to be judged at Regional level. 05-13-00
Shown: Kay Oskvig, Commissioner Orville Berg and Dana Potter.

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by MINDY BAKER
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"I was really nervous at first, but after we started talking, it was fun. Knowing that it was a live radio station and people could hear us made me nervous," said Rachel Beck and Becky Ramsey. "I guess she wasn't the only person nervous," Becky commented. "I was really nervous so I didn't know what to say."

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USDA offers new CRP incentives doctor concerned about ased farm cancer rate

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering new Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentives for landowners to install conservation buffers along streams, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The incentives include signing bonuses and more money for installing and maintaining conservation practices. They are enhancements in the USDA's new sign-up period 22 for the continuous CRP sign-up offer.

New CRP incentives are:

1) Up-front bonuses of \$10 per acre for every full year the contract covers. This amounts to \$100 to \$150 per acre at the start of the contract to defray installation costs for filter strips, riparian buffer, grassed waterways, field windbreaks, shelter belts, and living snow fences.

2) Payments equal to 40 percent of the installation cost of all continuous CRP practices, including contour buffer strips and shallow water areas for wildlife. This is in addition to the 50 percent cost-share paid by USDA for establishing certain approved practices.

3) Increases in maintenance rate incentives for tree planting, fencing, or water development and updated marginal pastureland rental rates to better reflect the market value of these lands. (In most cases rental rates in Iowa increased slightly with this update.)

4) An increase of 20 percent on the average widths of filter strips and riparian buffers to allow farmers to square off field and buffer boundaries for more efficient farming.

Sign up period 22 began April 6 and will continue through September 30. Up to \$100 million will be provided (nationally) in signing and practice bonuses in the current sign-up, with \$125 million each for fiscal years 2001 and 2002, according to Bob Soukup, State Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Iowa.

"Unlike the regular CRP the continuous sign-up program allows producers to enroll eligible highly environmental sensitive land at any time without waiting for a sign-up period or competing against other offers," Soukup said. "We're encouraging landowners to consider buffers as part of their conserva-

tion system."

Conservation buffers protect streams and rivers by keeping sediment and nutrients from entering the water, providing cleaner drinking water, enhancing recreation, and improving wildlife habitats.

In announcing the new incentives Leroy Brown, state conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) said, "We're pleased to have more incentives to attract more farmers to the program. Iowa farmers lead the way in the country in acres of buffers and number of contracts in the continuous sign-up of CRP, but we have thousands of miles of streams that can be improved with buffers and at the same time offer very fair incentives to farmers."

More than 25,000 Iowa landowners have entered more than 195,000 acres into the program. Iowa has also provided new funding for buffers as part of the state's \$11.2 million water quality initiative passed by the legislature.

Landowners with questions and interest should contact their local USDA Farm Service Agency.

seems to be environmental. It is probably due to exposure to pesticides and herbicides."

Dr. David Christ,
Northwest Iowa Urologists

By LAURA COONLEY
SPECIAL TO THE DCN

Increased risk of prostate cancer to a new Mayo Clinic study. I interviewed 1,177 cancer-free males. At the end of the study, 8.5 percent of the farmers got prostate cancer, compared to only 6.2 percent of the non-farmers over the age of 70 were likely to get prostate cancer.

Demographics, build, tobacco use, family history of cancer and occupation. The study concluded that there was a greater risk of prostate cancer with prolonged exposure to farm-related lifestyle factors like diet

ards from lifestyle factors.

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of death in men. It is more common in older men, but can be found in men as young as 40. Christ says that life expectancy had a significant effect.

"More people are dying from prostate cancer because people are living longer," he said. "The greater a man's life, the greater chance to have it."

The American Cancer Society estimates that 179,300 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1999. About 37,000 men die from prostate cancer each year. Only lung cancer is more deadly.

It is now possible to detect prostate cancer before it becomes untreatable by checking Prostate Specific Antigen levels, which are pro-

7-26-00

Students embark on environmental project: Lakes Area soil testing

DCN
10-4-00

Guest Editorial

Integrated crop management's urban effects

By Tim Terrill
Environmental Specialist

Many farmers know where the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is located and what programs are being offered, but few understand the impact those programs have on the environment in the city.

A good example is the Integrated Crop Management (ICM) program that pays farmers to use only the correct amount of fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides on the farm. It takes into account past applications of phosphorus and reduces the economic constraint on the farmer by reducing the excess application of fertilizer.

But how does this eco-

nomically and environmentally help the city dwellers? Reducing the amount of phosphorous will help control the algae blooms in our lakes. This economically affects the city because clean lakes generate economic prosperity.

The other effect ICM has on the urban area is that it can reduce health problems. Herbicides don't just kill plants; they often can cause health problems. Many people assume that the NRCS only improves water quality, but we also are in the business of helping people.

For example, Atrazine is a chemical that can have possible long-term effects on humans such as liver and kidney damage. It is also

believed that this may be a carcinogen. The NRCS rates atrazine and other chemicals to determine if they are at a high or low risk of leaching into the soil or the wind. If they are, a more environmentally friendly chemical is recommended.

However, most of these dangerous chemicals are on a restricted use list anyway, and are only used in trace amounts. No one can know all the possible long-term effects of every combination of every chemical, but we can know the effects some chemicals have on certain organisms. By treating and respecting nature, we are protecting the entire ecological balance around us.

Advanced Biology students are taking an active role in efforts to help improve water quality in the Great Lakes. The students of their project are working on a lake.

Benedict, Terrill's high school science teacher and his Bio students in Dickinson County are offering a grant to a resident of the area north of Mil-

waukee. This project the students are trying to help improve the exact amount of phosphorous, other lawn nutrients (and lime) and pH to assist them in making the most effective and environmentally sound application deci-

The soil samples are being gathered by the Terrill students and analyzed by the Soil Testing Lab at Iowa State University.

According to Benedict, the students have discovered that one of the main chemical pollution sources for the lakes is excess fertilizer runoff, particularly phosphorous from lawns.

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USDA offers new CRP i

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering new Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentives for landowners to install conservation buffers along streams, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The incentives include signing bonuses and more money for installing and maintaining conservation practices. They are enhancements in the USDA's new sign-up period 22 for the continuous CRP sign-up offer.

New CRP incentives are:

1) Up-front bonuses of \$10 per acre for every full year the contract covers. This amounts to \$100 to \$150 per acre at the start of the contract to defray installation costs for filter strips, riparian buffer, grassed waterways, field windbreaks, shelter belts, and living snow fences.

2) Payments equal to 40 percent of the installation cost of all continuous CRP practices, including contour buffer strips and shallow water areas for wildlife. This is in addition to the 50 percent cost-share paid by USDA for establishing certain approved practices.

3) Increases in maintenance rate incentives for tree planting, fencing, or water development and updated marginal pastureland rental rates to better reflect the market value of these lands. (In most cases rental rates in Iowa increased slightly with this update.)

4) An increase of 20 percent on the average widths of filter strips and riparian buffers to allow farmers to square off field and buffer boundaries for more efficient farming.

Sign up period 22 began April 6 and will continue through September 30. Up to \$100 million will be provided (nationally) in signing and practice bonuses in the current sign-up, with \$125 million each for fiscal years 2001 and 2002, according to Bob Soukup, State Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Iowa.

"Unlike the regular CRP the continuous sign-up program allows producers to enroll eligible highly environmental sensitive land at any time without waiting for a sign-up period or competing against other offers," Soukup said. "We're encouraging landowners to consider buffers as part of their conserva-

Area doctor concerned about increased farm cancer rate

"It seems to be environmental. It is probably due to exposure to pesticides and herbicides."

Dr. David Christ,
Northwest Iowa Urologists

By LAURA COONLEY
SPECIAL TO THE DCN

Farmers have an increased risk of prostate cancer, according to a new Mayo Clinic study.

Examiners followed 1,177 cancer-free males in Iowa for 10 years. At the end of the study, 8.5 percent, almost one in 10, of the farmers got prostate cancer. Only 6.2 percent of the non-farmers did. Farmers over the age of 70 were more than twice as likely to get prostate cancer than non-farmers.

They also took demographics, build, tobacco and alcohol use, family history of cancer and eating habits into account. The study concluded that farmers may have a greater risk of prostate cancer because of prolonged exposure to farm chemicals and not to lifestyle factors like diet and exercise.

"It seems to be environmental," said Dr. David Christ of Northwest Iowa Urologists. "It is probably due to exposure to pesticides and herbicides."

Christ provides specialized clinic services in Storm Lake, where medical officials are also seeing what appears to be a relatively high rate of certain cancers, including patients from the rural area.

Previous studies have found some connection between farming and prostate cancer, but this was the first study to separate occupational haz-

ards from lifestyle factors.

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of death in men. It is more common in older men, but can be found in men as young as 40. Christ says that life expectancy had a significant effect.

"More people are dying from prostate cancer because people are living longer," he said. "The greater a man's life, the greater chance to have it."

The American Cancer Society estimates that 179,300 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1999. About 37,000 men die from prostate cancer each year. Only lung cancer is more deadly.

It is now possible to detect prostate cancer before it becomes untreatable by checking Prostate Specific Antigen levels, which are produced in high amounts in prostate cancer cells.

"It used to be that we couldn't find it until it had spread," Christ said. "Now we can detect PSA levels and detect it before it spreads outside of the prostate."

Sept. 20-26 is Prostate Screening Week, and Christ suggests taking the time to be tested. Farmers are especially encouraged, but all men over the age of 45 should be tested yearly. Appointments can be made with family doctors for an exam and blood tests. Any abnormalities can be then referred to a specialist.

Guest Editorial

Integrated crop management's u

By Tim Terrill
Environmental Specialist

Many farmers know where the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is located and what programs are being offered, but few understand the impact those programs have on the environment in the city.

A good example is the Integrated Crop Management (ICM) program that pays farmers to use only the correct amount of fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides on the farm. It takes into account past applications of phosphorus and reduces the economic constraint on the farmer by reducing the excess application of fertilizer.

But how does this eco-

nomically and environmentally help the city dwellers? Reducing the amount of phosphorous will help control the algae blooms in our lakes. This economically affects the city because clean lakes generate economic prosperity.

The other effect ICM has on the urban area is that it can reduce health problems. Herbicides don't just kill plants; they often can cause health problems. Many people assume that the NRCS only improves water quality, but we also are in the business of helping people.

For example, Atrazine is a chemical that can have possible long-term effects on humans such as liver and kidney damage. It is also

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Marc Benedict, Terrill's junior high/high school science teacher and his Advanced Bio students in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are offering a free soil test to resident of the Lakes Area north of Milford.

Through this project the students are trying to help residents determine the exact level of phosphorous, other essential lawn nutrients (nitrogen and lime) and pH in order to assist them in making the most effective and environmentally sound fertilizer application decisions.

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Terril students embark on environmental project: Lakes Area soil testing

DCN
10-4-00

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Integrated crop management conference

An Integrated Crop Management Conference is to be held at the Dickinson County Community Building, Spirit Lake on Wednesday, Jan. 3, according to Joy Janachovsky, Dickinson County Extension Education Director, and Paul Kassel, ISU Extension Crops Field Specialist. The conference begins with registration at 9:15 a.m. and concludes at 4:00 p.m.

Several highly qualified presenters from Iowa State University, ISU Extension and the private sector are on the program. This year Session 1 & Session 2 will be presented to the all the participants. During Session 1, Dr. Robert Hartzler, ISU Extension Weed Management Specialist, will discuss

weed management issues for the coming growing season. In Session 2, Dr. Richard Carlson, ISU Climatologist, will discuss weather expectations for 2001. There are nine sessions on crop production to help you integrate the latest crop production information economically into your operation.

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Registrations must be postmarked by Dec. 26. After that date, participants are not guaranteed a noon meal.

The fee covers conference handouts, a noon lunch and refreshments.

For more information about the conference contact the Dickinson County Extension Office at 336-3488.

EQIP applications sought

The USDA encourages state landowners to apply for \$3.3 million in conservation-cost share funds through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program to improve land, water, and other natural resources. Applications will be taken at USDA Service Centers.

About one-third in EQIP funds are designated for statewide priority resource concerns, including soil erosion, water quality, manure management and grasslands, and will be available in the statewide sign-up until March 3, and based on how well planned conservation work and address statewide resource concerns.

The remaining \$2.3 million of Iowa's EQIP funds are designed for 46 geographical priority areas across the state. Local work groups, which consist of conservation agencies and organizations, will hold sign-up for

ed in the sign-up are encouraged to inquire about other cost-share options.

Under EQIP, USDA provides technical assistance, up to 75 percent cost-share on certain structural practices and incentive payments to producers who enter five to 10-year contracts based on conservation plans. There is a \$10,000 per year limit, with a total limit of \$50,000.

EQIP practices include but are not limited to grassed waterways, manure management facilities, terracing, pest management, ag drainage wellhead protection and pasture management. Other practices include tree planting, windbreaks, strip cropping, conservation tillage, wildlife habitat management and wetlands restoration, enhancement or creation.

Producers who have land in the

At that hearing, Wendels

Seek to establish water quality district

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

One of the long term goals of the Clean Water Alliance is to establish a water quality district for the Iowa Great Lakes watershed.

According to Donna Buell, board member of both the Okoboji Protection Association and Friends of Iowa Lakeside Lab, that goal may soon be a reality.

Through the work of Dick Ramsay, a Big Spirit Lake home owner and retired attorney from Des Moines, the members of the Clean Water Alliance will be petitioning the Dickinson County Supervisors to establish a water quality district for the Iowa Great Lakes watershed.

Buell said, "Dick Ramsay, working as an attorney/lobbyist, got the state legislature to pass legislation allowing the establishment of recreational lake districts around the lakes within the state of Iowa in an effort to provide funding for additional recreational amenities near Iowa lakes, such as more boat ramps."

The Clean Water Alliance visited with Ramsay indicating their feeling that the

recreational lakes districting addressed too broad an area and talked with him about returning to the legislature to work on a sub-category of the recreational lake districts that would address water quality.

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Ramsay, through his lobbying efforts, got the legislature to allow for the establishment of water quality districts within the state of Iowa for the water sheds of its lakes.

The purpose of the water quality district, according to Buell, is to establish districts

that could serve the water quality projects in the Lakes Region by providing the matching funds usually required from grants received by taxing the landowners within the water quality district; Those who normally benefit the most from good water quality.

On Jan. 2, 2001 the Clean Water Alliance will petition the Dickinson County supervisors to establish a water quality district around the lakes of the Iowa Great Lakes Region watershed.

The purpose of its establishment will be to provide a funding base for needed matching funds for grants received for water quality projects in the area.

The water quality district will include only the first two tiers of property owners back from a lake's shoreline.

Prior to a vote to establish a water quality district, in addition to the petition, two public hearings must take place on the issue. The first one is hoped to be held in mid-January followed by a second in early spring. The Clean Water Alliance hopes to have the issue put to a vote sometime in May of 2001. If

the issue passes a water quality district would be established for the Iowa Great Lakes watershed. Taxes to provide funding for water quality projects would not be collected until 2002 Buell indicated.

Only those property owners who are registered voters living in the first two tiers back from the lakes within the watershed would be voting on the water quality district's establishment. They, too, would be the only property owners affected by the tax.

"A five member board of trustees will govern the water quality district, two appointed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and three coming from within the water quality district," Buell said.

"Everyone will benefit," Buell added. "Although the water quality district will not initiate any projects; they will allocate funds for the various projects within the watershed regarding water quality. For example, Milford's city water company

WATER QUALITY
Continued on Page 2A

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Producers who have land in the Iowa Great Lakes or Silver Lake watersheds or have land within one mile of the Little Sioux River or one mile from the west fork of the Little Sioux River are located in an EQIP Priority Area Watershed. The sign-up for producers located in priority areas will be held in February.

At that hearing, Wendels

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Staff Writer

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Water Quality District questioned

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

A public hearing on the issue of whether or not to establish a water quality district for property bordering the Iowa Great Lakes met with overall approval by those in attendance at the Dickinson County Supervisor's meeting Tuesday.

However, the way the district was proposed to be funded met with some questions.

About three years ago, according to Dick Ramsay, local lakeshore home owner and chairman of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, a group of local residents met to discuss water quality issues for the area's lakes.

"It was my idea to establish a water quality district for the Iowa Great Lakes. I knew that a law had been passed in 1988 that allowed for the establishment of recreational districts in the state. Two such recreational districts have been established. One for a private lake near Des Moines called Lake Wood. The other is for a lake in Delaware County called Lake Delhi," Ramsay said.

"In 1999 I worked to get an amendment to the recreational districting law passed in the legislature. Through our democratic process I proposed the legislation to the legislature ser-

vice bureau and it was moved through committee, then finally passed out of the legislature with not one "no" vote.

Under the amendment to the recreational district law, three districts can now be established — a recreational district, a water quality district or a combination of a recreational and a water quality district.

Ramsay and the group, Concerned Citizens for Water Quality, decided to pursue the establishment of a water quality district for the Iowa Lakes Region.

The special purpose of a separate water quality district is to raise funds to promote water quality activities. It is limited in its purpose, like a drainage or lighting district, and is also limited in its powers.

According to the amendment passed by the legislature, a water quality district can provide funds for water quality activities like bank stabilization, dredging, water treatment and monitoring, watershed protection, the dissemination of public information or any activity which will improve water quality in a river, stream, or lake. The legislation also includes the creation and maintenance of wetlands or grass waterways as well as funding for activities on lands outside the district

that could affect the quality of the water within the district, i.e., a lakes watershed.

The trustees of a water quality district are elected by the people that live within or own property in the district. As trustees they can work to improve and promote water quality. By law they can acquire real estate and interests in real estate, purchase materials, employ personnel and do whatever is necessary to properly maintain and operate the district. A water quality district can not, however, tax land in the district in excess of 25-cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, tax agricultural land, nor can it pass laws, issue regulations, adopt



DCN Photo by Phil Brown

Dick Ramsay addresses concerned citizens.

ordinances, exercise police powers or condemn land. There would be five trustees for the proposed water quality district.

WATER

Continued on Page 2

Supervisors seek input concerning courthouse

By Sue Laue
Staff Writer

It's back to square one as the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors attempt to devise a plan that will allow for the redevelopment of the courthouse that will better reflect citizens' interests.

In a meeting held last Tuesday, a packed house at the Arnold's Park City Hall



"watershed"

By Steve Anderson
Dickinson County SWCD

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) of Dickinson and Osceola Counties are working on a grant to clean up the Silver Lake watershed. Over the next few weeks there will be articles released that deal with watersheds, lake protection, water quality and talk about the unique features found within the Silver Lake Watershed. Today this article will start basic information about watersheds.

So what is a watershed? Well imagine if you can imagine the Silver Lake watershed as a bowl and at the deepest part is where the lake will be located. The sides of the bowl represent about 15,500 acres of land that surrounds Silver Lake written about in depth in the weeks to come.

SUPERVISORS

Continued From Page 1

Eckert also indicated that other roads scheduled for surfacing in the county might be surfaced using the new mixing technology saving the county additional money. He estimated the savings over conventional road surfacing could be as much as one-third to one-half the cost. He is to report his findings on this issue to the board at their next meeting scheduled for Feb. 28.

Some of the top projects

for the county's roads scheduled for 2001 include: surfacing 240th Avenue at a cost of \$850,000, a bridge replacement on road A48 and bridge work on the Sand Bar Beach Bridge on M56 at a cost of \$300,000.

According to information from the county engineer's office Dickinson County currently has 14 structurally deficient bridges. Only eight are in the county's five year construction program.

BUDGET

Continued From Page 1

Some of the budget items include:

- Lighting along Hwy. 9 & along East Okoboji Lake's south and eastern shore line.

Those additions' residents, which include those people living in Okoboji Woods, Moore Lake Development, the Twin Hills area and Kelly's Beach, have sought to get fire protection established for there area for sometime.

A TIF (tax increment funding) district was established there late last year by the supervisors. The approved urban renewal plan will be used as a mechanism to implement fire protection for the homes in those additions.

The supervisors held a public hearing on the 110th

way on the western gate of Spirit Lake.

- New parking lot on Hill the paving of the road, no agreement was reached as to when or even if the road will be surfaced.

Dan Eckert, Dickinson County Engineer, stated that traffic counts on the road were under 60 vehicles per daily average making the paving of the road a low priority issue for the county in relationship to other county road construction needs.

Other issues affecting the resurfacing issue on 110th Street include the cost (\$1.4 million) and the desire of some residents to leave the well maintained road the way it is.

Even though previous county supervisors had

Facilitator keeps clean water meeting focused

By Greg Drees
Correspondent

In what may become a prolonged series of public meetings, concerned citizens for water protection in the Iowa Great Lakes Area filled the Milford Community Center on Saturday for a brainstorming session that generated a wealth of ideas for clean water preservation and restoration.

Governed by renowned mediator Pat Boddy of Des Moines, the second public forum proved to be more goal-oriented than its precursor. Boddy insisted that the meeting be an information-gathering session, and she kept the assembly focused and organized. Although perhaps falling short of evoking a spirit of cooperation, the meeting nonetheless spawned ideas that both sides agreed were necessary in

order to achieve the ultimate goal of clean water preservation.

Boddy opened the meeting by insisting that it be informational in its scope, and asked those in attendance who they thought were responsible for paying for clean water projects. Anyone who drinks or bathes with water from the lakes, offered the first participant. Property owners county-wide, added another. Business owners, added a third.

The list began to grow quickly as the crowd got into the rhythm of participation, lengthening the list to include farmers, municipalities, all recreational users, sportsmen, soil and sanitary districts, manufacturers and retailers, and anyone putting water into the lakes from the watershed.

What are the criteria,

Boddy then asked, that need to be considered before choices are made? Fairness, said one member from the audience. Affordability, chimed in another. A need to identify the critical threats to the lakes, said a third.

The bulk of the meeting was consumed by talk about the funding alternatives for water protection in the Iowa Great Lakes (see sidebar). The pros and cons of revenue raising choices elicited spirited debate among the audience. Many of the water quality district advocates continued to support the idea of a tax on the first and second tier landowners, saying it offered the best framework for stability in raising yearly revenues. Orville Berg, a commissioner of the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District, said they could apply for grants to

state and federal levels within the district framework. Donna Buehl, head of the Concerned Citizens for Water Quality, reiterated her belief that a water quality district would put the landowners closest to area lakes in charge of clean water projects under the guidance of trustees. Dick Ramsay, author of the amendment to Iowa law that allows the establishment of a water district, reaffirmed his contention that no other tax would so greatly improve property values.

Ramsay, however, conceded later in the meeting that he had met with Dickinson County Attorney Ned Bjornstad to discuss the idea of enlarging the district boundaries.

WATER QUALITY

Continued on Page 2



DCN Photo by Greg Drees

Pat Boddy, Des Moines, facilitated the latest of water quality meetings in Dickinson County.

2001

01-06-01

Letters to the Editor

Water quality district in question

I was pleased to see the article regarding the potential establishment of a Water Quality District ("Supervisors accept water quality district petition") on the front page of your Wednesday, January 3 edition. However, I was dismayed that the article did not mention that the district in question is a tax district and omitted a number of other critical aspects of such a district. For instances, who is in the district and who is not!

The Water Quality Tax District in question is an ill conceived plan to raise tax money from the property owners in the district with some exceptions. That district is...all land which touches the lake, river, or stream and land which but for a road or public land touches the lake, river or stream: (lawyer speak!). To be specific, it is the shore line property owners (first tier) and the second tier property owners (one road back) that will be in the district; taxed to fund a variety of activities to monitor and improve the water quality of the Iowa Great Lakes. The exception is farm property owner exempted, as it was thought the Farm Bureau people would not support such a tax!

The Iowa Great Lakes belong to Iowa. The lakes are used and abused by people from all over Iowa, the Midwest and other parts of the country. The residual and active ingredients of years of artificial fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides sprayed and dusted on farm land has drained into and polluted the water. The plethora of boat traffic, from the 200 horse power outboards to the nuisance jet skis, have emitted literally tons of hydrocarbons directly into the water. The storm sewer run off from properties in the watershed has washed everything from drive-way car wash detergents, discarded antifreeze, and lawn fertilizers, to list but a few pollutants, into the waters. The years of beautiful fire works displays over the waters have allowed detrimental amounts of phosphorus and nitrates, as well as toxic heavy metals, to contaminate the water. (Ironically, the Spirit Lake Protection Association spends approximately 75% of their yearly budget on fire works and at the same time advocates non phosphorus lawn fertilizer!). And, to add insult to injury, there are still countless lakes residents using septic tanks: some within 200 yards of the shore line!

My point is that to charge the shore and near shore-line property owners with the onus of responsibility for providing funds, through taxation, to monitor and improve the water quality of the Iowa Great Lakes is ludicrous! There are countless, equitable and fair ways to raise moneys to support the water quality. A community that can raise \$7 million to Save the Park can certainly raise enough money to Save and Protect the Lakes, without which the Park would not even exist!

The designers of this scheme maintain it is right to tax the lake shore property owners as it is they that profit from having quality water! They are totally wrong. It is the tourist industry; the motels, restaurants, marinas, gas stations, etc., that profit from the people who come to stay a while. It is the real estate agents that won't be making commissions if the water goes bad with e-coli, Eurasian Watermilfoil and/or Zebra mussels. Those are just some of the folks and organizations that should be charged to provide funding to insure a high standard of water quality.

I encourage all the property owners included in the proposed Tax District to attend the January 16 meeting and to bring their thoughts on the matter. You may want to represent your neighbors out of state folks that will not be allowed to vote sounds a bit like taxation without representation! The quality of our water is very important and the maintenance and improvement of that water is the responsibility of all of us that enjoy and appreciate the lakes!

DK Halling
20320 232nd Ave
Milford, Iowa 51351

Editors note: For complete details on the water quality district, see the Dickinson County News issue Saturday, December 23. However, there will be an update after the January 16 meeting.

WATER

Continued from Page 1

Three of those trustees would be elected from residents within the district. The other two would be appointed by the DNR and would have to own property within the district.

"Since water quality agencies already exist in the Lakes Region to deal with most water quality activities, the water quality district here would not be a 'doer' but a 'funder' for water quality activities. That is its purpose. For every dollar received from those within the district matching funds could be

Following the of the public hear then up to the supe decide, with in whether or not to the water quality di

If the supervisors go ahead with the ment of a water qu trict they would the an engineer to prep liminary plat of the boundaries within 30

"Is it fair to tax only those property

Questioned



DCN Photo by Phil Brown

concerned citizens.

nces, exercise police powers or con land. There would be five trustees for proposed water quality district.

WATER

Continued on Page 2

02-21-01

Supervisors approve urban renewal

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

The Dickinson County Supervisors, after holding a public hearing on the issue, approved an Urban Renewal Area II plan for additions along East Okoboji Lake's south and eastern shore line.

Those additions' residents, which include those people living in Okoboji Woods, Moore Lake Development, the Twin Hills area and Kelly's Beach, have sought to get fire protection established for there area for sometime.

A TIF (tax increment funding) district was established there late last year by the supervisors. The approved urban renewal plan will be used as a mechanism to implement fire protection for the homes in those additions.

The supervisors held a public hearing on the 110th

Street road project that runs from Lake Park to Highway 86 in the north west sector of the county.

Although there were residents in attendance at the meeting both for and against the paving of the road, no agreement was reached as to when or even if the road will be surfaced.

Dan Eckert, Dickinson County Engineer, stated that traffic counts on the road were under 60 vehicles per daily average making the paving of the road a low priority issue for the county in relationship to other county road construction needs.

Other issues affecting the resurfacing issue on 110th Street include the cost (\$1.4 million) and the desire of some residents to leave the well maintained road the way it is.

Even though previous county supervisors had

promised to surface the road as far back as 20 years ago, the present board asked Eckert to look into the cost and feasibility of using a new European method of road surfacing as a possible cost saving measure for 110th Street.

SUPERVISORS

Continued on Page 2



are (front row, from left) Edward and Coty

Anderson named watershed coordinator

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

Steve Anderson has been named to the position of coordinator for the Silver Lake Watershed Project by the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

In this new position it will be Anderson's job to write a grant to fund water quality activities for the project. He will also be responsible

for educating the public regarding the project, all public relations for the project and meeting all the requirements for the 319 EPA grant application.

The 319 EPA grant is both a federal and state funded grant from conservationists and the Department of Natural Resources according to Anderson.

Anderson's position is funded by

a grant that was written three months ago but not awarded until January 16. Anderson has from that date until April 16 to complete the grant and have it delivered to Des Moines.

"This is a clean water project grant. It is due April 16. It includes all of the watershed for Silver Lake - the lake situated next to the city of Lake Park in Dickinson County.

Sixty-five percent of the lake's watershed is in Dickinson County. Thirty percent of Silver Lakes watershed is in Osceola County and five percent of its watershed lies in Jackson County in Minnesota. This grant application, however, only covers the two counties in Iowa," Anderson said.

Anderson plans to hold public informational meetings at the end

of January or the first of February to begin an extensive public relations campaign to find out what the people in Silver Lake's watershed want and need in regard to dealing with water quality concerns and issues for their lake.

WATERSHED

Continued on Page 2

Clean Water Alliance develops natural allies

By Jane Shuttleworth
Correspondent

Keeping our water clean has been the focus of a variety of interest groups. The collaborative efforts of these groups is paramount to their success. They seem to be achieving that.

The Clean Water Alliance held its winter meeting on Wednesday, January 17 at the Waitt Water Quality Lab at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Present were representatives of the Department of Natural Resources, Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District, Dickinson County Conservation Board, East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation, Friends of Lakeside Lab, Inter-Lakes Protective Association, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Natural Resources Conservation District, Okoboji Protective Association, Spirit Lake Protective Association, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Clean Water Alliance is a watershed-partnership organization that formed 11 years ago to unify and avoid duplication of water quality protection efforts in the Iowa Great Lakes region. The Alliance now includes over two dozen private and governmental organizations. Meetings are held quarterly and are open to the public.

Tim Terrill, Environmental Specialist, kicked the meeting off with a progress report on the year 2000 accomplishments of the Alliance's Long Range Water Quality Protection Plan.

The long range plan, completed in 1999, is the most comprehensive water quality protection document ever produced for the Iowa Great Lakes, and the first such plan of its kind in the entire state of Iowa.

Water quality protection requires the combined and complimentary efforts of public awareness, water quality monitoring and research, and implementation of best

management practices such as conservation agriculture practices and urban runoff control. The Plan highlights the complexity of individuals, organizations and government agencies needed to implement water quality protection efforts.

At the same time, the plan coordinates and simplifies the task of water quality protection by listing specific goals and objectives and the lead organizations to accomplish those goals.

To date, Terrill indicated several major goals of the plan have been accomplished or initiated. Over 60 acres of wetland were restored to control nutrient runoff, higher than the targeted year 2000 goal of 50 acres. The Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District worked with the Iowa Lakes Resource Conservation and Development agency to develop a local brand of lake-friendly, zero-phosphorus lawn fertilizer, "Lake n Lawn Saver", now available at local nurseries.

The Cooperative Lakes Area Monitoring Program, coordinated by Lakeside Laboratory's Waitt Water Quality Lab, continues in its second year and volunteer participation in 2000 increased from 28 to over 40 volunteers. The Dickinson County Conservation Board, Iowa Lakeside Lab, Iowa Lakes Community College and local schools have developed water quality curriculum for middle school children. However, the plan is a statement of goals and is not a funding source. Many goals remain outstanding and existing projects are in danger of being discontinued due to lack of funding. Local funding sources are needed to attract government grants for wetland restoration and other conservation agriculture practices.

Traditionally, non-profit

CLEAN WATER

Continued on Page 2

The plan coordinates and simplifies the task of water quality protection by listing specific goals and objectives.



Don't miss DCCB's Sandhill Crane Tour

Sandhill Crane Tour will be held March 16-18 in Grand Island, Neb. **March 3 is the last day to sign up.**

Each spring some 500,000 Sandhill Cranes gather along the Platte River "Staging Area" during their northward migration. Add 7-9 million geese and ducks, thousands of songbirds, a few Bald Eagles and Whooping Cranes and you have a truly spectacular wildlife phenomenon!

Other highlights of this tour include:

- Pioneer Park Nature Center with live raptors, buffalo, and elk plus more at Lincoln, Neb.
- Crane Meadow Nature Center and guided bus tour
- Special Dinner program "Crane Lore" will be given by Naturalist Eric Volden of the Crane Meadows Nature

Center

• Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History and IMAX Theater

• University of Nebraska State Museum and Mueller Planetarium

• A Sandhill Crane Sunrise on the Platte River, plus much more

COST: \$90 per person plus motel. Cost includes: transportation, entrance fees to Crane Meadow Nature Center, Hastings Museum, and University of Nebraska State Museum, Friday night dinner and naturalist program, and IMAX Theatre admission.

For information contact Barbara Tagami, Naturalist for Dickinson County Conservation Board at (712) 338-4238.

Ande

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

Steve Anderson has taken the position of coordinator of the Silver Lake Watershed by the Dickinson County Water Conservation District. In this new position, Anderson's job is to write and fund water quality activities for the project. He will also be responsible

added. It could be six months before Anderson knows whether the grant application has been accepted and the project funded. Silver Lake has some unique characteristics. Although it is about 10 feet deep at its deepest point, at one time its average depth was 30 feet.

Silver Lake also has a unique area adjacent to its southwest border. A fen, first identified in 1898, is now marked by the state of Iowa as a preserve. There is a concern for the fen too. Fens are a collection of water that usually originates when water from the side of a hill drains down to form a basin. Over a period of thousands of years plants grow in the fen, die, and eventually build up and form peat. The water in the basin, confined by clay, comes up through cracks in the clay to fill it. The water in the basin has a very high pH. It is hard water that becomes home to rare plants, even orchids according to Anderson. The fen contains areas similar

son and his to control into Silver the fen. ment from off is rich ents. E phospho nitrogen. O lake the nu sediment severe algae It is also stirred up b heavy boat adding to th

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CD player donated by Kiwanis. Four remote control by Radio Shack top prize donated. Additional prizes awarded, including categories of prize game high school youth through age category through a color Gam games donated.

Water quality: what is sediment and what is its function?

By Steve Anderson
Silver Lake Clean Water Project Coordinator

This is the second in a series of four articles that will talk about concerns with lakes and watersheds with a special emphasis on Silver Lake and the Silver Lake Watershed.

Sediment is a natural pollutant in our lakes. In the Silver Lake watershed, sediment is a primary pollutant that is slowly filling up Silver Lake. So what is sediment?

Well, sediment can be just about anything that can be carried in the water and can be suspended in the water for any period of time. Sediment is usually thought of as muck or mud, or in other words, soil. Organic material can also be considered sediment. Organic materials would be like plant materials that are breaking down. Usually organic materials will break down quickly but still leave particles that will settle out and what is left is sediment. Sediment can be classified as a pollutant. Larger than natural sediment loads can limit fish habitat, lower dissolved oxygen levels, lower water clarity, and also increase nutrients which in turn cause large algae blooms. So what sediments are is a type of pollution, which means that soil and dead plant materials like, yard waste, are all polluting agents.

Sediment is commonly known as the materials that are filling up the lake. Usually lakes will naturally fill up with sediment and it usually takes thousands of years. Yet most of the lakes in Iowa are filling up faster than they would naturally. The sediments are entering the lakes at very high rates and it is due to human contribution. Once a lake gets filled to a certain point usually people will try removing all the sediment in the lake otherwise known as dredging. Dredging a lake is usually a multi-million-dollar process that can take up 10 years or more to accomplish. Yet dredging is a worthless process if practices are not done to prevent the sediments from coming into the lake. So, where does the sediment come from and what can be done to prevent sediment from getting into the lake?

Well the Silver Lake Watershed is about 16,000 acres in size and about 76% of those acres are agricultural cropland, which, contributes to the sediment coming into the lake. Yet, the city storm sewers also attribute to the sediment loads entering Silver Lake. Other sources of sediment can come from shoreline erosion and any other type of runoff that will enter the lake or a stream coming into Silver Lake. These are the areas that will be targeted by the Silver Lake Watershed

Clean Water Project that the Soil and Water Conservation District of Dickinson and Osceola counties are working to establish.

From the agricultural side of the watershed a Clean Water Project could help to minimize the sediment delivery to the lake by working with the landowners and operators to establish proper conservation practices. The practices that would be to use are like filter strips along the drainage ditches that drain into Silver Lake. There could be some areas where grassed waterways could be established to minimize erosion. Also terraces could be established to minimize erosion in some areas. Wetland restorations would also help to slow the sediments coming into the lake as well. Working with the landowners in the watershed, the Silver Lake Clean Water Projects goal will be to limit soil movement in the field and prevent it from getting into the drainage ditches so that it doesn't get to the lake.

As far as working in the city of Lake Park the con-

cerns that will be addressed have to do with storm sewer drainage and with shoreline erosion. The storm sewers that drain into Silver Lake are emptying the water from some of the streets of Lake Park. Just think of the dirt, the sand, the leaves, and what ever else you have seen go down a storm sewer drain.

Also, think about the stuff you may have poured down a storm sewer drain? Well it may have gone to the lake or it may have gone to the river never the less it did empty into and it could have contaminated a water body. A Clean Water Project would like to minimize the amounts of sediment entering the lake. Most of this would be done with public education about where the storm sewers go and why things should not be poured down the drain. A program to stenciling the storm drains that go to the lake would be created to show where the drain empties. Also through the Clean Water Project the area of sediment catch basins could be explored.

A sediment catch basin is an area that will slow down water to allow the sediment to fall out of the water and allow only the water to get to the lake. These steps will prevent the sediment from getting into the lake and will clean up the lake slowly.

Shoreline erosion will also be addressed through the Silver Lake Clean Water. The Clean Water Project would create a program for educating people on current methods to preventing shoreline erosion.

Methods of erosion control plantings that would hold the soil in place would be explored. In some cases, placing field rock on the

shoreline or, riprapping the shoreline, can be done to keep the waves from slowly eating up the shoreline.

By holding soil back on the land, minimizing the sediment delivery from storm sewers and preventing shoreline erosion the water quality in Silver Lake would increase significantly. Fish habitat could be restored, dissolved oxygen levels would increase, and water clarity would increase.

With cleaner water there maybe more recreational use and value that will come to Silver Lake. These are some of the goals that the Silver Lake Clean Water Project is hoping to achieve.

Outdoors News

Wetlands program enhances CRP

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graduation from ISU, and was eventually promoted to assistant hatchery manager. In 1992, Muhm transferred out to the wildlife unit at the Hogsback, a move he feels helped shape his career as a habitat specialist.

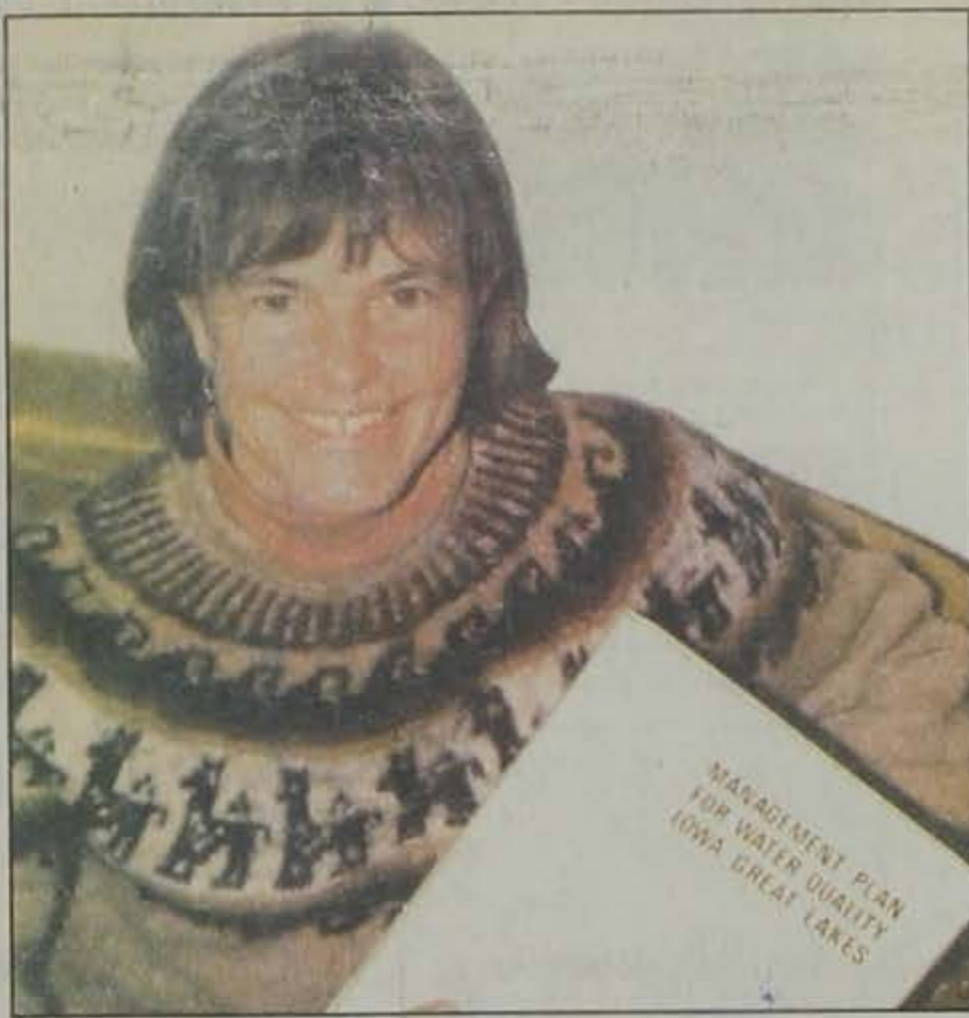
His new assignment as a wildlife specialist for Clay, Dickinson and Osceola Counties is a one-year appointment to help promote government programs that are conservation-related. "There are a lot of good programs out there," Muhm explained, "sponsored by the USDA, that the Soil and Water Conservation Service just doesn't have the manpower to promote. It's my job to get the word out and to assist the NRCS staff with what they need and also talk to people about a lot

promote soil and water quality, with the wildlife benefits as an added bonus."

Providing financial incentives to farmers and rural landowners is critical to the success of any private lands conservation programs, and Muhm feels the new "Wetlands in CRP" provides just that. "The future of wildlife in Iowa is on private lands," he explained, "and this project fits into the continuous CRP sign-up. It targets problem wet spots in row crop areas that can't be tilled out or get flooded with any significant rainfall." Besides the obvious water, soil and wildlife benefits, the financial incentives are also there. "I will be searching for potential sites in the next couple of weeks, and I anticipate the interest will be keen," Muhm continued. "The USDA will pay for 50-percent of the restoration, and a 40-percent additional cost-sharing assistance is available for the sign-up, adding up to a 90-percent payback incentive. This includes the upland seeding costs and any tile and dirt work necessary for the project."

Sign-up contracts will be for 10 and 15-year durations, with an upfront \$10 per acre per year of contract. Muhm expects the timetable to take another 60 days for final rules acceptance, followed by a month of training for NRCS staff, and sign-up sometime in June. That would leave actual field work to begin after next fall's harvest and to resume next spring. Muhm said up to 70-percent of landowners who have restored wetlands in the area under different programs have renewed their contracts upon expiration.

The new "Wetlands in CRP" program is also beneficial to the Iowa Great Lakes watershed. Muhm expects the undertaking to be highly successful and anticipates the work to be continued



Jane Shuttleworth

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About three years ago, Shuttleworth took a leave of absence from her job and returned

CLEAN WATER

Continued from Page 1

ate a lot of dialogue among
concerned groups and indi-



Signup period near end for EQUIP

The second signup period for cost-share funds from the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) will end March 30. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Iowa is offering the second signup after it received a supplement EQUIP funding of \$900,000, for a total of \$1.9 million available for statewide resource concerns. Signup is at local USDA Service Centers.

EQUIP offers cost-share for installing conservation practices, generally at a 50 percent rate, as well as incentive payments. According to Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for the USDA-NRCS, the three statewide resource concerns for 2001

are 1) livestock manure management and grazing lands, 2) soil erosion, and 3) priority lakes, municipal water supply impoundments, lakes, agricultural drainage wells and DNR priority cold water streams.

Any applications not funded during this signup can be held until additional funding is available, said Larry Beeler, an NRCS conservationist helping administer the EQUIP program.

Applications eligible for statewide resource concerns funds are primarily those from areas outside of the 31 funded priority areas. However, some applications within a priority area that address one of

the statewide resource concerns may also be eligible, said Beeler. To be sure, landowners should stop by their local USDA Service Center to see if they are eligible.

Conservation plans, including comprehensive resource treatment, must be developed for the entire area that will be included in the EQUIP contract. Under EQUIP, USDA provides technical assistance, up to 50 percent cost-share on certain structural practices and incentive payments to producers who enter 5 to 10 year contracts based on conservation plans. There is \$10,000 per year limit, with a total limit of \$50,000. Landowners should expect a fall

construction date for conservation practices included in contracts approved during this signup.

Statewide EQUIP practices include but are not limited to: grass waterways, manure management facilities, terracing, pest management, ag drainage, wellhead protection and pasture management. Other practices include tree planting, wind breaks, stripcropping, conservation tillage, organic crop production and wildlife habitat management.

For more information or to apply for EQUIP, contact your local USDA Service Center. (Spirit Lake 336.3782 Ext. 2)

03-28-01



Third in a series...

03-03-01

CLEAN WATER

Everybody wants it, but at what cost?

On an everlasting search

By Greg Drees
Correspondent

Wherever her early travels took her in search of the right causes, and whenever she needed an anchor to ease her apprehensions, she could find solace on the shores of Des Moines Beach on West Okoboji. Her grandmother's cottage was always there, a family place where the intrinsic bonds of the Iowa Great Lakes could be further enhanced.

And always there has been the need to seek answers to the environment. Jane Shuttleworth is now in her element, working tirelessly to unearth the answers to water quality. Certainly she is not alone, as a cadre of concerned citizens work together for the right solutions to water issues in the Iowa Great Lakes Region.

Shuttleworth, who for two years now has coordinated public environmental programs in association with the Lakeside Lab, has championed clean water causes and sought educational avenues to better inform the public of the needs for water quality efforts. Through private grant monies, she coordinates campaigns that emphasize water stewardship through education, research and monitoring. Shuttleworth recruits and supervises over 40 volunteers who monitor waters on 11 regional lakes, and directs guided

nature tours in a new phase of integrating the resources of Lakeside Lab with the overall goals of water quality.

Shuttleworth was an ardent supporter of the original concept of establishing a water quality district that would raise project revenues through a first and second tier landowner taxation, but after a pair of public meetings she and other proponents are now open to alternative fundraising methods and are researching the best opportunities. "We needed to create a forum and form a body that could raise local monies and attract government money to address water quality issues," she explained. "Whatever turns out to be the best way to achieve that consistent source of local revenues, we will find it."

Shuttleworth's ties with environmental causes are deep-rooted. As an annual visitor to her grandmother's cottage, she developed an early and eternal affinity for the Iowa Great Lakes. While earning a degree in environmental studies from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, she received an invitation to spend a summer in study at the Lakeside Lab on West Okoboji. "That experience gave me a deeper understanding of the ecology and landscape of the area," she said. "I became immersed in the living concept of the prairie, the wetlands, the geology of the

region."

While helping her father achieve state preservation status for the family farm, which is now the renowned "Ocheyden Mound", Shuttleworth rubbed shoulders with prominent naturalists and biologists on the preservation committee who encouraged her to seek a naturalist position. "I was trying to figure out what to do with my life, and that sounded like a pretty good idea," she recalled. "At that time (1980), only 17 counties in Iowa had naturalists, so I wrote the other 82 counties, and one that responded was Dickinson County."

Shuttleworth spent only one summer in that position before packing her bags for Panama and the Smith Tropical Research Institute.

She spent the next eight years in Central America in several jobs that studied the ecology of rain forests and the reintroduction of iguanas into tropical habitats.

Back in the states, Shuttleworth landed work with an environmental engineering company. She spent seven years traveling the



Jane Shuttleworth

country writing impact statements on endangered species, wetlands conditions and other environmental issues.

At least once a year, however, Okoboji drew her back. "I always maintained my bonds with the Lakeside Lab and my grandmother's cottage," she explained. "It was always a way to reflect on what I was doing in life and how it fit into the whole scheme of things."

About three years ago, Shuttleworth took a leave of absence from her job and returned

CLEAN WATER

Continued from Page 1

ate a lot of dialogue among concerned groups and individuals.

"We need to educate people," she said. "For instance, many folks don't understand that the huge majority of state water quality funds are spent on agricultural land use issues. That's fine, and it doesn't exempt the farmer from facilitating good environmental practices. But we also need monies for issues not traditionally addressed like evasive species threats and urban water management issues like sanitary sewer districts and urban wetlands."

Shuttleworth will continue her work of water monitoring and education awareness in conjunction with the Lakeside Lab, and will research with other concerned citizens the best way to provide local revenues for water quality projects.

In so many ways, her work has come full circle. She can remember, as a young girl, looking out on West Okoboji and sensing a special affinity for what she felt and witnessed. She wants other children to share that same sensation she enjoyed in her youth, as she does now.

Signup period near

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DCN Outdoors News

New wetlands program enhances CRP

By Greg Drees
Correspondent

They grant incredible beauty and ecological diversity to the landscape. More and more, wildlife biologists and nature lovers are seeking places to restore wetlands, with the knowledge that these prairie jewels are enhancing the earth in ways once not understood.

Recently Maury Muhm, habitat specialist for the Department of Natural Resources, announced another wetlands program that will certainly attract the attention of regional rural landowners. Muhm, who works out of the Big Sioux Wildlife Unit office at Kettleman Hogsback, will serve as a private lands wildlife specialist for the United States Department of Agriculture's "Wetlands in CRP" program. Although final details and approvals await official declaration from the Bush administration, Muhm wishes to make the qualifications known to property owners who have an interest in establishing or restoring small wetlands.

The program is designed to enroll wetlands and surrounding upland buffers into the continuous sign-up Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Iowa is one of only six states (Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Montana being the others) that will participate. This geographic outline comprises the historic "prairie pothole" wetland landscape where the program will be tested. About 150,000 total acres will be restored to wetlands and surrounding uplands.

Several requirements are mandatory for land to be eligible. It must have a wetland, or a potential wetland, as defined by the USDA, and that basin may not exceed five acres. The property must also have been cropped in three of the last ten years. The proposed wetland may not impede existing neighboring drainage, and the adjacent buffer may not exceed three times the size of the restored wetland. A five-acre wetland, for instance, may have 15 acres of surrounding grassland buffer, for which a CRP annual rental is paid, plus a bonus incentive payment at sign-up.

Muhm, who was born in Omaha and raised in Des Moines, earned a fish and wildlife degree from Iowa State University. He was raised in a hunting and fishing family and nurtured an affinity to the natural world at an early age. Two summers of working at Gull State Park on West Okoboji enamored Muhm to the Iowa Great Lakes Area. He took a full-time job with the fisheries crew at the hatchery in Spirit Lake after

graduation from ISU, and was eventually promoted to assistant hatchery manager. In 1992, Muhm transferred out to the wildlife unit at the Hogsback, a move he feels helped shape his career as a habitat specialist.

His new assignment as a wildlife specialist for Clay, Dickinson and Osceola Counties is a one-year appointment to help promote government programs that are conservation-related. "There are a lot of good programs out there," Muhm explained, "sponsored by the USDA, that the Soil and Water Conservation Service just doesn't have the manpower to promote. It's my job to get the word out and to assist the NRCS staff with what they need and also talk to people about a lot

promote soil and water quality, with the wildlife benefits as an added bonus."

Providing financial incentives to farmers and rural landowners is critical to the success of any private lands conservation programs, and Muhm feels the new "Wetlands in CRP" provides just that. "The future of wildlife in Iowa is on private lands," he explained, "and this project fits into the continuous CRP sign-up. It targets problem wet spots in row crop areas that can't be tilled out or get flooded with any significant rainfall." Besides the obvious water, soil and wildlife benefits, the financial incentives are also there. "I will be searching for potential sites in the next couple of weeks, and I anticipate the interest will be keen," Muhm continued. "The USDA will pay for 50-percent of the restoration, and a 40-percent additional cost-sharing assistance is available for the sign-up, adding up to a 90-percent payback incentive. This includes the upland seeding costs and any tile and dirt work necessary for the project."

Sign-up contracts will be for 10 and 15-year durations, with an upfront \$10 per acre per year of contract. Muhm expects the timetable to take another 60 days for final rules acceptance, followed by a month of training for NRCS staff, and sign-up sometime in June. That would leave actual field work to begin after next fall's harvest and to resume next spring. Muhm said up to 70-percent of landowners who have restored wetlands in the area under different programs have renewed their contracts upon expiration.

The new "Wetlands in CRP" program is also beneficial to the Iowa Great Lakes watershed. Muhm expects the undertaking to be highly successful and anticipates the work to be continued well beyond the first pilot year, resulting in more permanent positions for similar programs. He hopes to inform as many landowners as possible about this and other wetland restoration programs. "There are other alternatives out there, also," he said. "The Wetlands Reserve Program, for instance, offers similar soil, water and wildlife benefits and pays up to 100-percent reimbursement for restoration costs. It lets landowners retain control of access and remain the owners of the land. They may use it for their own recreational uses and allows them to sell the land at a future date, including any easements. It's a win-win situation."

Landowners interested in the "Wetlands in CRP" program or any other wildlife enhancement projects may call Muhm at 336-1485 or 330-2562, or he may be e-mailed at <mdmuhm@rconnect.com>

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Sign

The second sign-up
funds from the Envi
Improvement Program
March 30. The Natura
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the second sign-up af
plement EQUIP funding of \$900,000, for a
total of \$1.9 million available for
statewide resource concerns. Sign-up is at
local USDA Service Centers.

EQUIP offers cost-share for installing
conservation practices, generally at a 50
percent rate, as well as incentive pay-
ments. According to Leroy Brown, State
Conservationist for the USDA-NRCS, the
three statewide resource concerns for 2001

Any applications not funded during this
sign-up can be held until additional funding
is available, said Larry Beeler, an NRCS
conservationist helping administer the
EQUIP program.

Applications eligible for statewide
resource concerns funds are primarily
those from areas outside of the 31 funded
priority areas. However, some applications
within a priority area that address one of



Maury Muhm

Muhm will direct the new "Wetlands NCRP"
program.

of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and DNR programs
that are available to rural landowners. Four
wildlife technicians have been temporarily trans-
ferred to the Little Sioux Wildlife Unit to assist
Muhm in the private lands project.

Muhm explained that Pheasants Forever has
been instrumental in the undertaking of many of
these programs. "We have about 20 people
across Iowa in Americore positions, funded
through the DNR by PF," he said. "When PF saw
the continuous CRP sign-ups with the buffer strip
program, they really jumped on it and promoted
it. They were smart enough to see it as a way to

Koster stepping out in faith

Baptist worship leader ministers indeed

By Mike Jordan 03-31-01

Dickinson County News

It was not a banner year for Tom Koster in 1995. It was in June that Koster started having severe lower back and leg pain. He thought at first the pain was the result of his working in his back yard.

"I had been working to put a fence up in our back yard. For three or four days after that I experienced intense pain in my legs and lower back. It was not really debilitating pain, but severe enough," Koster said. "I thought it was from the fence work."

"I was working in floor care and maintenance at Dickinson County Memorial Hospital. The pain was still there at work and I went to see Dr. Donovan about it. He ordered an MRI at work that night. Donovan contacted me with the results of the MRI. I had a tumor around my spinal cord," Koster continued.

"Donovan contacted the Mayo Clinic to see what to do next. The following week I went to Rochester. There they gave me more tests, more MRIs. I talked to a neurosurgeon. I had the choice of eventual paralysis and pain or surgery with a chance of paralysis but removal of the growing cancerous tumor," Koster said.

"They removed the tumor in pieces. They got 85 to 95 percent of the tumor out during the surgery. Radiation therapy was used to remove the rest of it," Koster declared.

After spending a month at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Koster returned to his home in Spirit Lake. He started therapy at the hospital here and continued his radiation therapy for six weeks after that.

Koster had worked as an athletic trainer and exercise therapist in rehabilitation at the Dixon Chiropractic Clinic in Spirit Lake prior to his working at the hospital.

He knew a lot about physical therapy and realized his chances of walking again were not good. That fact was confirmed by the doctors who told him he would probably be confined to a wheel chair for the rest of his life.

Although Koster has some feeling in his legs and his muscles work, he has difficulty controlling his balance without his crutches. However his crutches allow him to walk — a major milestone over the doctor's initial projections. He can also stand unassisted and drives a van which is equipped with hand controls.

"People wave to me when I'm driving. I suppose a lot of them think I'm stuck up because I don't wave back. They don't realize, I guess, that I'm busy using my hands to drive my van," Koster laughed.

After many long hours of therapy and rehabilitation, Koster began to teach chiropractic assistant courses at Iowa Lakes Community College in 1997.

He also began teaching CPR classes at the hospital with the emergency medical services.

With the help of Vocational Rehabilitation Services out of Spencer, Koster began looking at starting his own business in 1997 also. In 1998 he got it up and floating.

That business, "Adaptive Fishing," is designed to allow people with disabilities the opportunity to fish.

Based in Spirit Lake, Koster takes his Adaptive Fishing pontoon boat to the lakes of the Iowa Great Lakes so just about anybody can go fishing.

The specially designed pontoon boat has plenty of room on board. The boat is easily boarded via a folding ramp system and once a person is on board the widely spaced seating allows for easy maneuvering of wheel chairs, too.

An avid and knowledgeable fisherman, Koster has his Adaptive Fishing boat equipped with a fish/depth finder, automatic anchor control, an outboard motor with power trim and tilt as well as an electric trolling motor for precise control to the hottest fishing spots.

Koster has worked with YMCA's Camp



Foster providing fishing camps for kids. He has also provided private guide service and worked the paralyzed veterans of America fishing tournament two years in a row. Koster has taken both boy and girl scouts fishing as well as several church camp attendees.

But Koster hasn't stopped there. He is also a part-time project coordinator for the Resource Conservation District. He works in computer recycling, is instrumental in developing and marketing Lakes n Lawn Saver

Their son, Paul, is 10 and the youngest daughter, Cierra, is six.

"This has been stressful on my family, especially Allison and Paul. They knew me when I could do what other dads do. Cierra was too young to remember. She only knows her daddy in his wheel chair or walking on crutches," Koster stated.

"When I got home from Rochester, Paula and I had to decide where we would go from here. This has been so stressful for her. We

longer do."

"The prognosis for me was not good. They basically told me, 'get used to being in a wheel chair, you'll be there for life.' I remember the first step I took with braces on. I was using parallel bars and my arms for support. The muscles came back. I didn't know if they would. A lot of prayers were said to make the connections. The majority of my leg muscles still work but I can't feel them," Koster emphasized.

As far as a career goal, Koster has one, or I should say several. "I plan to continue in the direction I'm headed now with Adaptive Fishing, my work with environmental concerns and RC&D as well as leading the Spirit Lake Baptist Church," Koster explained.

However Koster knows full well the tumor could grow back. "God was pruning me. He wanted to get my attention and He did. You can look at this two ways... just give up or the second way, which can be found in 1 Thesolonians 5: 16-18: 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'"

"It is an attitude thing," Koster reiterated. "My perspective changed. I realized that money is not always the important issue, now. I have learned to enjoy the simpler things like a beautiful sunrise, flowers and rainbows. I know now that you don't try to do it alone. Regardless of your situation, put your trust in Christ. Give your situation, whatever it is, to Him. It is a faith question. God is always there. He takes away worry. We are not supposed to worry about the things of life. Eventually when you accept things, and go forward, your attitude changes. You put your trust in Christ and everything goes a lot better. Prayer is a big part of it," Koster concluded.

"My perspective changed. I realized that money is not always the important issue, now. I have learned to enjoy the simpler things like a beautiful sunrise, flowers and rainbows. I know now that you don't try to do it alone. Regardless of your situation, put your trust in Christ. Give your situation, whatever it is, to Him."

environmentally-friendly lawn fertilizer, and runs a backyard conservation program.

Koster has also worked in data entry for the Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District and is an assistant commissioner with them.

During his busy schedule at work Koster found time, evenings and week-ends, to take a lay minister training program. That program lasted many months but culminated last July in his being named the worship leader at the Spirit Lake Baptist Church, the oldest church in Dickinson County.

Koster and his wife, Paula, have a young family. Their eldest daughter, Allison, is 12.

decided we could give up or fight on," Koster added.

"Before I got home people had already made the changes in our house so I could get around in it. They built a ramp for my wheel chair and changed doorways so I could get where I need to be in my own home. They were incredible.

"I was looking at being in a wheel chair the rest of my life but God beat that one. He had a better place for me. Here I am walking with crutches," Koster declared.

"Simple chores, like lawn mowing and scooping snow, many of the little things I did before and took for granted, I could no

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Duncan to All-State - p. 7

Harkin holds ag-bill hearing

By Phil Brown
Staff Writer

U.S. Senator Tom Harkin held a "field hearing" on agricultural and rural community issues for a standing-room-only crowd crammed into a meeting room at The Hotel in Spencer at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Harkin is chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. He opened the hearing by inviting audience participation; saying, "Your comments, ideas and recommendations will be a great help to my colleagues and me as we work to write new legislation and improve programs affecting agriculture and rural communities."

The intent of the new farm bill is to address the "broad range of farm and rural issues" and to "improve both farm income and conservation."

Representatives of six ag-related organizations presented their views on "broad range" components of the proposed farm bill: Dr. Neil Harl, ISU economist; Joan Blundall, Director of the Seasons Center for Community Mental Health, Spencer; Don Mason, President-Elect of the Iowa Corn Growers Assoc.; Mark Hamilton, Positively Iowa, (and publisher of the *Times-Citizen Newspapers*), Iowa Falls; Duane Sand, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Des Moines; and Phil Sundblad, Iowa Farm Bureau Fed-

eration, Albert City.

Presenters commented on agricultural-related economics, energy, natural resource preservation; rural community social problems caused by low commodity prices; farm market and distribution concentrations; and global food and agriculture policies.

Neil Harl, noting Harkin's assertion that "farm families and rural communities in Iowa have not shared in our nation's prosperity," (referring to the 1996 farm bill) he listed the "loss of the safety net protection against low prices"; the higher proportion of farm income coming from government programs (as income falls more government money is needed to replace it); and the loss of the U.S. domination of world commodity markets among his concerns. "The problem, in short, is too much production of basic agricultural commodities."

Among other remedies he suggested a policy of less direct subsidies, raising the CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) to 45 million acres (from 33.5 million acres), and restructuring government policies. Referring to the emergence of corn and soybean production in Brazil and China, he advocated that a "global food and agriculture policy" be negotiated in addition to a national one.

Relating to Harl's reference to the "...uncertainty for producers and input suppliers, storage

and marketing firms and shippers", Joan Blundall said, "unless there is a way to stabilize farm income as well as income related to agricultural businesses, there will (continue to be) a toll on the health and well being of rural citizens."

Underscoring the statement, she cited some antidotal cases showing how unstable, low farm income can effect rural people — enumerating mental health problems caused by stress and depression, the loss of family farms and businesses, lack of medical care and counseling funds, higher than average suicide rates in the nine county N. W. Iowa region (17.3 per cent compared with 11.6 per cent for Iowa and 11.4 per cent for the nation); the depletion of retirement savings; and the need to sell land and family heirlooms for living and medical expenses.

She said most rural health programs are based on urban models, and are therefor less applicable. A relative lack of health care insurance for rural families adds to the dilemma, as well as the need for more mental health professionals in rural America.

To cope with the situation she declared that "health care reform is critical" and that tax relief programs for loan repayment, continued support for rural Health Net-

HARKIN AG-HEARING

Continued on Page 2



DCN Photo by Phil Brown

U. S. Senator Tom Harkin leads Ag Committee Hearing

Sen. Harkin solicits comments on a new farm bill at a Senate Ag Committee field hearing for Lakes Area citizens. Several ag-related organizations participate.

Board Opens Emergency Investigation

The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance

Iowa's Pro-Active Leader in Water Quality Stewardship

By Jane Shuttleworth

Correspondent

03-31-01

The Iowa Great Lakes region is unique in Iowa for its cluster of beautiful, natural lakes and lilting glacial topography. These natural features have made the region a popular recreational area and vacation spot for over one-hundred years.

A lesser known fact of the region's history, however, is the inspirational role it has played in the formation of Iowa's conservation movement.

From the turn of the twentieth century to the present new millennium, the Iowa Great Lakes region has inspired conservation achievements ranging from the writing of the first fish and game laws to the establishment of public parks; from the first private/government partnerships to restore wetlands for wildlife and water quality to the first large scale infrastructure to manage waste-water treatment.

Today, the Lakes Area continues to be a pro-active leader in environmental leadership under the umbrella of the Clean Water Alliance. Organized in 1990, the Alliance is a partnership organization including over two dozen private and governmental groups that formed to increase cooperation and avoid duplication of watershed protection efforts in the Iowa Great Lakes.

Since its establishment, member organizations of the Alliance have worked together to restore over 200 wetlands, to implement con-

servation easements and grassed waterways, raised funds to build the Waitt Water Quality Lab, developed a local brand of lake-friendly lawn fertilizer, established a watershed-wide lake monitoring program, and the list goes on. Yet these are only recent accomplishments. To examine the history of the Alliance member organizations is to examine the history of Iowa's conservation movement.

Iowa Lakeside Laboratory

Conservation begins with education and awareness, and in the late 1800's the Lakes Area attracted the curiosity of Iowa's founding educators, scientists and conservationists. Among them was Dr. Thomas MacBride, who grew up on a farm and became a professor of botany, geology and zoology. A man of many accomplishments, Dr. MacBride initiated Iowa's park and preserve system, was a founding member of the Iowa Academy of Science, and was the first president of the University of Iowa.

MacBride also left a special gift for the people of Iowa in the Iowa Great Lakes region. MacBride and his colleagues conducted many expeditions to Northwest Iowa to explore its lakes, wetlands, prairies and woodlands. Impressed by the concentration of so many different ecosystems in such close proximity, MacBride and his colleagues dreamed of establishing a permanent outdoor classroom in the Iowa Great Lakes region for the people of Iowa to "learn about nature in nature". Back then, such an idea was unheard of, but in 1909, MacBride's dream came true with the establishment of Iowa Lakeside Laboratory on the shores of Lake West Okoboji. Lakeside was one of the first biological field stations established in the United States, and over the years has attracted students from every state in the union and from all over the world.

Today, Lakeside plays an active role in water-quality monitoring, research and education, thanks to the efforts of the local lake associations and the non-profit group, Friends of Lakeside Lab. Together these organizations raised funds to build the Waitt Water Quality Lab and Classroom, the first year-around teaching facility at Lakeside. Now K-12 students can visit the Lakeside, thanks to collaborative efforts between the Dickinson County Conservation Board, Iowa Lakes Community College and Lakeside. Lakeside also conducts watershed research and coordinates the Cooperative Lakes Area Monitoring Program (CLAMP), a group of over 40 volunteers from eleven lakes that are trained to collect water samples for lab analysis.

Okoboji Protective Association

Even before Lakeside offered its first courses, however, a group of local and summer residents had formed perhaps what was the first non-profit conservation organization in Iowa — the Okoboji Protective Association. Founded in 1906, the goals of the OPA are as pertinent today as when the organization was established almost 100 years ago: to protect and monitor water quality, to support education, research and public awareness about the lake ecosystem, and to prevent landscape practices harmful to water quality.

The first environmental issue to be tackled by the OPA and others in the Iowa Great Lakes region was the problem of human and livestock sewage disposal. Although the OPA played a leading role in bringing attention to the problem, in the early 1900's there was still no such thing as sanitary engineering, public health departments, water treatment plants or government programs to promote the development of such infrastructure. Excerpts from old OPA bulletins not only document this concern over a forty-year period, but the writing style of the times:

1906: "Sewage disposal and the best methods to prevent the contamination of West Okoboji Lake were the major concerns discussed at the first meeting OPA in 1906."

1912: "No swine should wallow on the shores, cattle have no business standing in the shallows; of course the very thought of the entrance of sewage into the waters of the lake is abhorrent to the fine sense of property of every right-thinking man."

1912: "Every lake dweller should make sanitation his hobby."

By 1930, the impact of raw sewage and industrial waste on Iowa lakes and streams had become a state-wide concern. However, scientific understanding and jurisdictional responsibility remained vague, and progress on the matter stagnated like the stench of untreated sewage.

Enter the ancestors of the DNR. Interestingly enough, it was the State Conservation Commission (today the Department of Natural Resources) and not the Public Health Department that led the charge to address lake pollution from sewage.

In 1932, the Board of Conservation and the Fish and Game Commission, the predecessor organizations to the State Conservation Commission, jointly funded Lakeside Lab to investigate the relationship between noxious algae blooms and sewage pollution. By then, sewage treatment technology was being developed, and William Woodcock of the Board of Conservation began to promote the idea of a treatment plant for the Iowa Great Lakes to protect the waters for fisheries. At that time, the issue was defined not as a public health problem but as a lake management issue, and the Department of Public Health still considered the dumping of waste into lakes and streams as a legitimate use of public waters.

In the mid-1930s, the Board of Conservation and the Fish and Game Commission consolidated into the State Conservation Commission, an action which reduced the government agencies involved in the problem. However, the need for sewage disposal was not concentrated in a single community but dispersed around the shoreline of the entire great lakes. A novel approach was needed as to how to fund and administer such a system. The approach that would be adopted is discussed in another OPA bulletin excerpt: "Mr. Badgerow (OPA Board member) is in favor of the creation of an Iowa Great Lakes Com-

mission having the same power that a city council would have over sanitation, public safety, etc." (1927?)

Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary Sewer System: the "Eighth Wonder of the World"

In 1936, the first version of the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary Sewer Commission was established with representatives from each lake town. It was no simple task to determine the financial responsibility of each town and the county, and the project would take several decades to be completed.

Today the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary Sewer System may well be the "eighth wonder of the world", not only because it accomplished the elimination of a major source of pollution from the lakes region, but due to the social, financial and political obstacles that had to be overcome before it could be constructed or even conceptualized. The system is also a major engineering feat. Constructed over relatively level terrain, the system includes 63 lift stations, over 100 miles of gravity and pressure sewers and a 3.8 million gallon-per-day capacity waste-water treatment plant that fluctuates between serving 10,000 people during winter months to over 80,000 people in summer months.

The East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation

"Twenty years ago, I remember the water was so thick with algae, I'd throw a board on the water and it would bounce like it was on the ground!", recalls Dick Harmon, board member of the East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation. "Nowadays, thanks to the sanitary sewer district, this lake is much cleaner!"

In the 1950s, the East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation was formed to improve the water quality of the East Okoboji chain of lakes, including East Okoboji, Upper Gar, Minnewashta and Lower Gar. Extending the sanitary sewer district around the perimeter of these lakes was an instigating factor in the formation of the EOLIC.

Since then, members have cost-shared numerous other water quality projects that have greatly improved the water quality of the East Okoboji chain of lakes. Example projects include sediment basins, terracing, grass waterways and livestock waste disposal projects. Each of these projects improve water quality by reducing the input of nutrients and sediments into the lake from urban and agricultural runoff. A recent grass waterway project, for example, is estimated as preventing the annual loss of 300 tons of top soil from entering the East Okoboji Lakes!

The EOLIC is fortunate to have a professional biologist as its current president, Gary Phillips. Mr. Phillips influence on water-quality protection extends well beyond the watershed of the Iowa Great Lakes. He is an expert in aquatic plants and coordinates Iowa's state-wide Eurasian watermilfoil-monitoring program. As an educator, he heads the Environmental Studies Program at Iowa Lakes Community College, leads Elder Hostel natural history outings, and is creator of middle and high school level environmental studies curriculum, including the Middle School Outdoor Education Program at Lakeside Laboratory.

Spirit Lake Protective Association
Although the Spirit Lake Protective Association began in the 1940's, it did not formalize as an organization until 1959. Again, extending the sewer line around the lake was an instigating factor. Such a project was difficult to finance without federal assistance. In the 1970s, Northwest Iowa had in a motivated representative in Washington named Wiley Maine. "I remember the day he called from Washington D.C. to tell us he had secured funding for the sewer project," recalls Steve Weed, who was the organizations secretary at the time. "It was August 8, 1972. It was such an exciting, joyful day! Such good news for our lakes!"

Inter-Agency Team Work: NRCS, SWCD and Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project:

In addition to human and livestock waste, soil erosion quickly became a major water-quality concern not only in Iowa but nationwide. In the mid-1930's, for example, it was not uncommon during the early spring for black clouds from the Dust Bowl region to be swept into the atmosphere and carried across the Midwest to the Atlantic seaboard! Soil erosion pollutes water by transporting phosphorous, organic material and other nutrients into the water that feed blue-green algae blooms. Soil erosion also harms aquatic life by smothering fish eggs and lake bottom habitat. Suspended soil particles reduce light penetration and thereby cut down on photosynthesis and the production of oxygen.

Soil erosion prevention and water quality improvement are the joint focus of the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Dickinson County Soil and Water District, and the

CLEAN WATER

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CLEAN WATER

Continued from Page 2A

Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project. The NRCS is a federal agency that works in partnership with landowners to provide leadership and technical assistance to help people conserve, sustain and improve soil and water resources. The NRCS works on a local level with landowners and through the Soil and Water District. Program monies for conservation agriculture and other soil and water projects are administered through the Farm Service Agency and by elected District trustees.

The Iowa Great Lakes was one of the first watersheds in Iowa to receive a Clean Water Project grant after Congress reorganized the Clean Water Act to focus water-quality projects on a watershed basis. The Clean Water Project began in 1990, and emphasized public/private partnerships to address water quality issues. To this end, the Clean Water Alliance formed the same year to strengthen partnership efforts and to raise local monies from private conservation groups for federal and state matches. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization, helped organize the Alliance in its first years. An environmental specialist position was created and first held by John Wills. In 1999, Tim Terrill replaced John Wills. Terrill also works in partnership with the NRCS and the Soil District, but in addition to the mostly agricultural work conducted by those agencies, he also works on urban-pollution problems. He consults with farmers and urban landowners, writes grants to fund conservation practices and conducts education campaigns. "One of the greatest enjoyment in my job is listening to people describing their needs and finding a program or information that can help them," says Terrill.

Center Lake Improvement and Preservation Association

One of Terrill's most recent projects was to help Center Lake residents learn about lake-friendly lawn care. Terrill and Soil Commissioner Tom Koster visited with Center Lake residents during their annual picnic last summer to tell them about the importance of testing soil before applying fertilizer to lawns. Soil data collected by Terrill High School students and citizen volunteer Hank Miguel in the Iowa Great Lakes region demonstrated most lawns have sufficient levels of phosphorus to grow good grass. Koster explained that "phosphorous is the main nutrient behind the excessive algae blooms that occur in Iowa lakes each summer, and lawn fertilizer runoff can be a major phosphorus source in small, urbanized lakes like Center Lake." Terrill and Koster discussed lawn-care alternatives, including the availability of "Lake 'n Lawn Saver", a local brand of zero-phosphorus fertilizer developed by the Soil District that is even edible!

Center Lake residents are in the process of formalizing the newest lake organization in the region, the Center Lake Improvement and Preservation Organization. The organization's goals are to work on a lake-friendly lawn care campaign, to implement storm water management practices, and conduct water quality monitoring.

Drinking Water Protection

We often think of fishing, swimming and boating when we think of the Iowa Great Lakes, but the lakes also supply the regions drinking water. Four water utilities are located

in the lakes region. Wahpeton, Central and Milford water works have intakes in West Okoboji, and Spirit Lake Water Works has an intake in Big Spirit Lake. The water utilities are very concerned about keeping the lakes clean and providing a dependable drinking water supply. To this end, they recently completed a Source Water Protection Assessment of the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed to identify potential pollution sources and to target watershed management needs. The utilities not only treat but routinely monitor water for contaminants but, as Milford Water Superintendent Dave Coleman states, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure: to keep water rates down it is cheaper to keep a healthy watershed than to treat a polluted water supply!"

Volunteers Make Things Happen

This has been a whirlwind tour of the history and variety of Clean Water Alliance members and their past and present accomplishments, and by no means has it been complete. However, this article cannot be concluded without mentioning the invaluable contribution made by individual volunteers to protect the water quality of the Iowa Great Lakes. Again space limits the examples that could be given, but certainly the prize must be given to Harriet Ostermann and Jean Hanby. In the early 1980's, this two-woman team raised the alarm about the devastating effects of construction erosion on water quality and campaigned for the county-wide adoption of silt fence ordinances.

Despite the fact that by the 1970's progress had been made on the problems of human and livestock waste, soil erosion and agricultural runoff, little attention was paid this menace which can cause 100 times the pollution of agricultural run-off. Ostermann and Hanby recognized the problem. They also recognized construction erosion could be controlled by the installation of a special type of cloth fence, called a silt fence, around construction sites to trap soil. They began a campaign for the adoption of silt fences ordinances in each of the lakeshore communities. "It was not any easy task!" recalls Ostermann. "People did not understand what we were talking about, and we had to work hard to educate them about the need."

Mother Nature chimed in on the campaign after the two women had convinced a lakeshore owner to install a demonstration silt fence around the home he was constructing on the shores of Big Spirit Lake. A rain-storm came and filled the fence with tons of dirt, even though the fence was not properly installed. "That really helped us get our point across, and from then on we did not have such a hard time getting the ordinance adopted," said Ostermann. Thanks to the efforts of these women, today silt fences are part of the landscape wherever there is a construction project.

A Look to the Future

The Iowa Great Lakes provide a source of recreation, drinking water and aesthetic enjoyment for residents and visitors. Good water quality drives the region's lake-based economy and enhances the quality of life for those who live and visit the region.

Human and livestock waste have been nearly eliminated as water quality concerns, but excessive nutrient influx and soil erosion from agricultural runoff remain a concern. New challenges lie ahead, including increasing amounts of urban nutrient and sediment

runoff, invasive species threats such as Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels, as well as potential hazardous spills.

Water quality protection is a complex, multi-layered process that requires innovative thinking and the cooperative efforts between individuals, government agencies and non-profit institutions on local, state and national levels. To this end, the Iowa Great Lakes is fortunate to have in place the Clean Water Alliance to coordinate these efforts

through education, monitoring, research and implementation of best management practices. Despite its accomplishments, however, the Alliance has permanent funding for any of its activities future challenge to the region will be the establishment of a steady funding source to improve the planning ability and effectiveness of water-quality protection in the Iowa Great Lakes. Let the legacy of the region's conservation efforts be an inspiration!

Supervisors consider GIS for Dickinson County

information, turning on and off the various layers using a base map, to see exactly what a person would want to see on a particular map.

Supervisors heard a presentation on the Dickinson County Information System.

The GIS system is in place and will be used at a cost of \$10,000.

The information on the Inter-County System will be used for their system.

to access GIS information, that is, any time.

Does regarding this system, can be referred to the information.

of the system. parcel of land seconds.

The important thing, with the establishment of a GIS system, according to Bendixen, is to determine who the players are, those entities that are interested in using the system, and by inter-connectivity of servers, share that information.

The supervisors will work between now and their next meeting, April 9, to identify the players for the county's GIS system, to determine the best means to form a cooperative effort toward establishing a GIS system, and to plan how to begin base mapping.

With the state coordinates established, the system could also be used by realtors to identify exact real estate descriptions. It could also be used by road construction contractors to determine road make-up and materials costs as well as by surveyors to determine lot lines exactly.

The main GIS system advantages lie in time savings, management and maintenance issues.

animals or woodworking has no gender lines," she said. One of 4-H's goals is to help students become better citizens, life, and to live by the motto "the best better." They provide environments that support culture through their youth and adults. "4-H really helps students because it gives people skills that for their lifetime," Smith said. Smith knows this firsthand. As old, Smith showed help for the projects are administered through the Service Agency and by elected District trustees.

The Iowa Great Lakes was one of the watersheds in Iowa to receive a Clean Water Project grant after Congress reorganized the Clean Water Act to focus water-quality projects on a watershed basis. The Clean Water Project began in 1990, and emphasized public/private partnerships to address water quality issues. To this end, the Clean Water Alliance formed the same year to strengthen partnership efforts and to raise local money from private conservation groups for federal and state matches. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization, helped organize the Alliance in its first years. An environmental specialist position was created and first held by John Wills. In 1999, Tim Terrill replaced John Wills. Terrill also works in partnership with the NRCS and the Soil District, but in addition to the mostly drinking water. Four water utilities are located

WIND TURBINE

Continued on Page 2

I/Editor

graduated degree in government studies." He hopes to use his background in legislative issues to help interpret governmental concepts for newspaper readers.

to protect the water quality of the Great Lakes. Again space limits could be given, but certainly be given to Harriet Oster Hanby. In the early 1980's, team raised the alarm about effects of construction erosion and campaigned for new challenges lie ahead, including amounts of urban nutrient



Spirit Lake school district

Lakes Area residents may see a generator to the east of this will vote Monday on approving the kilowatt output of this ge

Supervisors consider GIS system for Dickinson County

04-04-01

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

The Dickinson County supervisors heard a presentation by Todd Wee, Dickinson County land surveyor, on Global Information Systems (GIS) for the county.

Wee presented information on the GIS system that Webster County has put in place over a four-to-five year time period at a cost of \$1.1 million.

Wee reported that much of the information on the GIS system is available on the Internet. Webster County spent \$110,000 alone on markers, a fly-over and locator for their system.

The basic equipment needed to access GIS information is a P.C. But, Wee stated, that information can be accessed at any time.

Most everything the county does regarding land is based on location. With this system, any piece of land in the county can be referenced in about 30 seconds, once the information about the land is entered into the system.

An individual map of any parcel of land could also be made in just a few seconds.

The county could use the GIS system to map culverts, paved and unpaved roads, drainage districts, or be used for locating any particular spot of land in the county.

With new information placed in a GIS system, voting precincts and sanitary districts could also be designated.

Bob Bendixen, a land surveyor with Jacobson-Westergard and Associates, suggested the county conduct a future meeting with GIS in mind.

He also suggested that with CAD, the GIS can draw layers upon layers of mapping

information, turning on and off the various layers using a base map, to see exactly what a person would want to see on a particular map.

The important thing, with the establishment of a GIS system, according to Bendixen, is to determine who the players are, those entities that are interested in using the system, and by inter-connectivity of servers, share that information.

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The main GIS system advantages lie in time savings, management and maintenance issues.

In other business, the supervisors approved the purchase of two new Caterpillar motor graders for the county at a cost of \$254,996.

They also extended a five-year lease for the Nepl Pit to Arco Dehydrated at an increase of 43 percent in revenue to the county or \$96.77 per acre.

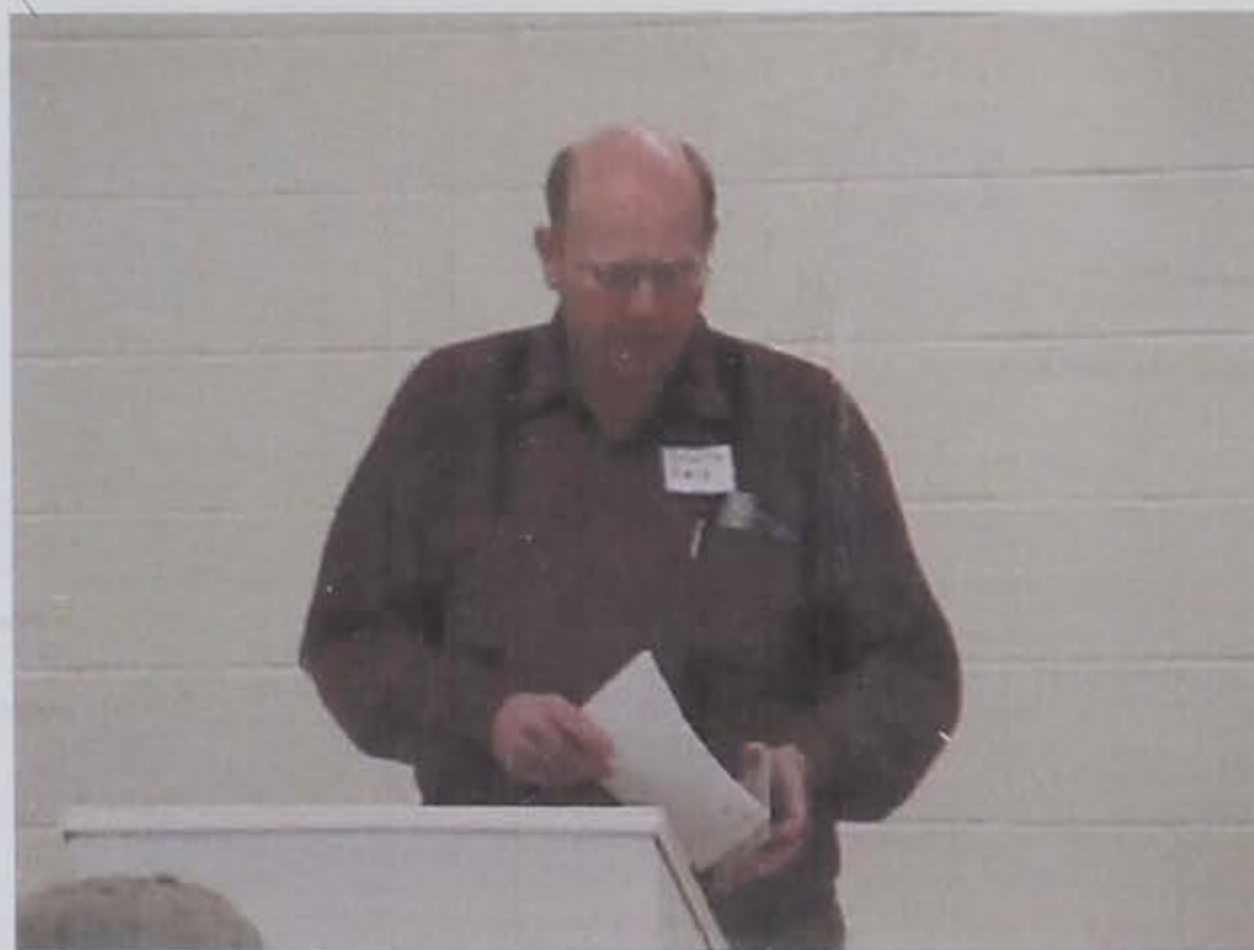
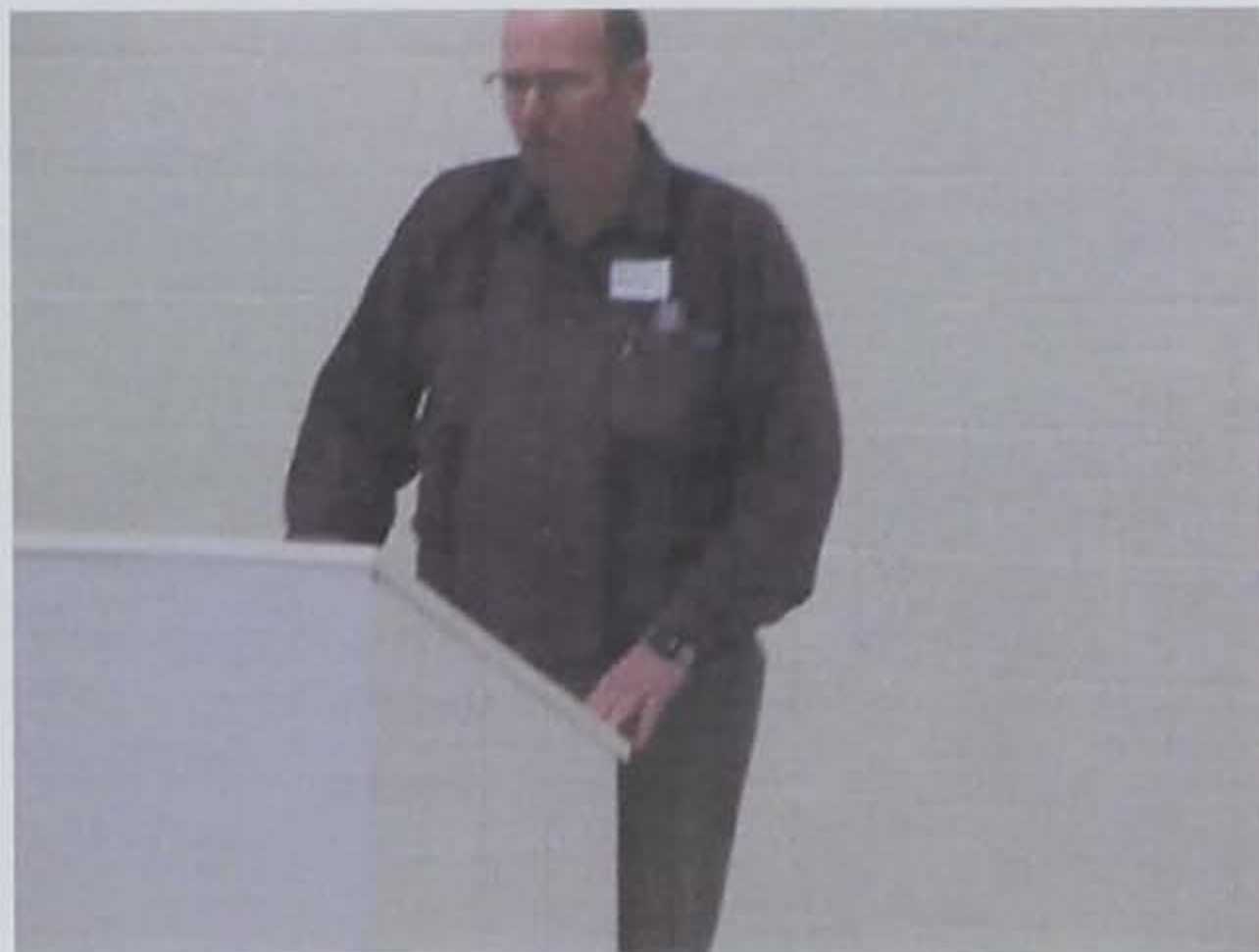
A service lines application by Terril Telephone for the extension of home service lines

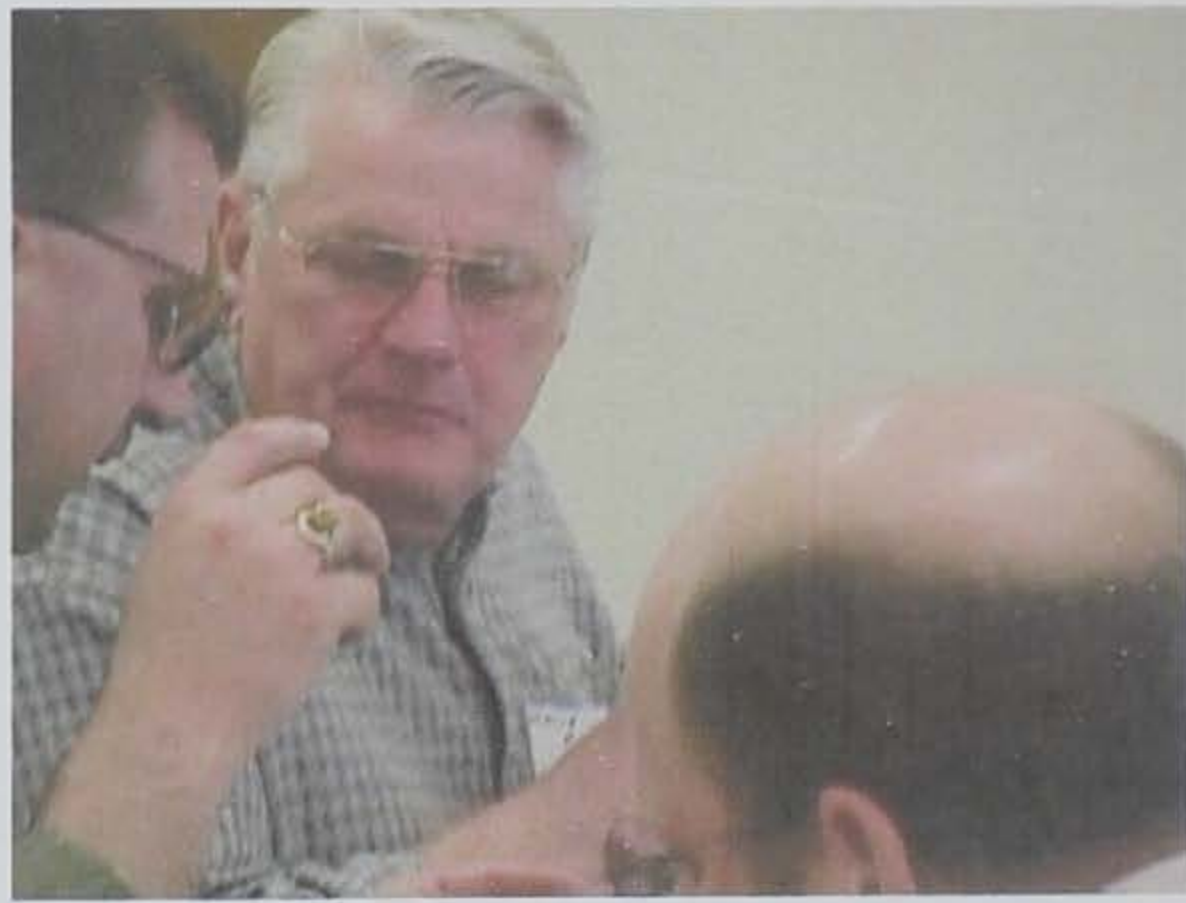
GIS SYSTEM

Continued on Page 2

CDI Region 2 Tour April 2001

















CAYLER PRAIRIE

STATE HISTORICAL
MONUMENT





absent. Commissioners and the DNR were concerned that She said this would be a good use of the pier. "The

have a minimum of four votes to pass.

Rainmaker to appear at Iowa Lakes Community College

A dinner theatre, complete with an elegant meal and a timeless theatrical performance will be held in Estherville later this month.

Iowa Lakes Community College, in cooperation with several sponsors, will host the Iowa Touring Theatre Company in a performance of "The Rainmaker," Friday, March 23.

"The Rainmaker" is the story of Lizzie Curry's life. The play is set during a drought that mirrors her romantically unfulfilled life. When all seems lost, a colorful flim-flam man named Starbuck appears, promising that he can bring rain within 24 hours, for a mere \$100. Starbuck concentrates his attention on Lizzie while he puts the men to work on seemingly useless tasks.

"The Rainmaker" is a classic of the American theatre. It's raucous, charming

and sweet — a "feel good" story for all ages.

Seating for the dinner will be at 6 p.m. The performance will follow. Cost for the meal and play is \$30. The dinner includes a choice of either orange roughy or an Iowa chop. Individuals are asked to have their dinner choice ready at the time reservations are made.

Seating is limited and reservations are required. To reserve tickets, please contact the Iowa Lakes Community College Foundation office at (712) 362-0491. The performance will be held in the gymnasium of the college at Estherville.

Also in conjunction with this event, students in several college clubs will sell raffle tickets from now through the performance. Steffen Furniture of Spencer donated a recliner to be raffled to benefit student scholarships.

Employment Council

to pay for it. We need to protect our natural resources," said Spirit Lake High School principal Sheryl Hall. "And that gives us the opportunity to teach the kids that this is the right thing to do. There

loan from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, which was paid off in 1998.

The turbine is now producing, on-average, 100 percent of the electricity used by the elementary school. The



Fourth in a series... 04-10-01

CLEAN WATER

Everybody wants it, but at what cost?

Water source management becomes vital

By Greg Drees

In light of the clean water debates that have raged in the Iowa Great Lakes Area for decades, and the recent rebirth of those issues with the proposed establishment of a water quality district, it is necessary in the whole scope of things to look at municipal utilities that manage and sell water resources. Recently, water superintendent David Coleman and general manager Bob Sewell of Milford Utilities sat down with *The Dickinson County News* to explain their role in the stewardship of clean water.

Who doesn't take potable water for granted? We turn on the tap and expect quality water to automatically pour forth. Sure, in recent years tap water filters and bottled water have become chic, but for the most part we turn it on and drink it, cook with it and bathe in it. And never think twice about it.

At Milford Utilities, Coleman and Sewell spend each working day to ensure that their single source of water from West Lake Okoboji is safeguarded. Milford Utilities has long been a member of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance and has been known as a leader in water quality management within the watershed. Coleman and Sewell are both personally committed to the establishment of a funding source to drive clean water projects, whether it

be a water district or some alternative revenue-raising method.

"What people might not understand is that Milford Utilities is already indirectly funding clean water efforts," said Sewell. "We volunteered for and promoted the Department of Natural Resources' request for the delineation and assessment of our watershed. Through the cooperation of other municipal water utilities, we got the grant money for the study and David, among others, has spent over 60 hours on the project that maps out potential spill problem areas within the watershed and illustrates the locations of storm sewers and farm tiles that can help prevent them," he added.

Tim Terril of the Natural Resources Conservation Service has also worked to complete the delineation project, which is a collection of software with a layer of maps. Phase one of the undertaking, which is the data collection for source water protection, has been completed. The second phase, which will be the management strategies, will get underway if more grant monies are available. The first grant application, which was written with the help of Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation consultant Duane Sands, was rejected last November. A similar application will be made again in April. "There is tremendous competition for these grant monies," Coleman said.

Milford Utilities, which is a part of the City of Milford but governed by a separate board of directors, sells water to the municipalities of Milford, West Okoboji, Wapeton and also to Osceola Rural Water. They will soon sell water

to Clay Regional Water. Twenty-seven percent of the water they sell goes back to people around the lake. West Lake Okoboji is also the source of water for Central Water, which under a 28E agreement sells water to the towns of Arnolds Park and Okoboji. Big Spirit Lake is the only source of water for the town of Spirit Lake. "Our thinking has always been that all municipalities in the watershed, if their source of water is the lake, should help protect that watershed and participate like everyone else in environmental-friendly protection," said Sewell.

But how best to further fund local water quality projects? "We need a fair solution," said Coleman, "one that involves everyone who benefits from the lakes but is not burdensome on anyone. After all," he added, "should a senior citizen in one of our communities on a fixed income pay the same for clean water protection as the million dollar house owner on West Lake? If you polled area residents they'd say, sure, they'll help finance water quality projects. But it needs to be fair to everyone."

Before former water-superintendent Mel Berryhill left Milford Utilities, he and Sewell were both instrumental in the passage of a bill that controls chemical usage around docks on area lakes. Essentially, persons must have a certified applicator's license before they can use chemicals that might affect the lakes around their homes and cottages. "Why let people put something in the water that we and other utilities have to remove before it's safe for customers to drink?" asked Sewell.

"For example," Coleman added, "people might want to use an algicide to kill all the weeds around their dock in hopes of attaining a nice sandy beach, but what are they doing to the water?" Each of the men, however, feel



David Coleman and Bob Sewell

IOWA, MINNESOTA GROUPS PLEDGE

Erosion, nutrients still water quality

By Jane Shuttleworth

used to target areas agriculture program

CLEAN WATER

Continued on Page 2

IOWA, MINNESOTA GROUPS PLEDGE TO WORK TOGETHER

Erosion, nutrient load still water quality concerns

By Jane Shuttleworth
Contributing Writer

Soil erosion and nutrient loading are the main water quality concerns in the Iowa Great Lakes watershed, according to Tim Terrill, Environmental Specialist.

Terrill provided an update on the five-year plan and presented two maps showing land use and erosion rates across the area at a meeting of the

used to target areas for conservation agriculture programs. He explained how these programs can save farmers money by reducing soil loss and fertilizer use and improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment loading into the lakes.

Ralph Nordstrom, of the Jackson County Soil and Water District in Minnesota, pointed out that the watershed maps stopped at the Minnesota line.

"Forty percent of your watershed is in Minnesota," he said.

meet in La Donna concerned Citizens for an update. She reported on a new comment.

The city draw its per-

By Mike Jordan

Staff Writer 04-28-01

Plans to levy a tax in Dickinson County to finance lake water quality efforts have been dropped.

The idea was the brainchild of Citizens for Water Quality.

Orville Berg, spokesman for the group, said the plan to implement a two-tiered tax of property owners around the lake wasn't withdrawn because of lack of support.

"We have learned from the public that there is almost universal support to address the need for a water quality district here," Berg told the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors at a hearing Tuesday night. "We wanted to be the first water quality district in Iowa under the new Iowa law."

After talking with citizens, the supervisors, city officials and attorneys and others, the group decided to pursue another proposal.

er proposal.

"What we came up with is the idea of a 28E funding agreement, a contract to allow governmental entities to share in the cost of a water quality district," Berg said. "We hope a workable agreement, a proposal to the county and cities, to set up a board of directors to approve a budget for the district, oversee and decide on projects could be done."

Over the next few weeks, the group will be refining its proposals with an eye toward presenting them to the cities in the county in June.

Although sparsely attended, compared to previous packed meetings on the issue, there were some questions raised by those in attendance.

Most centered around funding. One citizen voiced concern

Continued from Page 1

about pollutants. Berg said there are three primary water quality issues - pesticides and fertilizers on lawns, storm sewers and farm run-off.

The problem is, Berg said, that Iowa law preempts local control of pesticide and fertilizer use. As for storm sewers and the addition of sediment traps, Berg stated there were no funds for those even though hundreds are needed.

Berg said there is a need to come up with funds to help

farmers build filter strips. He also recognized the need for local funds to go along with the state and federal grants that support them.

Seventy to eighty percent of project dollars for water quality come from state and federal funds, Berg added.

Besides Citizens for Water Quality, Iowa Great Lakes Water Quality District, the Clean Water Alliance and Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District are all working on water quality issues.

04-28-01

DICKINSON COUNTY

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

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Volume 2, Number 026

Jazz Band send-off - p

Second Spirit Lake wind turbine seeks approval

By Roger Wiley

After eight years of success with the Spirit Lake School District's current wind turbine generator, the Spirit Lake Board of Education is poised to let a contract for the purchase and installation of a second unit. This one will potentially have five times the generating capacity of the first turbine. The board meeting is Monday evening.

"What's exciting about having the wind turbines is that we are modeling the philosophy that we need to protect our natural resources," said Spirit Lake High School principal Sheryl Hall. "And that gives us the opportunity to teach the kids that this is the right thing to do. There

are lots of ways that we can use the data about our usage of the [current] turbine, and it's been well-used in classes, particularly science classes.

"It also shows good stewardship — the benefits to taxpayers are substantial."

The first turbine, which provides electricity only to the elementary school, was purchased in 1993 for a total cost of \$239,500. A \$119,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Energy helped fund the project. The remainder of the capital costs came from a low-interest loan from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, which was paid off in 1998.

The turbine is now producing, on-average, 100 percent of the electricity used by the elementary school. The

Iowa Legislature has mandated and the Iowa Utilities Board has promulgated regulations that require utility companies to credit or purchase excess power generated by such wind turbines — known as "net metering."

The first turbine is a Wind World 480 volt, three-phase generator which is capable of producing up to 250 kilowatts of electricity per hour. The average production per year has been approximately 300,000 kilowatts. The threshold wind speed to produce electricity is eight miles per hour.

Bid specifications for the new wind turbine generator require a unit capable of pro-



Natural Heritage
Duane Sands, wa
ber. A similar ap
again in April.

DCN photo by Roger

IOWA, MINNESOTA GROUPS PLEDGE TO WORK TOGETHER

Erosion, nutrient loading are still water quality concerns

By Jane Shuttleworth
Contributing Writer

Soil erosion and nutrient loading are the main water quality concerns in the Iowa Great Lakes watershed, according to Tim Terrill, Environmental Specialist.

Terrill provided an update on the five-year plan and presented two maps showing land use and erosion rates across the area at a meeting of the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Alliance at the Waitt Water Quality Lab at Lakeside Laboratory on Wednesday.

The maps were prepared with GIS technology with assistance from Iowa Lakes Community College.

Terrill showed how the maps can be

used to target areas for conservation agriculture programs. He explained how these programs can save farmers money by reducing soil loss and fertilizer use and improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment loading into the lakes.

Ralph Nordstrom, of the Jackson County Soil and Water District in Minnesota, pointed out that the watershed maps stopped at the Minnesota line.

"Forty percent of your watershed is in Minnesota, and the water does not stop at the state line," he said.

His comment sparked discussion on how to increase cooperation between the Iowa and Minnesota portions of the watershed. A tentative meeting date was set in May for Dickinson County and Jackson County watershed staff to

meet in Lakefield to address this need.

Donna Buell, representing Concerned Citizens for Water Quality, gave an update on water-quality funding. She reported that the group is working on a new proposal based on public comment from the February public meeting facilitated by Pat Body and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

The citizen's group plans to withdraw its petition to form a water quality district and replace it with a new plan based on county-wide participation. A public meeting on the proposal is expected to be scheduled sometime in May.

The next Clean Water Alliance meeting will be July 18 at 1:30 at the Waitt Lab.

district's first wind turbine

soon be seeing a second and larger wind-powered familiar landmark. The Spirit Lake Board of Education said the second turbine, which would produce five times the electricity of the first, is being considered.

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04-28-01

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Fens provide valuable

By Steve Anderson
Silver Lake Clean Water
Project Coordinator

This is the third article in a series of four telling about the Silver Lake Watershed and what the Soil and Water Conservation District of Dickinson and Osceola Counties want to address with a Clean Water Project application grant.

The Silver Lake fen is another one of Iowa's true natural treasures found in Dickinson County. The Silver Lake fen is located on the west shore of Silver Lake. The Silver Lake fen is one of only two known artesian fens found in that state of Iowa. The Silver Lake fen has been rated by the Iowa State Preserves Board as the best fen in the state of Iowa. So all what is a fen you maybe asking?

A fen is a very unique land feature that created by special conditions. First of all most fens in Iowa are usually located on the side of a hill but can occur on all types of landscapes.

The Silver Lake fen is located on the side of a hill. On this special hillside there is water that is coming out of



it like a spring. This water collects along the hillside and actually creates saturated soil area.

This saturated soil slows the decomposition of plants and over a thousand years or more creates peat. The peat is like a huge sponge that holds water and creates special conditions for specific plant populations to grow.

One reason the Silver Lake Fen is Iowa's number one fen is because the plant population that is found

Water quality addressed

I attended the brainstorming meeting held Feb. 24 on the Water Quality District. Although I feel the moderator did a very good job of controlling the meeting, I do want to say the Clean Water Alliance was able to get their opinions while others of us were held to the Golden Rule. Because of that I am expressing my opinion through this newspaper.

I am still confused and unable to understand why we need a new tax to fund these special interest groups. It seems if we speak out against this tax, we are put in to a bad character category. I think we need to look at what is going on here in my opinion, this is a special interest group, not unlike those volunteers of the Cancer Society, who are looking for a easier route for funding - a new tax. I prefer a choice to give rather than a mandated tax. In addition, if our County Government and the local city governments do not see this Clean Water Alliance important enough to budget a significant amount of the groups' needed funds into their annual budgets, then why should we feel it that important. After all, we all agreed at Saturday's meeting, clean water in this "State Treasure", the Iowa Great Lakes, is important not only to the County but to the State of Iowa.

My issues and concerns with forming a Water Quality District are the following.

A. It is a TAX! It is a new tax, which will fund a special interest group, much like taxing for the purpose of funding the Cancer Society or United Way.

B. This TAX is on properties owned by a select group of taxpayers rather than on everyone that enjoys and/or benefits from the Iowa Great Lakes. Not only will a large number of these land owners not be able to vote on this tax, it exempts all AG-land that may or may not have contributed to the problem.

C. The elected governing Board will more than likely be the same group requesting this tax as again there is a significant number of affected landowners that are registered somewhere else and will not be able to vote on the tax or on the Board controlling tax money.

D. There is no recourse for the taxpayer if this tax is voted in, as this tax will not come up for review by the voting taxpayers for another 8 years.

If Dickinson County believes the Clean Water Alliance is important, then lets look at funding them with already existing tax money. Last year-end, June 30, 2000, the County General Fund ending balance was \$1.9 million or 57 percent of the actual expenditures. This year the General Fund was estimated to end with \$1.6 million.

I have some questions. Are they the only ones who get their drinking water from the lakes? Don't all property values in the area benefit from the lakes? Aren't they one of the rea-

Farmable Wetlands pr

By U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley

Farmers accustomed to grappling with small wet, low-lying areas located smack dab in the middle of their fields will be glad to hear that sign-up has begun for a newly created conservation program that offers eligible producers economic incentives to restore these wetlands and adjacent buffers by taking them out of production for conservation purposes.



Administered through the 16-year-old Conservation Reserve Program, the Farmable Wetlands Pilot program gives producers in Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota the opportunity to enroll up to 40 acres per tract if they meet the following eligibility requirements: the land must previously have had an agricultural commodity planted 3 of the last 10 crop years; a wetland must be 5 acres or less; a buffer may not exceed the greater of 3 times the size of the wetland or an average of 150 feet on either side of the wetland; and producers agree to take restorative measures to

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

He questions Farm Bureau work

I read a propaganda article from the Dickinson County Farm Bureau recently. The headline said, "Iowans should be confident in knowing that farmers care for the environment."

I thought, "Yes, we should, but why aren't we?" The Farm Bureau is a huge lobbying group, just behind the National Rifle Association in moneys spent; responsible for influencing state and national legislators to do a variety of things that have made Iowa family farmers welfare recipients.

The Farm Bureau may in fact be well meaning, but it apparently does not have the wisdom to; recognize the basic laws of economics, comprehend the global market, realize the effects of years of herbicides, pesticides (poisons), and artificial fertilizers on the soil and water; and/or the issues of biotechnology.

The article boasts of having 1.5 million acres of land enrolled in continuous Conservation Reserve Program, far ahead of other states. While the program is great for soil rejuvenation and wildlife habitat, that was not its purpose.

It is a grandchild of the 50's Soil Bank and other set aside programs - all designed to artificially inflate the price of corn and beans by taking land out of production. The fundamental laws of supply and demand were abused by the Farm Bureau.

By paying farmers to leave land idle and diminish supply it boosts the price, instead of suggesting and supporting other crops, organic farming, alternative land use, the Bureau lobbies for subsidies, direct support payments and other governmental schemes that impose and perpetuated a welfare economy on the small

farmer.

The article also boasts of soil erosion decreasing—as Iowa leads all other states in soil erosion tonnage, that should not be too difficult considering the acres taken out of production! It also says, "...water quality is improving!"

What water are they talking about? Is it Rural Water, water pumped out of Okoboji and Spirit Lake; turned into a chemical cocktail to counter e-coli, excessive run-off chemicals (phosphorus and nitrates), fertilizers, herbicides, feed lot drainage, manure lagoon flooding, and other pollutants now found in detrimental amounts in source water?

The exceptionally high incidence of breast, prostate, and colon (all water dependent systems) cancer in the farm belt does not indicate improved water quality! Likewise, the massive growth of the bottled water industry and home filtration systems does not indicate water quality improvement.

I have a hunch the Farm Bureau read Dr. Downing's, (ISU professor Gov. Vilseck charged with looking at Iowa's impaired waters) recent report in the March 12 Des Moines Register stating that Iowa, "...has some of the most fertilizer-polluted waters in the world."

The Farm Bureau article is a feeble attempt at damage control. I suggest that instead of self-aggrandizement, the Bureau should put its lobbying efforts and money into activities to improve water quality by educating farmers in safe land management practices and encouraging government support of alternative farming practices.

D.K. HALLING
Milford

Budget woes could close state

By Paul Wahl
Editor

If the legislature and governor don't come to an agreement this week, 10 state parks could be closed this summer, including two in Dickinson County.

Last week, the Iowa House of Representatives removed \$500,000 from the Department of Natural Resources budget in a cost-saving effort.

"Due to the downturn in tax

revenue, some departments and divisions may be given a smaller operating budget for fiscal year 2002, but it is not yet certain this will occur to state parks," said Steve Pennington, interim administrator of Iowa DNR - Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division.

"The discussion was that 'if' the parks budget were reduced by a certain amount, it could result in the necessity to close some smaller parks."

According to State Rep. Greg Stevens, Pikes Point State Park on West Lake Okoboji and Trappers Bay State Park near Lake Park on Silver Lake could be impacted.

Stevens tried unsuccessfully to amend the House version of the Agriculture and Natural Resources appropriations bills to replace the lost funding.

"However, the bill did say that if there wasn't enough money in the department's bud-

get, they could raise fees to make up the Stevens said.

Last year, fees were raised and an additional \$1 million flowed into the Department of Natural Resources. Money was used to staunch the deficit.

Trapper's Bay

Continued

Water quality addressed

I attended the brainstorming meeting held Feb. 24 on the Water Quality District. Although I feel the moderator did a very good job of controlling the meeting, I do want to say the Clean Water Alliance was able to get their opinions while others of us were held to the Golden Rule. Because of that I am expressing my opinion through this newspaper.

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Water Quality District raises questions

A couple of years ago we decided to subscribe to *The Dickinson County News* because so many things happen in the winter when we are not in residence at the Lakes Area.

The January 20 article about the water quality district is a case in point. The goal of establishing a water quality district is certainly a worthy one and one with which I do not think any one would quarrel. According to the article, the funding is a question, and the suggestion has been made that the property owners in the first two tiers back from the lakes should be the only ones assessed to provide the needed money. Donna Buell, head of the Concerned Citizens for Water Quality, is quoted as saying she believes it is a fair approach because those people are able to use the lakes for recreation, get their drinking water from the lakes, and benefit from increased property values.

I have some questions. Are they the only ones who get their drinking water from the lakes? Don't all property values in the area benefit from the lakes? Aren't they one of the rea-

86-23-01

CAPITOL GAINS AND LOSSES

Farmable Wetlands program is worth a second look

By U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley

Farmers accustomed to grappling with small wet, low-lying areas located smack dab in the middle of their fields will be glad to hear that sign-up has begun for a newly created conservation program that offers eligible producers economic incentives to restore these wetlands and adjacent buffers by taking them out of production for conservation purposes.



Administered through the 16-year-old Conservation Reserve Program, the Farmable Wetlands Pilot program gives producers in Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota the opportunity to enroll up to 40 acres per tract if they meet the following eligibility requirements: the land must previously have had an agricultural commodity planted 3 of the last 10 crop years; a wetland must be 5 acres or less; a buffer may not exceed the greater of 3 times the size of the wetland or an average of 150 feet on either side of the wetland; and producers agree to take restorative measures to

reconstruct the wetland as best as possible.

In the current fiscal year, the USDA estimates that 33.9 million U.S. crop acres will be enrolled in the CRP and by next year an additional 500,000 environmentally fragile crop acres are anticipated to be enrolled in this new wetlands conservation program.

Unlike the CRP, the sign-up for the wetlands pilot program is not competitive and eligible acres are automatically accepted. Keep in mind that Iowa may enroll up to 100,000 acres. Contracts run from 10 to 15 years in exchange for annual rental payments, incentive payments and cost-sharing agreements for conservation practices.

Restoring wetlands helps keep the earth's natural ecosystem intact. Wetlands help mitigate downstream flood damage, improve surface water quality and protect groundwater supplies.

This new conservation program will remove the financial penalty for farmers who embrace practices that allow Mother Nature to work her wonders on soil, air and water quality.

Interested farmers should contact their local Farm Service Agency to sign up and get the full details. As a lifelong family farmer, I can appreciate the many financial

and environmental decisions that individual farmers must make each crop year.

Such decisions play into a farmer's bottom line and impact the environmental health of the land, air and water affected by his farming operation.

Good public policy ought to recognize the challenges farmers face in their efforts to strike a balance between earning a decent living and continuing smart stewardship of the earth's natural resources. For generations, farmers across Iowa have tilled their fields and made a spring covenant to treat the land with care and respect, asking for a bountiful harvest in return.

A farmer's productivity may be measured in bushels per acre, but his ability to sustain his livelihood off the land can be traced to sensitive land, air, and water quality management and conservation practices.

Through its arsenal of conservation assistance programs, the USDA can help producers keep a farmer's promise: to earn a decent living, preserve natural resources, enhance the environment and feed a growing world population.

Grassley represents Iowa in the U. S. Senate.

Budget woes could close state parks here

By Paul Wahl
Editor

If the legislature and governor don't come to an agreement this week, 10 state parks could be closed this summer, including two in Dickinson County.

Last week, the Iowa House of Representatives removed \$500,000 from the Department of Natural Resources budget in a cost-saving effort.

"Due to the downturn in tax

revenue, some departments and divisions may be given a smaller operating budget for fiscal year 2002, but it is not yet certain this will occur to state parks," said Steve Pennington, interim administrator of Iowa DNR - Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division.

"The discussion was that 'if' the parks budget were reduced by a certain amount, it could result in the necessity to close some smaller parks."

According to State Rep. Greg Stevens, Pikes Point State Park on West Lake Okoboji and Trappers Bay State Park near Lake Park on Silver Lake could be impacted.

Stevens tried unsuccessfully to amend the House version of the Agriculture and Natural Resources appropriations bills to replace the lost funding.

"However, the bill did say that if there wasn't enough money in the department's bud-

get, they could raise camping fees to make up the difference," Stevens said.

Last year, fees were raised and an additional \$450,000 flowed into the Department of Natural Resources. Much of that was used to staunch a running deficit.

Trapper's Bay and Pike's

CUTS

Continued on Page 2

ON THE BLOCK?

- Pikes Point State Park
- Trappers Bay State Park
- Mini-Wakan State Park
- Okamapedan State Park
- Wanata State Park
- Bixby
- Fish Farm Mounds
- The Museum and Nature Centers located at Fort Atkinson, Maquoketa, Bellevue and

District natat' artists



Part of Soil Conservation Earth Day events

and the children on developing a poster.

The posters were completed at the schools and submitted to the district for judging.

Over 400 posters were received this year for judging with entries in three different divisions - Division 1, grades K-1; Division 2, grades 2-3 and Division 3, grades 4-6.

Here are the winners:

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Each of winners will receive an "Earth Week 2001" t-shirt and a

Water Quality Commission needs two more votes

By Krista Abels
News Intern

Only two more cities remain in getting a Water Quality Commission started in the Iowa Great Lakes region.

The Commission would help to protect the quality of the water in the lakes in Dickinson County.

In order for the Water Quality Commission to become a reality, it must be approved by all of the communities in the county and the board of supervisors.

Remaining to approve the commission are Terril and Lake Park.

"We've applied for our own grant that will do basically the same thing for us that the Water Quality Commission would do," said Lake Park Mayor Robert Anton Sr. "The grant will come through in September, so the city council voted to wait to make a decision about the Water Quality Commission until we see the results of that grant."

Terril is still gathering infor-

'We've applied for our own grant that will do basically the same thing for us that the Water Quality Commission would do.'

ROBERT ANTON SR.
LAKE PARK MAYOR

mation.

"We really haven't heard a lot about the Commission so far, so we haven't made any decisions yet, but I think they are scheduled to present their ideas at our next meeting," said Terril Mayor Don Holmberg.

If the commission is formed, each community will have one or more representatives on it

COMMISSION

Continued on Page 2

Issues to forefront

rapidly in this county than in other parts of our state," Northey said. "The desire for housing in this area has affected natural drainage waterways to our lakes."

In many new building sites, fill is required to make a low or water-laden area buildable.

Many of the wetlands in the region have been made dry as a means to provide more buildable land next to or near a lake.

A lattice-work of policy is in place to deal with drainage issues.

Iowa code provides a framework for establishing a drainage district. And, as Northey is quick to point out,

drainage districting is totally voluntary.

Many things contribute to drainage problems. One rather obvious cause is hard-surfacing land. When use of a piece of land is turned to such things as a parking lot, it creates a great place to park but it can also eliminates a place where water previously soaked into the ground.

"The hard surfacing of land takes away from the normal absorbability of ground and grass in dealing with run-off," Northey said.

DRAINAGE

Continued on Page 2A

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now available to some Iowa landowners through a new U.S. Department of Agriculture program, the Soil and Water Conservation Assistance (SWCA) Program.

SWCA is a voluntary program that provides cost-share and incentive payments to help landowners address serious threats to soil, water and related natural resources. Conservation practices may help to improve and protect cropland, grazing lands, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Land eligible for SWCA must be outside of funded Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) priority areas and outside of the national Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) priority areas. In addition, land approved for 2001 statewide EQIP contracts is not eligible.

Signup for SWCA funds is continuous. Applications signed prior to July 13 will be included and ranked in the first group of applications. Applications will be ranked according to the amount of benefits offered to the environment at the most reasonable cost to the USDA. Contracts will be awarded to the highest ranked applications. Another ranking may occur later in the year, and all SWCA funds must be obligated in a contract by Oct. 1, 2001.

"SWCA will provide landowners in non-priority areas an additional opportunity to install conservation practices and systems on pastureland, cropland and wildlife areas," said Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Iowa. NRCS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture agency that will administer SWCA. "SWCA will provide financial incentives to Iowa landowners while helping to improve water qual-

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COMMISSION

Continued from Page 1

appointed by the respective city councils.

The Iowa Great Lakes area has the Clean Water Alliance that is working for water quality. It focuses on watershed boundaries - the area of land around the lakes that contain water that drains into the lakes.

With the new Water Quality Commission, the area could expand to political boundaries and in turn include all of Dickinson County, it also could be used to support and encourage projects in the Minnesota portion of the watershed.

The Clean Water Alliance is a coalition of more than 30 government and nongovernmental organizations, such as lake protective associations, conservation groups, the DNR, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Dickinson and Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The purpose of the Alliance is to improve water quality planning and coordination and to avoid duplication of water quality efforts.

The Water Quality Commission would provide a long-term, reliable and fair entity to preserve, improve, protect and promote the quality of water in the lakes located in Dickinson County.

The creation of the Water

Quality Commission would also provide a reliable source of funding to the efforts for water quality.

"Right now, we go around hat in hand every year to get the money we need, which is very time-consuming and unreliable," said Jane Shuttleworth, environmental coordinator for Iowa Lakeside Labs. "This commission would ensure that we have the money to continue into the next year."

Having the guarantee of local money every year would also help to attract more matching funds. The money would come from state and federal water quality organizations.

The Clean Water Alliance Long Range Plan could serve as a decision-making guide for the Commission if it is approved. The plan includes a list of goals, objectives, and lead organizations designated to carry out those goals.

Many of the goals in the plan have been accomplished, others lack permanent funding, one of those being water quality testing. The Commission could help to support these goals.

"We have been working on getting this commission going for a year now, and we're glad to see that things are going so well," Shuttleworth said.

es to forefront

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DRAINAGE

Continued on Page 2A

07-25-01

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DRAINAGE

Continued on Page 2A

07-25-01

New funds available for conservation practices

REGIONAL - Approximately \$400,000 in cost-share funds are now available to some Iowa landowners through a new U.S. Department of Agriculture program, the Soil and Water Conservation Assistance (SWCA) Program.

SWCA is a voluntary program that provides cost-share and incentive payments to help landowners address serious threats to soil, water and related natural resources. Conservation practices may help to improve and protect cropland, grazing lands, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Land eligible for SWCA must be outside of funded Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) priority areas and outside of the national Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) priority areas. In addition, land approved for 2001 statewide EQIP contracts is not eligible.

Signup for SWCA funds is continuous. Applications signed prior to July 13 will be included and ranked in the first group of applications. Applications will be ranked according to the amount of benefits offered to the environment at the most reasonable cost to the USDA. Contracts will be awarded to the highest ranked applications. Another ranking may occur later in the year, and all SWCA funds must be obligated in a contract by Oct. 1, 2001.

"SWCA will provide landowners in non-priority areas an additional opportunity to install conservation practices and systems on pastureland, cropland and wildlife areas," said Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Iowa. NRCS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture agency that will administer SWCA. "SWCA will provide financial incentives to Iowa landowners while helping to improve water quality, reduce erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat," said Brown.

Landowners agree to sign a five-to ten-year contract, and will be required to develop a conservation plan for the area enrolled in SWCA. The contract will include a practice completion schedule, as well as maintenance for the life of the practice. Landowners will receive 75 percent cost-share for eligible practices, and the total payment per participant shall not exceed \$50,000.

According to Brown, practices eligible for cost-share include, but are not limited to: conservation cover, grade stabilization structures, grassed waterways, prescribed grazing, streambank protection, terraces, tree plantings, waste management systems, wildlife upland habitat management and others.

Brown encourages landowners to check with their local NRCS office for a complete list of eligible practices and specifics on enrolling in the program.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

08-07-01

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DRAINAGE

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07-25-01

...ing to improve water qual-

Growth pushes drainage issues to forefront

A new drainage district is being established in south Maywood to help control runoff from the area into West Lake Okoboji. A large water retention pond is part of the project. It will be used to help filter water prior to its release into the drainage system. Here, heavy equipment awaits a dryout after recent rains so that the work can continue.



DCN photo by Mike Jordan

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

Hardly a Dickinson County Board of Supervisors meeting goes by without discussion of drainage issues. Almost any other governmental entity in the Iowa Great Lakes region is likely to have drainage issues on its agenda.

The reason, according to Wayne Northey, chairman of the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors and long-time area farmer, is growth.

"Part of the reason we see the issue of drainage keep coming up at our governmental meetings is the use of the land is changing more

rapidly in this county than in other parts of our state," Northey said. "The desire for housing in this area has affected natural drainage waterways to our lakes."

In many new building sites, fill is required to make a low or water-laden area buildable.

Many of the wetlands in the region have been made dry as a means to provide more buildable land next to or near a lake.

A lattice-work of policy is in place to deal with drainage issues.

Iowa code provides a framework for establishing a drainage district. And, as Northey is quick to point out,

drainage districting is totally voluntary.

Many things contribute to drainage problems. One rather obvious cause is hard-surfacing land. When use of a piece of land is turned to such things as a parking lot, it creates a great place to park but it can also eliminate a place where water previously soaked into the ground.

"The hard surfacing of land takes away from the normal absorbability of ground and grass in dealing with run-off," Northey said.

DRAINAGE

Continued from Page 1A

"Some grassy areas even act as a natural retention pond for water."

Parking lots aren't the only culprit.

"Many people are aware of the run-off from hard surfaced parking lots but large roof areas tend to speed up run-off," Northey said. "So when we create hard surfaced parking or construct large roofed structures, we need to compensate for them with proper drainage systems. That is what drainage districts are set up to deal with."

Drainage systems were established in the area as early as the beginning of the last century. However, as the county has grown, those systems have become outdated or overloaded or both.

Some of the original systems are now 100 years old and still in use.

"We have to update the old systems or replace them to meet our current needs," Northey added. "If we don't address these drainage problems as they come up, we could end up compounding them in the future."

Those approaching the supervisors with a drainage concern for their area often petition the county to have a drainage district established for them.

Iowa law provides that an engineering firm be commissioned to determine the boundaries and design for the proposed district and the cost of establishing a district.

"What the people are asking us to do is seek a professional opinion for them on proper drainage," Northey said. "We do that, but the final decision as to whether a drainage district is established or not rests with the property owners within the proposed district. It is voluntary. Sometimes they decide to go ahead with it, and sometimes they don't."

In either case the engineering costs are borne by the property owners.

The cost of forming a new drainage district is shared by all the property owners within the new district. That cost-sharing is done using a formula to determine how much each property owner will pay.

The formula is established by an engineer and two property owners who live outside the proposed drainage district to encourage equity in the allocation of the costs.

Rick Hopper, an engineer with Jacobson-Westergard and Associates Inc., an area engineering firm in Spirit Lake, has worked with

drainage districts on many occasions.

"Once a drainage district is submitted for establishment, the engineer does a report on the proposed district," Hopper said. "He determines the boundaries of the watershed, considers the proposed improvements and files a report on the proposed district."

Following a 40-day notice, a public hearing is held on the proposed drainage district. An engineer and two property owners outside the proposed district determine the cost-sharing for the district.

"There are varying ways to do that, but a common one is to use a point system," Hopper said. "With the point system, it is determined what property owners will benefit the most from the drainage district. That property is assigned 100 points."

Points for the remaining property within the district can go as low as zero, meaning that property owner would have no benefit from the drainage district being established and would not share in the cost.

Often a drainage district crosses city or county boundaries. The boundaries are where the water flows, not where the city or county limits end.

"To assure our quality of life here in this county, we must continue to address drainage issues," Northey said. "It is good to remember that those that pay for the establishment of a drainage district are also those that benefit from it."

This summer

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your

District names top 'Help A Habitat' artists

04-23-01

Contest was part of Soil and Water Conservation District's Earth Day events

Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners have announced the winners of this year's poster contest, which is co-sponsored by Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the Auxiliary of the Conservation Districts of Iowa, featuring the theme, "Help A Habitat."

This year, the district commissioners co-sponsored Earth Week activities with the Dickinson County Conservation Board Naturalist and Lakes Art Center.

Tom Koster, Assistant Commissioner and Help A Habitat Coordinator; Barbara Tagami, Dickinson County Naturalist and Lissa Potter, Education Director of Lakes Art Center, met with over 700 children from Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji and Spirit Lake Elementary schools.

While the children discussed different types of habitats with Koster and Tagami, Potter worked with

the children on developing a poster.

The posters were completed at the schools and submitted to the district for judging.

Over 400 posters were received this year for judging with entries in three different divisions - Division 1, grades K-1; Division 2, grades 2-3 and Division 3, grades 4-6.

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■ Kathleen Rowley, fourth-grade student at Spirit Lake Elementary.

Each of winners will receive an "Earth Week 2001" t-shirt and a certificate.

All four posters will be sent to be judged at regional level.



Krista Kolegraff tied for first in Division II.



Kathleen Rowley was the winner in Division III.

McKenzie Colt was the winner in Division I.



Dana Potter tied for the winning spot in Division II.

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Wayne Hornsby,
the Dickinson County Board
of Supervisors and long-time
farmer, is growth.



DCN photo by Mike Jordan

Ginger Viator's job is to help farmers and others establish stands of wildflowers and native grasses through the Native Revegetation Program.

Going native

Program aims to establish stands of wildflowers, grasses in county

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

A program offered through the Iowa Lakes Resource Conservation and Development office could put wild flowers and native wild grasses in your yard.

According to Ginger Viator, Native Revegetation Program Coordinator, just about any property owner can plant and grow native wild flowers and grasses in their yard.

Viator has been working with the program since November of last year. She provides information and education to farmers and other land owners in Dickinson, Emmet, Palo Alto, Clay and Buena Vista counties.

Farmers or land owners can receive payment from the government for taking crop

land out of production and planting native wild grasses and flowers.

Part of Viator's job is to help make the proper transition from growing a regular harvestable crop to setting aside the crop land for wildflower and grass planting.

"Preparation of the soil for wild flower and grass planting is important," Viator said. "If the field is bean stubble, for example, a person can just go ahead and have it planted.

"The key is having a firm seed bed for these plants. If the soil is too fluffy, it erodes away and affects the success of the planting.

Wildflower and grass seeds are planted

Arnolds Park holds off signing agreement

Document would coordinate water quality efforts

By Anitra Wolf 08-18-01
Staff Writer

The Arnold's Park City Council surprised Dickinson County water quality supporters Wednesday night, deciding to wait on signing the 28E agreement to create a water quality commission.

The shock came just after supporters celebrated Monday's signing of the agreement by Lake Park, supposedly the last city to climb on board.

But things weren't quite wrapped up in Arnolds Park. Previously, the council had accepted the 28E agreement, subject to the city attorney's approval.

But Arnolds Park attorney Harold White didn't approve.

"The problem is that in that 28E there is no real end to the financial commitments. They literally could go on forever," said Arnolds Park Mayor Steve Dulin. "We just need to have the assurance that our commitment level has a time limit on it ... not just forever."

But the blow isn't as bad as it seems. The problem is easily resolved.

"The council is 100 percent in favor of the water quality district," Dulin added. "We just want to see a time limit on the commitments."

Preliminary conversations between the Arnolds Park and Water Quality District lawyers have already begun to remedy the problem.

Steve Anderson is the coordinator for the Clean Water Alliance and one of the people who will advise the Water Quality Commission.

"It'll just be a little formality," said Anderson. "They (Arnolds Park) just want to make sure the wording's correct." Anderson also believes that this is a concern that other city councils will see as well — now that it's been pointed out.

"I think what's going to happen is that all the city attorneys are going to see the same thing," he said. "This is just a little more protection for all the cities and the county."

So far no changes to the 28E agreement have been made. If the original agreement is altered, it will need to be approved again by all entities.

But Dulin is hoping an agreement can be made without needing to do that.

"I'm hoping that with the existing wording that Dick Ramsey (the District's attorney) will be able to pacify our city attorney."

Supervisors make Water Quality Commission appointments

By Mike Jordan 08-22-01
Staff Writer

The Dickinson County Supervisors unanimously appointed themselves to serve a one-year term on the Water Quality Commission.

Supervisor David Gottsche, however, asked that Larry Halling, a resident in his district, serve as his proxy on the commission for the term.

The supervisors also held a public hearing on the sale of two parcels of county property. Following the hearing, the sale of the Christopherson Gravel Pit, a two-acre parcel of property, was made to Larry Christopherson, an adjacent landowner, for \$1,000.

The other parcel of land was land-locked, unbuildable 7.5x16-foot piece of county property located in Arnolds Park. It was sold to Ron Walker representing his mother, Irene Walker, for \$5.

The supervisors approved an amended living snow fence policy for the county as presented to them by Dickinson County Engineer Dan Eckert. That policy provides payment to Dickinson County landowners, with approved CRP contracts on their land administered through the Farm Service Agency, 50 cents per linear foot in a one-time payment for living snow fence planted. However, the living snow fence must be placed along the north and west sides of Dickinson County Roads to qualify.

The new policy also provides for a standing corn option as well as a plastic snow fence option for the landowners.

Cohrs Construction of Spirit Lake was awarded a contract for the grading of one mile of 140th Ave. (commonly known as the Lake Park Cemetery Road) and the replacement of large precast culvert along the roadway there. Cohrs' successful bid was \$242,221.80 just 1.5 percent lower than the only other bid submitted and slightly under the county engineer's estimated bid of \$242,764.20.

Steve Anderson, representing the Clean Water Alliance, presented the supervisors with a request for support for the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation's project to acquire land adjacent to Gull Point State Park to add to the park's acreage.

The property is owned by Paul Petitti and has some natural wetlands on it. Estimated cost of acquiring the land, improvements to it and miscellaneous expenses was put at \$420,000.

were started was in response to the threats of Lakeside losing.

In 1995, the Friends became an official, nonprofit organization, and Judy Thorenson was elected as the first resident.

By 1998, the Friends had successfully raised over \$800,000 to build the Waitt Lab, and they are in charge of the water chemistry and community education programs offered through it. The Friends also support the staff

activities co Waitt facility.

A variety of place in the middle school project is one.

Middle school from Dickinson surrounding community College to develop curriculum in terrestrial ecology from the Kindergarten.

PLANTING

Continued on Page 2

Lake Park ayes water quality commission

By Joy Hibma
Staff Writer

With cheers of glee and plenty of applause, the Clean Water Alliance celebrated after receiving the final affirmative vote to establish Dickinson County's Water Quality Commission, a 28E agreement, Monday night.

Lake Park was the last Dickinson County city to climb aboard.

"We're very pleased that Lake

Park decided to join in the 28E Agreement, along with all the other cities in Dickinson County," said Ace Cory, an advocate for the Water Quality Commission.

"It's the most significant thing to happen here since the Iowa Great

'It's the most significant thing to happen here since the Iowa Great Lakes Sanitary District was established 65 years ago.'

ACE CORY

WATER QUALITY COMMISSION ADVOCATE

Lakes Sanitary District was established 65 years ago."

Over the past several months, advocates for the commission have traveled throughout the county, talking to concerned citizens, 10 different city councils and the

county's board of supervisors.

Each one heard the pros and cons behind having the district.

"If we don't protect our lakes, then revenue will decline, the taxes will increase and we'll lose tourism. No one wants that," Cory

said.

But after Monday night, all 11 governmental entities have agreed to participate.

"After realizing the amount of sales tax we receive from the county, I put it in perspective," said Lance Heikens, Lake Park City Council member.

COMMISSION

Continued on Page 2A

ative.

The Okoboji Protective Association and other community leaders started the Friends of Lakeside Lab in 1993. It is intended to expand and increase the emphasis and commitment of the Lab as a community resource for water quality research, monitoring

son was elected as the first president.

By 1998, the Friends had successfully raised over \$800,000 to build the Waitt Lab, and they are in charge of the water chemistry and community education programs offered through it. The Friends also support the staff

Middle school from Dickinson surrounding cooperate with Iowa Community College to develop a curriculum in terrestrial ecology from the Kindergarten.

Continued from Page 1A

He went on to say that keeping the lakes attractive and clean helps ensure tax revenue from tourists and property owners.

"Each community receives portions of it (local option sales tax), and if we didn't have that, we'd have to get it elsewhere. Which

would be every taxpayer in Dickinson County," Heikens said.

The first meeting for the commission will be held Sept. 18, with annual meetings continuing afterward.

The commission will be made up of representatives from each gov-

ernmental entity involved.

"They can name anyone they want, and they will be the ones deciding the budget," said Donna Buell, an advocate for the Water Quality Commission and member of the Clean Water Alliance.

From then on, the Water Quality

Commission will be providing the long-term support to preserve, improve and promote the quality of the Iowa Great Lakes.

"It's something to be very proud of," Cory said. "We're one of the first county's in the state to have something like this."

The budget will be prepared by the Commission members each year. It begins July 1 and ends June 30.

The maximum annual budget should not exceed \$100,000 the first year and \$200,000 the following year.

Cash pool to foster lake health

Dickinson County and its towns have joined in a \$1.5 million effort to protect the Great Lakes.

By PERRY BEEMAN
REGISTER STAFF WRITER

The Iowa Great Lakes stand to become greater now that all 10 Dickinson County towns and the county itself have joined in a \$1.5 million effort to protect them environmentally.

That local pool of money should bring in many times that amount in federal money, officials say.

Local lake-protection groups have been active for years. At times, though, volunteers tired of the task of begging the city councils for money each time a project came up.

So people such as Dick Ramsey, Jane Shuttleworth and Donna Buell of the Dickinson County group Citizens Concerned for Water Quality spent the better part of a year negotiating a pact among the cities and county. The pact creates an 18-member commission to receive applications for government grants.

Such an intergovernmental commission was envisioned in the area's first watershed management plan in the early 1970s.

The bottom line is that the group will raise up to \$100,000 a year with which to match federal grants in the next year. For the seven years after that, it will have up to \$200,000 a year. "We want to show the state that we are ready to match \$12,

Similar stories are coming from all over Iowa and the country.

Students at West Elementary School in Knoxville came to school on Fifty-Cent Friday knowing the money would go to victims in New York and Washington, D.C., not to playground equipment. Students and staff raised \$200.

A stand-up comedian traveling through Des Moines turned in half

and we need help," said Steve Anderson, coordinator of the Clean Water Alliance, a group working on water quality issues in the region.

Dickinson County's water-quality commission, made up of representatives chosen by the cities and county, will decide which projects get done. The work is likely to include the establishment of wetlands and other projects that help keep pollutants from washing into lake water. Each local government will decide how to pay its share, based on a formula.

Some cities and the county will get more than one seat on the 18-member commission. Said Shuttleworth: "It's going to help us make things happen instead of just talking about them. Everybody is going to take responsibility for water quality. Everybody is going to be more informed."

The commission idea was pushed after an earlier effort to tax lakeside residents for improvements stalled. Shuttleworth, who works at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory and with local protection groups, said residents throughout the county should pay, because the whole county benefits from the lakes.

Anderson said the group probably will focus on continuing projects already under way.

Reporter Perry Beeman can be reached at (515) 284-8538 or beemanp@news.dmrreg.com

Flood of cash: Volunteer Aldes of cash that were donated to Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund

RED CROSS: Contributions can be made to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund by calling (800) 435-7669.

Water Quality District established

By Anita Wolf
Staff Writer

After hitting a few bumps in the road, the Dickinson County Water Quality District is finally riding smooth.

Wednesday at their City Council meeting, Arnolds Park became the final governing body to climb aboard.

Previously, the city's lawyer found a problem with the agreement: it had no time frame for funding commitments.

But the problem has been resolved.

"The district is going to make an amendment to the bylaws that will limit the funding commitment to three years," said Arnolds Park Mayor Steve Dulin. "The amendment will not only cover Arnolds Park, but also everyone else involved in it."

The Water Quality District Commission, which meets for the first time on Tuesday, Sept. 18 will vote on the amendment at their first meeting.

In other business, the Arnolds Park City Council has set a meeting date for Wednesday, Sept. 26 at 7 p.m. to discuss city services provided outside of city limits.

"We're inviting the board of supervisors, those in Center Grove township and others who want to discuss this topic with us," said Dulin.

According to Dulin, providing services outside of city limits assesses extra liability to the government of Arnolds Park and he is concerned with the ramifications.

"The question is 'does the city want to continue to provide services outside of the city limits?'" he said.

And while the 28E agreement with Center Grove residents does not expire until January, Dulin wants to get a jump on the planning.

"We want to initiate the discussions now, rather than the first of January when we're under the gun," said Dulin. "It'll be an interesting decision."

Clean Water Alliance attends meeting

Water quality commission meets network

By Anita Wolf
Editor

The Dickinson County Water Quality Commission has now made the necessary connections to begin working.

At their second official meeting on Sept. 24, the commissioners were introduced to the Clean Water Alliance and its members.

"The Clean Water Alliance represents a ready-made advisory committee for you," said Ace Cory, representing the Inter-Lake Protective Association. "All of these people and organizations have a lot of experience working with water quality."

Cory illustrated his point by showing a chart of the organizations involved in Iowa Great Lakes water quality. The chart showed a spider web of connections.

Orville Berg, representing the Soil and Water Conservation District, agreed.

"There are a lot of pieces that fit together," he said. "They actually fit together well."

Berg is also the chairman

of the Water Quality Commission.

Before introductions were through, the commission also had to be introduced to the man who would be doing their footwork, Steve Anderson.

Anderson, the Clean Water Alliance Coordinator, introduced himself and the eight goals of the alliance.

Other individuals introducing themselves and their organizations included Dick Ramsay, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation; Steve Anderson, Clean Water Alliance Coordinator; Donna Buell, Citizens Concerned for Water Quality and Barbara Tagami, Conservation Board.

After meeting their network of organizations, the commission established two committees: a budget committee and a project proposal committee.

The budget committee, made up of the executive members of the commission, will meet to decide on a budget form.

Two forms were discussed in length at the meeting. The first budget form would set

DCN 9-29-01

aside a minimal amount for operating expenses and leave the rest available for whatever projects are deemed most worthy.

The second proposal was to create a more formal budget, allocating percentages to different project divisions such as education, monitoring and pollution management.

The project proposal committee will work on the process that individuals or organizations will need to use to apply for the commission's monies.

At first, the group will work on establishing an application form, a review process and a timeline. Eventually, they will be the governing body that chooses which projects are funded.

Both committees will report their findings back to the commission at the next meeting.

For those who feel they have projects that should be funded by the commission, now is the time to start planning. Contact Steve Anderson at (712) 336-3782 ext. 3 for more information.

Water Quality Commission holds first meeting

After getting the go ahead from all the governing bodies in the county, the Dickinson County Water Quality Commission held their first meeting on Tuesday.

The first order of business was to elect officers. Orville Berg, West Okoboji, was elected chairman, and Mel Berryhill, Milford, got the nod for vice chairman.

Dave Thoreson, Okoboji, will be secretary and Ron Walker, Arnolds Park, will be treasurer. "I think the first meeting went really well," said Berg.

According to Berg, the new group spent much of the meeting getting acquainted, but they also did some business.

"We talked about what type of organizational structure or flow chart we need to develop," said Berg. "We want to have a process through which to screen proposed projects."

They also began discussing the budget.

Further planning will occur at the commissions next meeting on Monday, Sept. 24.

DCN 9-22-01

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Radio station effort aims for \$5,000, nets \$200,000

09-18-01

MONEY, from Page 1A

McDowell, like so many other Iowans and other Americans, needed to help. Some way. Any way. He was watching the horrible events unfolding on television, but he couldn't go to New York to cut steel or join the bucket brigade.

"I felt helpless, more or less," he said. "I wanted to do something."

So McDowell and Matt Louvar, a co-worker of his at the Iowa Medical Classification Center in Oakdale, started collecting donations. McDowell's son's Webelos pack helped, too, and by Monday they had collected more than \$12,000.

Similar stories are coming from all over Iowa and the country.

Students at West Elementary School in Knoxville came to school on Fifty-Cent Friday knowing the money would go to victims in New York and Washington, D.C., not to playground equipment. Students and staff raised \$200.

A stand-up comedian traveling through Des Moines turned in half his take from the weekend — \$502 — to the Red Cross offices in Des Moines.

In Spirit Lake, on-air personalities at KUOO radio station started a fund drive on Thursday. They thought it would be great to raise \$5,000, maybe \$10,000.

By Monday, they had collected just more than \$200,000, said promotions director Brett Groen.

"We almost could have used a traffic cop out front because there were so many cars," Groen said.

One couple from Laurens donated \$2,000 at the station's booth at the Clay County Fair, he



Flood of cash: Volunteer Alice Wolvek counts some of the bundles of cash that were donated in Iowa fund-raising efforts to the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund.

RED CROSS: Contributions can be made to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund by calling (800) 435-7669.

said.

Exactly how much Iowans have given is unclear.

Mackerley, the Red Cross official in Des Moines, is still trying to tally the flood of donations. She said it would be later in the week before she had a handle on how much had come in so far.

Officials at the Salvation Army office in Des Moines were in a similar situation. Cash counted Monday topped \$10,000, but officials had yet to tally any checks.

Reporter Mark Siebert can be reached at (515) 284-8127 or siebertm@news.dmreg.com

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DCN 9-29-01

DCN 9-22-01

NEWS EXTRA

SPECIAL SECTION

CHEROKEE DAILY TIMES
SPIRIT LAKE DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

SPENCER DAILY REPORTER
STORM LAKE PILOT TRIBUNE

AMERICA UNDER ATTACK

8:55 A.M.
NEW YORK



The south tower of the World Trade Center explodes after being struck by an airplane Tuesday morning.

9:43 A.M.
WASHINGTON



Flames and smoke pour from a building at the Pentagon after a direct hit from an aircraft. PAGE 5

THE LATEST
AROUND THE WORLD



President Bush observes a moment of silence with a crowd at Emma E. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Fla.

REACTIONS
AREA RESIDENTS



Crowds at the Clay County Fair gathered around television sets Tuesday to watch coverage of the tragedy. PAGE 3



Smoke, flames and debris erupts from one of the World Trade Center towers as a plane strikes it Tuesday. The first tower was already burning following a terror attack minutes earlier. Terrorists crashed planes into the two buildings and collapsed both towers.

(AP Photo/Chao Sol Cheong)

Nation rocked by terrorist onslaught

NEW YORK (AP) - In the most devastating terrorist onslaught ever waged against the United States, knife-wielding hijackers crashed two airliners into the World Trade Center on Tuesday, toppling its twin 110-story towers. The deadly calamity was witnessed on televisions across the world as another plane slammed into the Pentagon, and a fourth crashed outside Pittsburgh.

"Today, our nation saw evil," President Bush said in an address to the nation Tuesday night. He said thousands of lives were "suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror."

Said Adm. Robert J. Natter, commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, "We have been attacked like we haven't since Pearl Harbor." Establishing the U.S. death toll could take weeks. The four airliners alone had 266 people

aboard and there were no known survivors. In addition, a firefighters union official said he feared an estimated 200 firefighters had died in rescue efforts. Dozens of police officers were believed missing.

No one took responsibility for the attacks that rocked the seats of finance and government, but federal authorities identified Osama bin Laden - who has been given asylum by Afghanistan's Taliban rulers - as the prime suspect.

Aided by an intercept of communications between his supporters and harrowing cell phone calls from at least one flight attendant and two passengers aboard the jetliners before they crashed, U.S. officials began assembling a case linking bin Laden to the devastation.

U.S. intelligence intercepted communica-

tions between bin Laden supporters discussing the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, according to Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The people aboard planes who managed to make cell phone calls each described similar circumstances: They indicated the hijackers were armed with knives, in some cases stabbing flight attendants. They then took control of the planes.

At the World Trade Center, the dead and the doomed plummeted from the skyscrapers, among them a man and woman holding hands.

Attack

continued on Page 2

In speech to nation, Pres. Bush says government will track down terrorists



President George Bush spoke to the nation Tuesday night.

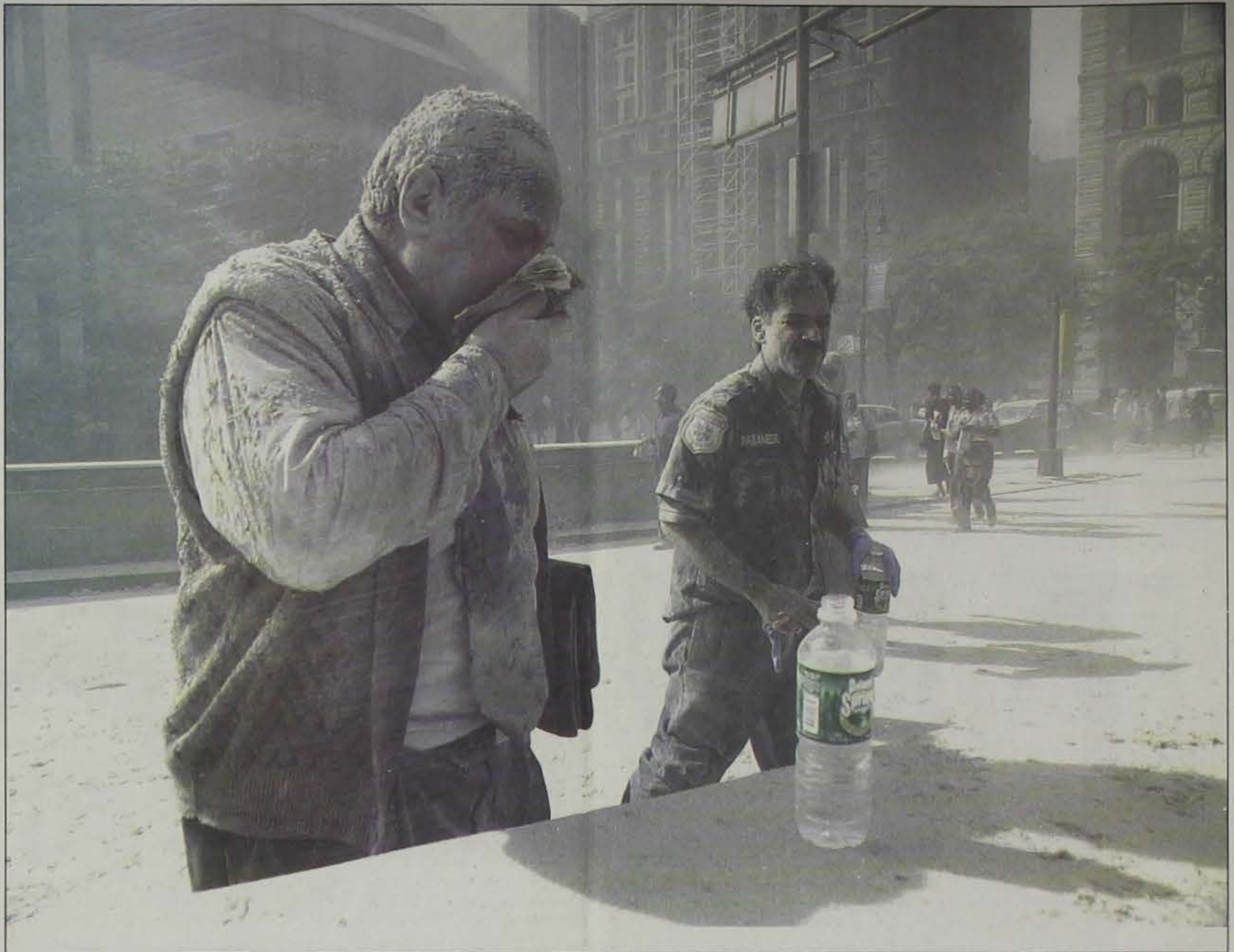
BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. (AP) - As chaos uninged New York and Washington, President Bush deplored the acts of "a faceless coward" and commanded the United States military to high-alert status worldwide.

After traveling to secure military bases in Louisiana and Nebraska, Bush was returning to Washington and the White House late Tuesday, spokesman Ari Fleischer said.

"The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake, we will show the world that we will pass this test," Bush declared earlier as terrorist strikes on the nation's centers of commerce and government forced him into

Bush Speaks

continued on Page 6



New Yorkers are covered with ash following the collapse of one of the two towers at the World Trade Center in New York. The two men were located near city hall.

Associated Press photo

Attack

continued from page 1

"Freedom itself was attacked this morning and I assure you freedom will be defended," said Bush, who was in Florida at the time of the catastrophe. As a security measure, he was shuttled to a Strategic Air Command bunker in Nebraska before leaving for Washington.

"Make no mistake," he said, "the United States will hunt down and pursue those responsible for these cowardly actions."

More than nine hours after the U.S. attacks began, explosions could be heard north of the Afghan capital of Kabul, but American officials said the United States was not responsible. "It isn't us. I don't know who's doing it," Pentagon spokesman Craig Quigley said.

Officials across the world condemned the attacks but in the West Bank city of Nablus, thousands of Palestinians celebrated, chanting, "God is Great," and handing out candy.

At the Pentagon, the symbol and command center for the nation's military force, one side of the building collapsed as smoke billowed over the Potomac River. Rep. Ike Skelton, briefed by Pentagon officials, said, "There appear to be about 100 casualties" in the building.

The television images were extraordinary: A plane slamming into the second tower as smoke poured from the first; the buildings tumbling down and vanishing in a gray cloud; bloodied survivors stumbling through the streets of Manhattan, covered with dust and ashes.

The attacks altered the very skyline of Manhattan, destroying two buildings where 50,000 people worked. The first airstrike occurred shortly before 8:45 a.m. EDT. By evening, huge clouds of

smoke still billowed from the ruins. A burning, 47-story part of the World Trade Center complex - already evacuated - collapsed in flames just before nightfall.

Emergency Medical Service worker Louis Garcia said initial reports indicated that bodies were buried beneath the two feet of soot on streets around the trade center.

"A lot of the vehicles are running over bodies because they are all over the place," he said.

For the first time, the nation's aviation system was completely shut down as officials considered the frightening flaws that had been exposed in security procedures. Financial markets were closed too.

Top leaders of Congress were led to an undisclosed location, as were key officials of the Bush administration. Guards armed with automatic weapons patrolled the White House grounds and military aircraft secured the skies above the capitol city.

Evacuations were ordered at the tallest skyscrapers in several cities, and high-profile tourist attractions closed - Walt Disney World, Mount Rushmore, Seattle's Space Needle, the Gateway Arch in St. Louis.

The Federal Reserve, seeking to provide assurances that the nation's banking system would be protected, said it would provide additional money to banks if needed.

In Afghanistan, where bin Laden has been given asylum, the nation's hardline Taliban rulers rejected suggestions he was responsible.

Bin Laden came to prominence fighting alongside the U.S.-backed Afghan mujahideen - holy warriors - in their war against Soviet troops in the 1980s. But former followers say he turned against

the United States during the 1991 Gulf War, seething at the deployment of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War campaign to oust Iraq from Kuwait. He has repeatedly called on Muslims worldwide to join in a jihad, or holy war, against the United States.

Abdel-Bari Atwan, editor of the Al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper, said he received a warning from Islamic fundamentalists close to bin Laden, but had not taken the threat seriously. "They said it would be a huge and unprecedented attack, but they did not specify," Atwan said in a telephone interview in London.

Eight years ago, the World Trade Center was a terrorist target when a truck bomb killed six people and wounded about 1,000 others. Just the death toll on the planes alone surpassed the 168 people killed in the 1995 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

This is how Tuesday's mayhem unfolded:

At about 8:45 a.m., a hijacked airliner crashed into the north tower of the trade center, the 25-year-old, glass-and-steel complex that was once the world's tallest.

Clyde Ebanks, an insurance company vice president, was at a meeting on the 103rd floor of the south tower when his boss said, "Look at that!" He turned to see a plane slam into the other tower.

"I just heard the building rock," said Peter Dicerbo, a bank employee on the 47th floor. "It knocked me on the floor. It sounded like a big roar, then the building started swaying. That's what really scared me."

The enormity of the disaster was just sinking in when 18 minutes later, the south tower also was hit by a plane.

"All this stuff started falling and all this smoke was coming



The south tower of the World Trade Center explodes after being struck by an airplane Tuesday morning. The collision was approximately 18 minutes after a previous plane collided with the north tower of the facility.

Associated Press photo

through. People were screaming, falling and jumping out of the windows," said Jennifer Brickhouse, 34, from Union, N.J.

The chaos was just beginning. Workers stumbled down scores of flights, their clothing torn and their lungs filled with smoke and dust.

air was black, from the pavement to the sky. The dust and ash were inches deep along the streets.

John Axisa said he ran outside and watched people jump out of the first building; then there was a second explosion, and he felt the heat on the back of his neck.

Donald Burns, 34, was being evacuated from the 82nd floor when he saw four people in the stairwell. "I tried to help them but they didn't want anyone to touch them. The fire had melted their skin. Their clothes were tattered," he said.

Worse was to come. At 9:50, one tower collapsed, sending debris and dust cascading to the ground. At 10:30, the other tower crumbled.

Glass doors shattered, police and firefighters ushered people into subway stations and buildings. The

Local federal offices ordered to close

By Ben Montgomery
Sports Editor

Fear caused by the terrorist acts in New York and Washington D.C. Tuesday caused a rippling effect that resulted in the closing of local offices of federal agencies in Spencer and surrounding communities.

Orren Knoffloch, branch manager of the Spencer and Storm Lake Social Security offices, was forced to close his offices following news of the attacks.

He said the order arrived from Baltimore, Md., in an email from acting commissioner of Social Security, Larry Massanari.

"It just said that thoughts and prayers continue to be with our fellow Americans, and that due

to security reasons, facilities across the country were being closed immediately in the wake of today's terrorists attack," said Knoffloch.

The doors at both offices were closed at 11:45 a.m. Tuesday. At this point, Knoffloch expects that the offices will be open again on Wednesday.

"I'll be in contact with our employees and if we have to remain closed for another day, they will be contacted," he said.

Under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture, the Spencer site of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) received word from their Sioux City area office to close their offices Tuesday morning.

Soil conservation technician Dee Grange was in the office at the time.

"First of all, we were emailed by the state office that they were closing in Des Moines," said Grange. "I'd say about 45 minutes later, our area office (in Sioux City) contacted us and said we were to close down. It was a safety issue."

Grange said that the office closed at about 10:30 or 11 a.m. In the same "loop," according to Grange, the Farm Services, Rural Development and the Resource and Conservation Development offices in Spencer also closed soon after.

"As far as I know, we'll be back open (Wednesday)," said Grange.

It was business as usual at the Spencer Post Office, however.

Postmaster Kent Goechenour said Tuesday mail delivery would continue as it always had,

though some packages could take longer to get to their destinations.

"We have no plans of closing down," said Goechenour. "Basically, what we're hearing is obviously this is having a big effect on the transportation of mail. There's just no way of saying what kind of effect. When airports are closed down, that has a major effect on the delivery of mail."

Goechenour was referring to the Federal Aviation Administration's order Tuesday to ground all aircraft in the U.S. until further notice.

"The word from higher up is that we're going to continue business as usual, and obviously be more alert to strange packages that arrive at the counter," said Goechenour.

Violence affects local residents

By THOMAS KLETT
Storm Lake Pilot-Tribune

The country is still in shock from terrorist attacks that collapsed a national landmark and struck fear in the nation's capitol.

With friends and family working in New York City and Washington, D.C., thousands from across the country were directly affected by the destruction.

However, many, many more, from the youngest child to the nation's oldest citizens, will attempt in the coming weeks and months to comprehend the attacks against America.

In Storm Lake citizens stayed close to their televisions, and high school students at both Storm Lake Public and St. Mary's watched live news coverage as the story unfolded throughout the day.

Local families with relatives and friends anxiously tried calling New York and Washington, D.C., often to find downed phone lines. Even hours after the event, no one could believe the twin towers of the World Trade Center were gone.

Patricia Hampton of Storm Lake was in shock yesterday afternoon as she watched the disaster in a place she used to call home.

"Seeing these images on T.V. this morning were especially shocking to me because I've been on those streets and to try to picture the New York City skyline without those towers... It's a very deep psychological shock that there could be a single moment that would wipe out such a predominant landmark. To see a place so familiar in an ordinary day-to-day

way suddenly change so dramatically and so violently... it's difficult to process," she said.

Both she and her husband, James, have family and friends in the New York City and Washington, D.C., areas. James has a brother in Washington, D.C., and Patricia has a cousin who goes to school in New York City.

"We're assuming he's O.K., he's several blocks from the World Trade Center, but we haven't heard anything specific," Patricia said. "All the phone lines to Long Island, where his parents are, are down, which makes it very difficult to get news from family."

Her mother has been acting as a switch board for family members trying to get news, she said.

"It's hard for us to understand how somebody could hate a country enough to do this to so many innocent people," she said.

Patricia said it will be several days before her or her family come out of their shock. "We do feel lucky - as far as we can tell family members are safe and the rescue and support agencies in New York City are functioning just as they're intended."

Even with what is expected to be a massive death toll, Patricia said she hopes the United States does not act rashly in response.

"This could potentially be a trigger for expanded violence in the world and I hope our government is calm enough and reasonable enough to act thoughtfully," she said.

The priority now needs to be on rescue efforts, she said.

Reaction in the schools

Students at the Storm Lake High School and St. Mary's High School watched news coverage throughout the day, and became witnesses to what Storm Lake High School Principal Mike Hanna called "negative history."

"It's something these kids will remember," Hanna said.

Many of the high school students do not have similar incidents to compare yesterday's attacks to. Some of the older faculty at the public high school compared it to the assassina-

tion of President Kennedy or the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger, Hanna said.

Rose Davis, principal at St. Mary's, said there has been mixed reactions from upperclassmen there.

"Most of it is disbelief that something like this could happen in our country," she said. "They just wonder what will happen in the months and years to come of those in their age group and for our country, and how we will respond to this and the fear that goes with that."

St. Mary's staff was trying to limit exposure to K-4 students so that family could discuss the incident with their children first.

Larry Parman, assistant superintendent for Storm Lake Public, said teachers did their best to conduct classes throughout the day.

"We're trying to have a day of school, though we know it's far from a normal day, and we are asking our teachers to use good judgment in what they allow kids to watch depending on age (in the elementary)," he said.

Middle and high schoolers in public school were allowed to watch news coverage and were given an opportunity to discuss it.

There was a K-12 prayer vigil and service at St. Mary's yesterday afternoon. Also, a community meeting was held at Buena Vista University for students, faculty and staff to come together and support one another.

All of Storm Lake Public's counselors were alerted that the incidents could very well affect many in the schools. Throughout the day parents called to check what was happening, and some to inform their children the status of relatives working in New York and Washington, D.C.

"We have 1,900 students and 300 staff members," Parman said. "We can pretty much be assured some have friends or relatives involved on the east coast, so we're just trying to be alert and sensitive to the needs of students and staff members."

At both Storm Lake and St. Mary's parents were allowed to take their children home if they wanted, while security was heightened slightly here.

"We beefed up security in the buildings a little bit, locked some doors we don't normally lock, and have people in the halls," said Hanna.

Several schools called off activities, including South O'Brien which canceled its 7th grade volleyball match here. However, the Storm Lake School District still held its cross country invitational, but not out of disrespect to what has happened.

"Our feeling is terrorism is designed to disrupt as much as possible, so we're trying to maintain as



Crowds gathered around TV displays in various fair buildings Tuesday to hear news reports of the terrorist attacks on the United States.

Photo by Chris Nielsen

normal of a routine as we can under the circumstances," Parman said.

A country shuts down

Throughout the country airports and federal buildings closed. At the Siouxland Gateway Airport, Northwest Airlines representatives said flights were grounded until at least noon today, while the FAA grounded all commercial and private flights, including at the Storm Lake Municipal Airport.

"All air craft are grounded until further notice," said Robert Ohrlund, chair of the airport commission.

The 185th Fighter Wing based out of Sioux City was on heightened alert, as are other military and National Guard units throughout the country.

Federal offices in Storm Lake closed down yesterday, including the Social Security Administration and the USDA offices.

A national response has been planned over the years, and will be put into full effect, said Bob Christensen, Buena Vista County emergency management coordinator.

"Emergency management deals with terrorist events and mitigation planning," Christensen said. "They're meeting as we speak on a national level."

As of Tuesday afternoon Christensen said no requests for assistance were made of local or state resources.

Mitigation planning has been focused on locally in the past several years.

"We have implemented terrorist activity planning into emergency management planning," Christensen said. "It's a unified, ongoing plan for most any event, such as weather."

For the veteran emergency management coordinator, he had only one word for the destruction on the east coast - unbelievable.

"I haven't seen anything like this before," said Christensen. "This incident, personally, will change a lot of things all the way from the national level to the local level. There'll be more focus on terrorist events."

Local politicians offered what words of comfort they could.

Sen. Tom Harkin said the nation must not succumb to panic.

"We must meet this tragedy with resolve, determination and the coordi-

nation of federal, state and local agencies," Harkin said. "Our nation stands in shock and mourning in the face of these horrific acts."

Sen. Charles Grassley said any U.S. military response will be "major."

"I think any military response will be major and there might even be non-military response... We've got to send the signal that we are not going to tolerate this attack on our nation," Grassley said. "I don't understand people who feel that their suicide is an act of faith and that killing all these people is the road to Heaven. I don't understand that. I never will."

State Senator Steve King offered his prayers to the families and friends of the victims of the terrorist attacks. He urged cooperation throughout the country, including from those affected by the airport shut downs and increased security at state and federal facilities.

"This is a time for us to show our unity, not a time to place blame or be involved in politics," he said.

How to help

In the coming days and weeks there will be a nation-wide call for help for those injured in yesterday's attacks.

Steve Harrington, director of the Siouxland Blood Bank, said the national blood supply is currently low, and said any donors would be helpful. Extended hours will be established at the Sioux City location at 1019 Jones St.

Also, the Siouxland Bloodmobile will be visiting area locations in the coming weeks, and donors will be needed then as well.

Upcoming dates include Sept. 20 at Holstein from 3-7:30 p.m. at Vet's Hall; Sept. 25 at Cherokee from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at the community center; Sept. 27 at Sioux Rapids from 3-6:30 p.m. at the American Legion Hall; Sept. 28 at Aurelia from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the community center; and Oct. 2 at Buena Vista Regional Medical Center from 12-6 p.m.

"With this crisis it will deplete the national blood supply, so if people cannot donate immediately donors will be needed in the coming weeks and months," said Kris Hartje, donor consultant with the Siouxland Blood Bank.



Students at Storm Lake High School gathered around a TV set in the commons to watch news coverage of the terrorist attack Tuesday morning.

Photo by Brent Hardin

Fairgoers react to Tuesday's terrorist attacks on U.S.

By Chris Nielsen
Daily Reporter Staff

The mood at the Clay County Fair was somber Tuesday as reports of terrorist attacks on the United States unfolded. Instead of focusing on the fair's numerous attractions, crowds gathered around TV displays in the fair's various commercial buildings to hear the latest news reports.

Looks of disbelief were on the faces of many as news anchors' commentary and shocking pictures of the carnage in New York City, N.Y., Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania were broadcast. Many viewers

talked quietly among themselves as more and more people gathered to find out what the latest events were.

According to Rudy Chapman, a member of a Janitor's Closet crew at the fair, it was reluctantly the topic of conversation at the fair on Tuesday. "You don't want to bring it up with people who are out to enjoy the fair, but it's in our hearts and on our minds."

According to Clay County Sheriff Randy Krukow, who was present at the fairgrounds Tuesday, the terrorist attacks will affect people both nationally and internationally.

"Right now, my reaction is to be in prayer for the innocent people killed and for their families," said Krukow.



Randy Krukow
Spencer

"It's horrible. It's like when JFK got shot. People will remember where they were on this day."



Pat Wallinga
Sheldon

"Every place at the fair people are crowded around TVs and radios. It must have been horrible what the people on those planes went through."



Brian Johnson
Faribault, Minn.

"I'm outraged by this. It's crazy and doesn't make any sense."



Bud Berg
Avoca, Minn.

"It reminded me of Pearl Harbor when I first heard about it on the radio this morning. It's very serious."



Diane Clasing
Emmetsburg

"I'm scared by this. It concerns me that the government hasn't been fully able to communicate what is going on."



Rudy Chapman
Spencer

"It's certainly a huge tragedy. For everybody at the fair, it's in our hearts and in our minds."



A Pentagon employee is aided outside the Pentagon Tuesday, Sept. 11, after the building took a direct, devastating hit from an aircraft in a terrorist attack.

(AP Photo, Will Morris)

Slaughter of innocents ancient political tactic

(AP) - It is a notion as old as human history, a cold-eyed calculation made by zealots down the ages: that the taking of innocent lives, or the threat to do so, can serve as a brutally effective means of advancing a cause.

The modern age of mass terrorism - culminating with Tuesday's devastating kamikaze-style attacks against some of the greatest icons of American prestige and power - dates back only a little more than three decades.

"You look at the ancient Greeks, at Roman history, at biblical accounts - all the elements are there," said Ariel Merari, a terrorism expert at Tel Aviv University. "These are acts that we as a species have always been capable of, and we as a species have carried out. But as an international political phenomenon, it's relatively new."

The late 1960s ushered in a wave of commercial airline hijackings, the first of them carried out in 1968 by a radical Palestinian faction, with many others to follow in the name of what was then the relatively little-known Palestinian cause.

With success a host of imitators sprang up. Left-wing and nationalist groups proliferated in Western Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, many of them employing terror as a tactic. The arena widened to the world's far-flung corners, and the target list expanded.

Terrorism. The very idea is to strike paralyzing fear into the hearts of an enemy, or a perceived one. To invest an act of violence with far-reaching consequences that go beyond the moment's spectacular display of blood and destruction.

It requires a chilling degree of detachment from the fundamental values upon which civilization is built, ethicists say.

"The world view that undergirds any terrorist activity is as far removed from any ethical philosophy as can be imagined," said Tom Morris, a former Notre Dame University professor of philosophy.

"It involves treating people as mere means to ends. It ascribes only instrumental value to people, and no intrinsic value."

The public revulsion inspired by terror attacks is part of the point - but in a way beside the point. Terrorism as we know it today is the product of a media age, a calling card of a global culture in which fame and infamy are closely coupled.

"The whole idea - the only idea, in some sense - is to bring attention to the cause," said Rohan Gunaratna of the Center for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Sometimes, the battle over terrorism is a struggle over semantics.

"Terrorist" is an epithet, and even the most enthusiastic practitioners of terror's black arts bridle at it. When the U.S. State Department periodically updates its list of terror organizations and the countries that sponsor them, this judgment is often accompanied by howls of protest.

It is a two-sided coin: repressive regimes use the terrorist tag to discredit those who struggle against them. So who is a terrorist, and who is a freedom fighter?

Even decades after the fact, the answer is sometimes clear, sometimes not. Nelson Mandela is a universally beloved and respected statesman. But with the Mideast's latest plunge into violence, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's claim to the title of leader and statesman is being bitterly challenged.

The line between guerrilla warfare and terrorism has always been a difficult one to define.

Confronted with a powerful foe, rebel movements and guerrilla armies use tactics that are in some ways akin to terrorism, relying heavily on stealth, surprise and audacity.

"What some people call terrorism would probably be better defined as low-intensity warfare," said Merari, the Tel Aviv University expert.



Rev. Jim Simons pauses a moment near the scene of a fatal plane crash outside Shanksville, Somerset County Tues. Sept. 11, 2001. He directs St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Ligonier, Pa.

(CNHI News Service Photo by Dave Lloyd of The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, Pa.)

PYSCHIE EFFECTS

By Kris Dotson
CNHI News Service

GALLIPOLIS, Ohio — As schools across America sent children home to be with their families in the face of a national tragedy, a psychologist warned against allowing unchecked viewing of television reports of Tuesday's terrorist attacks.

"Everybody's in shock — this is a shocking experience," said Rick Boone, clinical psychologist for Holzer Medical Center and Holzer Clinic.

Local schools let children out early Tuesday, so that means they had access to television and radio broadcasts they may not normally have had.

"It's so unprecedented with people our age," Boone said. "We've never had anything like this in the United States, so the response of our schools may carry some unintended consequences for the kids such as fear — fear of something they might otherwise not have been concerned with."

"Yet, I think the school officials wanted to return their children to their homes where the family can all be together because we just don't know what's going to happen or if there's anything else yet to come."

Boone is also a major in the Army Reserves and has a son in ROTC.

Helping students deal with national tragedy

By Kris Todd
Daily Reporter Staff

While adults were deeply impacted by Tuesday's events, children also reacted to news of the terrorist bombings that filtered into their classrooms.

Educational staff at all levels worked together to address this reverberation and to put it into an appropriate context that students could understand.

Today will mark another day in which staff will attempt to ensure that learning for students is a seamless process.

Marc Singer, Lakeland Area Education Agency (AEA) 3's lead for the School Social Work Department, reported school staffs will meet and make sure they have a common way to present information to students this morning.

"They will want to answer questions openly, but not alarm students any more than they already are," said Singer.

He added AEA members will continue to support school district crisis plans throughout the days ahead. If requested, they will also work with individual classrooms or children, said Singer.

Meanwhile, in the classrooms across Spencer yesterday, students and staff alike watched current events unfold on television. As the events of the day soaked into students' consciousness levels, staff were present to aid and assist in the process.

According to Kathy Elliott, high school principal, this meant openly talking with students and helping them to process the information unfolding.

"We are mostly trying to help kids recognize the impact of what's happening here," she reported Tuesday afternoon.

Meanwhile, discussions in the high school hallways and classrooms ranged from comparisons to the attack on Pearl Harbor to how it feels to be a bombed country. Students also learned about the roles of the Pentagon and the impact expected from the attack on the country's financial well-being.

According to one high school teacher, initial classroom reaction from students was stunned silence.

"The students are taking this all in," said Steve Bomgaars, high school social studies teacher. "All of us are trying to figure out what has happened and why it happened."

He advised students to view Tuesday's happenings as "an incredible tragedy."

"One of the things for our students to look at is how the government reacts to this incredible crisis we're involved in right now," said Bomgaars. "In my lifetime, the only thing that remotely compares to this is the day that President Kennedy was assassinated."

At the middle school level, principal Tim Barth said students often can't differentiate between fiction and reality. This, combined with the fact that such a national disaster has not transpired during their lifetimes, led students to do a quick reality check on the seriousness of the day's occurrences.

"This is one of those situations that almost supersedes the educational process," said Barth.

School staff probably has more potential to serve in a supportive role at the elementary level, though, added AEA representative Singer.

"The sight of buildings collapsing is particularly scary for a younger child," said Singer.

Elementary guidance counselor Dennis Brechwald concurred.

While elementary-aged students haven't felt the impact as greatly as adults, he said they will over the next days as news filters to them on the homefront. As such, he anticipates staff will then need to deal with additional concerns.

"Parents will have to reassure," said Brechwald. "The school system is here to reinforce that we are very safe here in the Midwest and coming to school is one of the best places they can be."

Brechwald said elementary staff will try to normalize the day and keep things in perspective as much as possible for students, so they can continue to learn in a safe environment.

WHAT DO WE DO WHEN THE UNIMAGINABLE BECOMES REAL?

By Dana Larsen
Storm Lake Pilot-Tribune

It is the helplessness that hits the hardest.

Our leaders tell us they will take whatever steps are necessary to protect our citizens. Step one, we suspect, is to hit our knees and pray.

It is beyond our comprehension.

This isn't supposed to happen in America. We are accustomed to seeing terrorist attacks around the world, but

that is from the safe distance of news video and the detachment of foreign perception.

This isn't supposed to happen in America.

It hasn't happened, to this magnitude, on our soil, not since Pearl Harbor.

It would be easier to understand if it were a war. In war, there is some territorial or political reason for carnage, something which we can comprehend and combat in return. There is no explanation for this, and little protection

against it happening again.

The innocent victims of this cowardly attack had no idea they were in danger, and we all have no idea where the next strike is coming from. They took Lord-knows-how-many-lives, but they also took our national innocence. We may never feel quite so safe again.

This isn't supposed to happen in America. Here, in Iowa's heartland, our common workday was shattered by the video of the World Trade

Center collapsing, the Pentagon in flames, and reports coming in from Pennsylvania and Maryland. It was surreal - did we tune into some sick horror movie by mistake? But we quickly found that we couldn't change the channel and make this go away. Even as we watched it, we could scarcely believe.

Because it isn't supposed to happen in America.

Our local schoolchildren struggle with the news. Our residents worry for friends and

relatives. Air travel plans are grounded, events canceled. The heartbreak grips us all - the image of people leaping 100 stories to their death from burning towers is seared into our consciousness permanently.

What to do now? Pray. We are under attack, as surely as if a war had been declared. It is a war for sanity, a war against madmen who are willing to expend any amount of innocent lives for their own political, psychotic reasons. We will have to pull

together more than we have in this country since the World War II generation. We will have to help when the opportunities present themselves.

And all we can do now is pray.

Pray for all those who were slaughtered. Pray for all those who have risked their lives to try to rescue victims. And pray for us all, for what the world has come to.

Pray that this isn't to ever happen in America, not ever again.



Flames and smoke pour from a building at the Pentagon after a direct hit from an aircraft.

Associated Press photo

"These cowardly acts against our nation will not stand. I stand with President Bush in calling on every resource of the federal government to be used to track these cowards down and bring them to swift and certain justice."

Sen. Tom Harkin
D-Iowa

"I think any military response will be major and there might even be non-military response ... We've got to send the signal that we are not going to tolerate this attack on our nation. I don't understand people who feel that their suicide is an act of faith and that killing all these people is the road to Heaven. I don't understand that. I never will."

Sen. Charles Grassley
R-Iowa

World leaders offer support to U.S.

LONDON (AP) - Governments around the world offered condolences to an America that looked more vulnerable than ever after Tuesday's terror attacks, but thousands of Palestinians celebrated in the West Bank and in Lebanese refugee camps.

People on every continent watched in horror as astonishing images of terror in the United States filled their television screens. But in the West Bank town of Nablus, Palestinians cheered and distributed candy to passers-by, and Iraqi television played a patriotic song that began "Down with America!" as it showed the World Trade Center towers collapsing.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat offered his sympathy to Americans and said he was horrified by the devastating attacks, which also hit the Pentagon.

Leaders around the world - including most in the Middle East - offered messages of support.

Afghanistan's Taliban rulers condemned the

attacks and rejected suggestions that suspected terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden, who has been given asylum in Afghanistan, could be behind them.

"It is premature to level allegations against a person who is not in a position to carry out such attacks," said Abdul Salam Zaeef, the Taliban ambassador in Pakistan. "It was a well-organized plan and Osama has no such facilities."

President Gen. Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, one of three countries that recognize the Taliban's government, condemned the attacks and called for cooperation to combat the "modern-day evil" of terrorism.

Key indexes sank on world stock markets and many European and Asian airlines canceled flights to the United States and recalled planes already in the air.

Britain and Belgium banned commercial flights over their capitals, and Britain warned its citizens traveling in the United States to beware of possible further attacks. Israel closed its airspace to foreign flights and evacuated staff from diplomatic missions and Jewish institutions around the world.

In the West Bank town of Nablus, about 3,000 people poured into the streets shortly after the attacks began, chanting "God is Great" and handing out candy in a traditional gesture of celebration.

There were no reports of celebrations elsewhere in the West Bank and Gaza.

Sheik Ahmed Yassin, whose Islamic militant Hamas group has carried

out a series of suicide bombings in Israel, said he was not interested in exporting such attacks to the United States.

"We are not ready to move our struggle outside the occupied Palestinian land. We are not prepared to open international fronts, however much we criticize the unfair American position," Yassin told reporters in Gaza City.

In Ein el-Hilweh, Lebanon's largest refugee camp, where about 75,000 Palestinians live, revelers fired weapons in the air, witnesses said. Similar celebratory gunfire was heard at the Rashidiyah camp near the southern city of Tyre.

Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, whom the United States has accused of backing international terrorism, called the attacks "horrifying" and urged Muslim aid groups to offer help "regardless of political considerations or differences between America and the peoples of the world."

Syria's government condemned the attacks and offered condolences to the United States and the American people, the official Syrian Arab News Agency reported. Syria has also been at odds with the United States, which has accused it of backing terrorism.

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate who is struggling for power against the country's hard-line Islamic leaders, expressed "deep regret and sympathy with the victims" and said "it is an international duty to try to undermine terrorism."

In Washington, D.C. chaos and fear as national capital tries to empty after attacks

WASHINGTON (AP) - Secret Service agents at the White House shouted at tourists to get away. At the Capitol, stunned congressmen huddled under the shade trees outside. Downtown, students ran to a dorm roof to watch the Pentagon burn.

Across Washington, people left work and jammed streets and subways to try to get home as the seat of government was evacuated after devastating terrorist attacks at the Pentagon and in New York City. Sirens wailed across the city. Cars jammed the streets, and bomb-sniffing dogs patrolled the Washington Monument.

"I just want to get out of downtown, get someplace safe," said Tracey Nicholas, who had collected her son from his elementary school in downtown but was stranded with no way to get home. She bought Marcus, a third-grader, a hot dog and tried to think what to do.

Standing in line at the White House, Elmar Torenge of Holland and a friend heard the news of the World Trade Center attacks on a radio. Then they heard a big explosion. "We were quite scared. ... A policeman who seemed quite panicked told us to get ... out of here."

Inside the Capitol, guards ran through the hallways shouting at people to leave. "There's a plane coming," one frantic guard shouted. "Get out!"

Outside, Senate President Pro Tem Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., talked to reporters until a loud boom from behind the Capitol caused an aide to grab him by the arm and try to drag him away. "Some people in the world are bent on destruction," Byrd said.

At George Washington University near the State Department, student Aaron Costello, 20, of Richmond, Va., ran to his dorm roof to see the Pentagon smoking across the Potomac River.

"It's still just unreal to me right now," Costello said.

At his house on a hill near the Pentagon, John Croom, a 69-year-old retired Army staff sergeant was dumbfounded as he watched the smoke.

"I don't understand how they could do this. ... I thought Washington was protected," Croom said.



Cars lined up the street and around the corner at Amridge in order for people to fill their cars and trucks with gas before the upcoming gas hike.

Rumors of rising prices lead to gas lines

DES MOINES (AP) - As many as 20 cars waited in line Tuesday evening at the downtown Git n Go convenience store as motorists reacted to rumors tied to the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

In Pleasant Hill, at an intersection where two gas stations sit on opposite corners, 85 cars were lined up. In West Des Moines, a police officer directed traffic outside a Kum & Go store as the line of cars blocked a major street. Sitting in line at the Git n Go, Julian Garcia, of Des Moines, said a friend told him they were selling gas for \$7-\$8 in Boston.

"We heard \$3 in Ames and \$5 in Kansas City," said Tara Wasson, of West Des Moines. "Everybody says it's from what happened today."

Wasson's cousin, Becky Wasson, said: "I can't afford \$60 for a fill-up." Gov. Tom Vilsack held a news conference to urge Iowans to stay calm, which he said will help stabilize prices and keep gas supplies sufficient.

Vilsack said a spot check found one

gas station in the Quad Cities charging \$4 a gallon, but gas prices were not rising generally by more than a few cents a gallon. He said any complaints of price gouging would be investigated by the state attorney general's office.

"There is no indication that wholesale prices have increased dramatically," Vilsack said. "There is plenty of gasoline for Iowa motorists."

David Downing, the state's energy analyst, warned that consumers rushing to the pump in a panic could drive prices up.

"They are actually going to make it a self-fulfilling prophecy," he said.

Ron Marr, of the Petroleum Marketers of Iowa, said gas stations could find supplies temporarily depleted by the panic.

"If the public acts irrationally and rushes to buy gasoline, it will create a supply problem," he said.

Rolf Hanson, executive director of the Iowa Petroleum Council, said gas prices may be higher at some stations



Ricky Wilson, owner of Wilson Concrete and Construction in Spencer, fills up one of three 55-gallon barrels in the box of his full-sized pickup at Spencer's Amridge in order to prepare for a major increase in gas prices.

to deter people from panic-buying. "Our message is: Don't panic," Hanson said from his hotel room in Washington, D.C. "This has happened before, most recently in the Gulf War. It usually lasts 24 to 48 hours and they go back down. ... Wait this out. It should go down."

Photos by Ben Montgomery



Government officials are focusing their probe on Osama bin Laden, who has been tied to previous attacks on Americans overseas.

Government probe focuses on terrorist bin Laden

WASHINGTON (AP) - U.S. officials began piecing together a case linking Osama bin Laden to the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history, aided by an intercept of communications between his supporters and harrowing cell phone calls from victims aboard the jetliners before they crashed on Tuesday.

U.S. intelligence intercepted communications between bin Laden supporters discussing the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, according to Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"They have an intercept of some information that included people associated with bin Laden who acknowledged a couple of targets were hit," Hatch said in an interview with The Associated Press. He declined to be more specific.

Hatch also said law enforcement has data possibly linking one person on one of the four ill-fated flights to bin Laden's organization.

Government and industry officials said at least one flight attendant and two passengers called from three of the planes as they were being forced down in New York and Washington - each describing similar circumstances.

The callers indicated hijackers armed with knives, in some cases stabbing flight attendants,

took control of the plane and were forcing them down toward the ground, officials said.

One of the passengers was Barbara Olson, the wife of a top Justice Department official who called her husband as the hijacking was occurring.

Olson, the wife of Solicitor General Theodore Olson, was aboard American Airlines Flight 77 that left Dulles International Airport in Washington and was forced to crash into the Pentagon.

The officials said Olson told her husband the attackers had used knife-like instruments to take over the plane, and forced passengers to the back of the jet.

Theodore Olson confirmed his wife made the calls before

dying. "She called from the plane while it was being hijacked. I wish it wasn't so but it is," he said.

Separately, a businessman aboard a United flight that left Boston and crashed into the World Trade Center twice called his father as his plane was being hijacked, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the victim's father was interviewed by the FBI. The father indicated his son made two calls - both times the phone cut off. In the first call, the businessman said a stewardess had been stabbed. In the second call, the son said his plane was "going down."

A flight attendant aboard the second jetliner that struck the World Trade Center managed to call an emergency number from the back of the airplane, an American Airlines source said. The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the flight attendant said her fellow attendants had been stabbed, the cabin had been taken over, and they were going down in New York.

U.S. officials said there was early information tying the attacks to bin Laden, a wealthy Arab believed to be living in Afghanistan who previously has been tied to terrorist attacks against Americans overseas. But they cautioned it was too early to definitively assign blame.

Early native survives World Trade Center attack

By THOMAS KLETT
Storm Lake Pilot-Tribune

An Early native narrowly avoided harm when a second aircraft flew into the second World Trade Center tower yesterday morning.

Ellen Higgins Rieder, a 1978 St. Mary's graduate, works for an insurance company in the second tower of the World Trade Center.

Her sister, Martha Smith of Nemaha, said Rieder had recently arrived at work at the World Trade Center when the first plane collided with the a trade center tower.

"She could smell the first explosion and saw all the debris falling when she decided to get the heck out of there," Smith said.

Rieder was about half way down the stairwell when building officials were saying the second tower was safe, Smith said.

Only moments later a second airplane impacted the mid-section of the second tower. "She was in the stairwell around the 10th floor of her building when the second plane hit," Smith said.

Rieder, who works on the 51st floor, told her sister the plane impacted the second tower around the 60th floor, Smith said.

"She could feel the other impact walking down the stairs, and she said something about how 'someone was trying to get them and hasn't given up,'" Smith said.

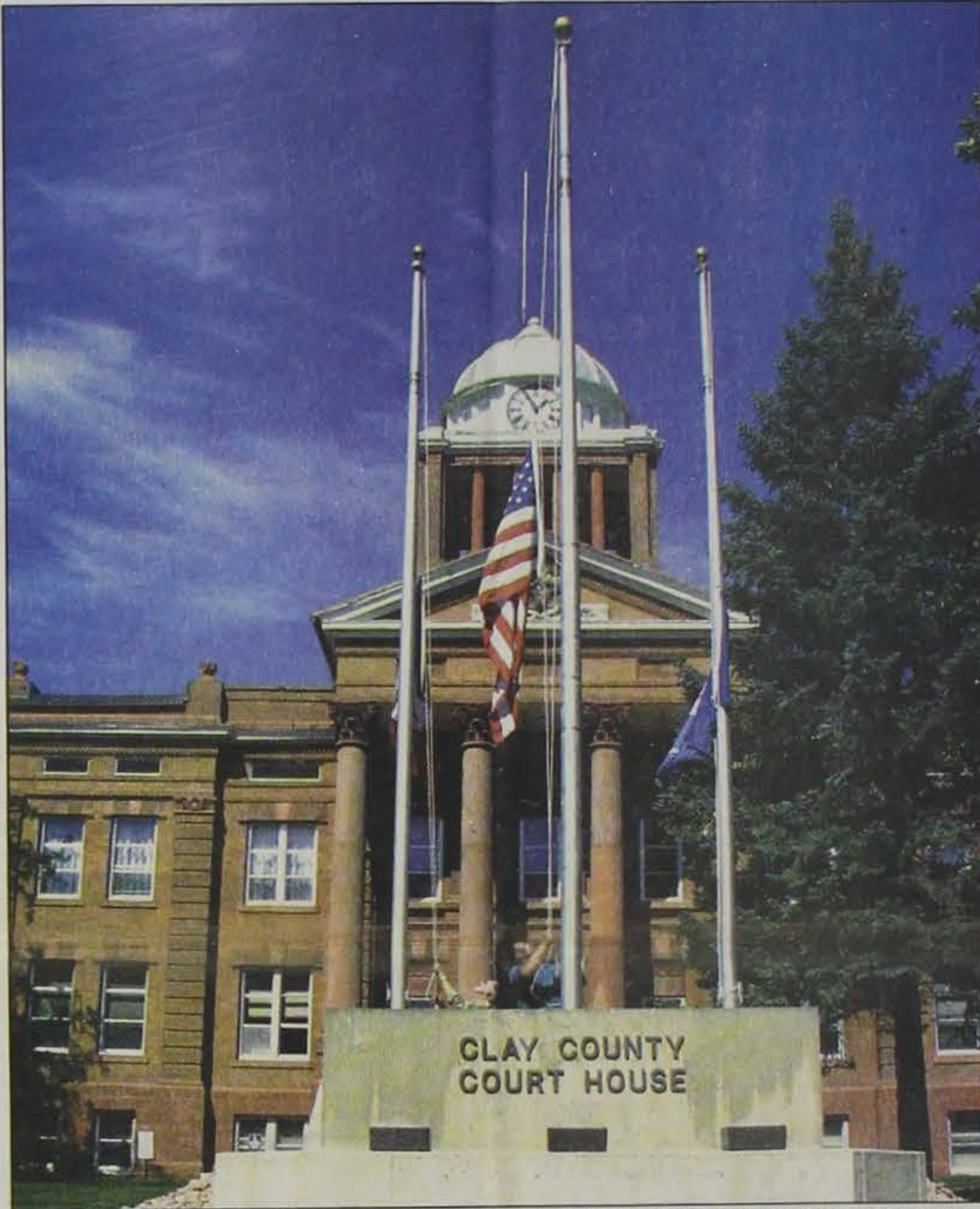
Rieder told her sister that while the stairwells were full, people were not panicking, she said. Smith called almost immediately after hearing the news, and was able to talk with her sister's nanny about 8:30 a.m. Central Standard Time, who was able to report to Smith that her sister was not injured "At that point I contacted the rest of the family," Smith said.

After leaving the tower, she went to her husband's office which was located nearby. People tried to convince her it was safe, but then the first tower collapsed, Smith said.

Rieder escaped with no injuries. She had to walk 30 blocks in the dust from the twin towers' collapse to get home, Smith said.

Smith said when she first saw what had happened in New York City, she thought the worse. "I knew she was located in the middle of that tower," Smith said.

Rieder was also employed at the World Trade Center when a bomb was detonated in the basement in 1993. After the most recent terrorist attack, Smith said her sister has had enough "That's the closest she ever wants to get to something like that again," Smith said. "To be honest, she's still in shock - I don't think it has sunk in yet. She's thankful she got out."



Clay County building maintenance workers Ed Campbell (left) and Steve Gustin lowered flags at the Clay County courthouse Tuesday afternoon to commemorate those killed in terrorist attacks on the United States.

Photo by Chris Nielsen

Residents seek out information on attacks

By Daniel F. DeLong
Editor Cherokee Daily Times

CHEROKEE — On most mornings the foot traffic in Charlie Letsche's Radio Shack downtown store is brisk, but it wasn't on Tuesday.

Letsche was standing alone in front of a television set and shaking his head in disgust as a CNN news broadcaster was recapping the events of the morning: terrorists had attacked and destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City, and portions of the Pentagon in two separate attacks.

"We didn't go far enough the first time," Letsche said between glimpses at the flickering TV screen, referring to Operation Desert Storm in Iraq 10 years ago, that wounded but did not wipe out a festering number of hardline Islamic fundamentalists who had been in Baghdad with Saddam Hussein.

While no group had yet taken credit for the attack for the insidious acts, most folks here believed it was Hussein and a handful of other American-hating Arabs who planned and paid for the operation.

For hours after the first attack, Main Street here was deserted as most people stayed at home, preferring to watch coverage of the most deadly event involving civilians in U.S. history on television.

Around noon, office workers quickly moved into restaurants and lounges to watch the proceedings.

At the Bright Side Lounge, just a few doors west of the Radio Shack, had a steady stream of people in and out all morning.

Most of them looked on in disbelief, and exchanged thoughts about what size of bomb should be used in response.

"A complete act of cowardice," shouted one man who stomped back out into the sunlight and disappeared.

Meanwhile, virtually all the churches in town were open and worshippers who normally wouldn't think of attending anything other than a Sunday service made their way into the pews, offering a prayer for those who died.

At Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, the number of devotees was about 10 times greater than usual, church officials said. And they expected to see an even larger gathering at night.

At Carey's Restaurant on south Second Street, Jennifer Launderville couldn't take her eyes off the old TV playing from atop a cabinet.

Her brother is in the army, stationed in Texas. She watched and waited, wondering if the order would be sent out that the troops would be mobilized and sent overseas.

Tragedy hits close to home for area couple

By Anitra Wolf
DCN Staff Writer

Spirit Lake and New York City seemed worlds apart on Tuesday, Sept. 11 as the World Trade Center came crashing to the ground.

But for one Spirit Lake couple, the New York tragedy hit a little too close to home.

Upon hearing the news of the attack, Spirit Lake residents John and Kathi Hinn waited for word from their daughter and son-in-law, Gretchen and Anthony Lolis, both of whom work in New York City.

Gretchen works for Calvin Klein in the fashion district and Anthony works in the financial district, directly across the street from the World Trade Center.

"Tony saw the first plane crash into the World Trade Center through the window at his office," said Kathi Hinn.

Following the crash, Tony's building was evacuated.

"He rushed down 20 flights of

stairs onto the street," said Kathi.

After safely exiting the building, Tony immediately tried to call his wife from a pay phone but ended up just leaving a message for her.

While at the pay phone, Tony looked up in the sky to see the second plane come into sight.

"Tony said he saw the pilot deliberately turn the airplane to try to cut the building in two," said Kathi. "He also saw people jumping and screaming from the second tower."

Along with thousands of other citizens of New York, Tony then decided to flee the area.

As he was fleeing, Tony heard more planes going over the city.

"He thought for sure they were waging an attack on New York," said Kathi.

Fearing for his life, Tony reached a ferry and was able to leave the city.

Tony then went to his home in North Bergen, N.J., to await word from Gretchen. The area where Gretchen worked had been closed so he couldn't get to her. So he headed

home.

Meanwhile, Gretchen received Tony's message and alerted her family that the two of them were all right. She then left her workplace to get to Tony.

"She works on 39th and 7th," said Kathi. "And she was trying to get to a diner on 125th Street. Tony's brother, Matt, was in the city and found her on 86th Street."

After two hours of travel to just a short distance, Gretchen greeted Tony at their home at about 4 p.m. yesterday.

And although both Gretchen and Tony are safe at home, anxiety still fills the air.

"Tony said it was the scariest thing he had ever seen," said Kathi. "He said he won't sleep for a long time."

Tony estimates the tragedy at the World Trade Center killed between 30,000 and 40,000 people. Today, he'll report to work at an emergency site to see how many of his co-workers survived.

Gretchen has the day off.

Bush Speaks

continued from page 1

virtual hiding.

He was secreted between military installations here and in Nebraska, in what former President Clinton said was part of a Secret Service and military plan to keep the president safe.

"He needs to take every conceivable precaution in the event there are more attacks planned and there is a plan to attack the leadership of the United States," Clinton said in an interview.

The United States received no warning of the attacks on the

Pentagon and New York's World Trade Center towers, White House press secretary Ari Fleischer said. For now, Bush was concerned about the victims, not any failure of U.S. intelligence.

"First things first," Fleischer said. "There will come an appropriate time to do all appropriate look-backs. His focus is on events this morning."

Bush considered making a televised address to the nation Tuesday night after joining by teleconference a meeting of his National Security Council in

Washington.

"Freedom itself was attacked this morning by a faceless coward and freedom will be defended," he said from this tightly guarded Louisiana air base.

With the White House itself and Camp David under threat of attack, the president's whereabouts were kept secret. He made a brief statement from a conference room here, assuring Americans that he was in regular contact with his command post in Washington: Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and the

White House national security team.

"Our military at home and around the world is on high-alert status and we have taken the necessary security precautions to continue the functions of your government," Bush said, his back to a pair of American flags and the portraits of Air Force leaders.

"We have been in touch with the leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans."

He then boarded Air Force One at 1:30 p.m. EDT for a secret destination that turned out to be Nebraska's Offutt Air Force Base, home to the U.S. Strategic Command, which controls the nation's nuclear weapons.

White House officials were sensitive to any appearance that Bush was not at the helm. Fleischer said Bush wanted to be in Washington, where Cheney led the crisis operations center at the White House, but "he understands that at a time like this, caution must be taken" with his location.

The president lingered in Louisiana for just 90 minutes. Military fighter jets escorted his arrival from Florida, where he had intended to make an education speech.

At the first reports of attacks on New York's World Trade Center, Bush told his Sarasota elementary school audience that he was hastening back to Washington. All of that immediately changed - and he was diverted to Louisiana - when a plane slammed into the Pentagon, and Washington, too, was under attack.

DCN O

2nd grader wins poster contest

By Joy Hibma
Staff Writer

Last spring when McKenzie Colt designed her poster she didn't know she'd be the recipient of money. She also didn't know her habitat would be a winner at a regional competition.

This past week Colt, a second grader at Spirit Lake Elementary, was awarded a check for \$35 from Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the honors of being named the first place winner in the K-1 Division of the 2001 Regional Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest.

"It's really exciting for her," said Maxine Butler, from Dickinson County's Soil and Water conservation office. "It's also exciting to see how much she grasped and understood. Her picture has all the different kinds of habitats. From the worm in the apple to the monkey on the tree."

Colt designed her poster last spring after learning about different animal, plant and even human habitats. She, along with other Spirit Lake students, also studied how colors and pictures went together.

Lissa Potter from the Lakes Art Center and Barbara Tagami, the Dickinson



DCN photo by Joy Hibma

McKenzie A. Colt was named the first place winner in the K-1 Division of the 2001 Regional Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest, and on Thursday, Dec. 20, she was awarded her winning poster by Mark Ingwersen, Dickinson County Soil and Water Commissioner Chairman and a \$35 cash award from Beth Sander, Dickinson County Mutual and representing

Her poster was one of four that were chosen in the county, and at that time, she won a certificate and an Earth Week t-shirt.

Her poster was sent on to the regional competition. It included winners from 14 other counties, going over from Kossuth to Lyon and even down to Wright and Ida.

the Conservation Districts of Iowa and Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company.

Last year's contest theme was "Habitat for Life", and the competition was open for all students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The posters were judged on the entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

Supervisors show commitment to environment

Readers Write

DCN 1-5-2002

On Dec. 11, 2001 the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors once again showed that the water quality and the environment are high priority to Dickinson County. The board agreed to grant a conservation easement to the Dickinson County Conservation Board for the approximate 15 acres of land east of the Oak Haven Care Facility. This will do several things that will help the community.

First of all, this may end up saving the county between \$70,000 and \$80,000. This is due to small wetlands that can form or get established in road ditches or near bridges that are owned by the county. If the county is going to upgrade the roads or bridges they may have to fill some of these small wetlands. The county engineer does look at all options to prevent filling in these small pothole areas but sometimes it can't be helped.

Also, this is not to say we should approve the filling wetlands but in this case where the wetland has been filled in by road crews 50 plus years ago, we are not going to be harming much because of a pre-existing condition. When the county fills in these small pothole areas, they must replace them acre for acre. This may end up costing the county money to buy and reconstruct a wetland basin for the area that they have filled along a road.

For example, the county in the past has paid \$3,200 for replacing a wetland acre in size. Now on the property east of the Oak Haven Care Facility there are approximately 5 acres of wetlands that could be restored. This is land

that can have wetlands restored and the county would not have to purchase the land.

So, if you take the figures from the past wetland replacement and figure it out, the county could save anywhere from \$70,000 to \$80,000.

Second the County Board of Supervisors decision will now allow for an Environmental Learning Center to be placed on the land. This has been a plan of the Dickinson County Conservation Board and the Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County since 1996.

Back in 1995 several groups came together like Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Dickinson Conservation Board, University of Okoboji, and The Lakes Art Center to create an over all Long Range Plan for this area. This is one of the last major steps of that plan. This will create a large green space area in the middle of the Dickinson County that will be open to the public. It also places several service areas together like The Lakes Art Center, Westport School House, Okoboji Summer Theater, and soon to be coming, the Environmental Learning Center.

Currently the Environmental Learning Center is being headed by the Conservation Foundation of Dickinson County.

The Dickinson County Conservation Board, Friends of Lakeside Lab, and other organizations are working together to make sure this facility will be the best Environmental Learning Center in the Region.

This project will be a great asset to Dickinson County not only that it will save the county money in the long run, but create a large green space area in the middle of the Iowa Great Lakes. This is an area currently filling up with what some would say is uncontrolled development which is going to significantly impact the reason for the expanded development, the lakes.

The Dickinson County Board of Supervisors has again shown that the environment is very important to Dickinson County.

They realize that the environment of Dickinson County is the reason why the county is the only rural county in Iowa that has shown increase in development and the only thing we have different than all the other counties in the state are the lakes. We need development to survive is what most will say.

Here in Dickinson County, need to watch how fast and how we develop because eventually it will come to the point that it will impact our lakes. We will not be able to change the system once development starts to impact the lakes of Dickinson County.

So we need to pre-plan and we need to slow down and really think things over before we go beyond our capacity and start to impact the one thing that makes the cash registers ring in this county, the water quality of the Lakes in Dickinson County.

Steve Anderson
Coordinator of the Dickinson County Clean Water Alliance

Welch Lake Wetlands Project underway

Chris La Rue

Big Sioux Wildlife Management Biologist

Many individuals passing along Highway 86 north of Spirit Lake may have noticed some recent construction activity. Construction on the first segment of the Welch Lake Wetlands Project is underway and completed.

The land acquisition by the Iowa DNR and the US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) on the Apple Orchard off Highway 9 to Welch Lake may be one of the most important water quality and wildlife projects for West Lake Okoboji and the Iowa Great Lakes. In 1995 the Fish and Wildlife Service purchased the first Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) portion of the Welch Lake Complex.

From 1996 to 1999 several other tracts were added by Iowa DNR and FWS to protect and enhance the watershed. The final engineering has been done for some time and a drainage agreement was recently approved for DD #26 by the County Supervisors and Iowa

DNR.

The current construction is taking place on the Fish and Wildlife Service's North Booth WPA Tract. When construction is completed on the Apple Orchard and the South Booth WPA Tract, over 80 acres of wetlands will have been added to the Welch Lake Wetlands



Complex. The Welch Lake Complex all together will have a total of 222 wetland acres that will protect and enhance the water quality of West Lake Okoboji. The total complex is now over 1,000 acres of public land. As the wetland development is completed, native prairie

grasses and forbs will be established with a small portion of the area remaining in crop as development takes place. The final segment of construction should take place next spring or early summer with bids being taken this winter.

A wetlands complex of this size will provide multiple bene-

established to a mixture of grasses and native prairie. A diversity of game and nongame migratory waterfowl and other wildlife species will be attracted to this public area for viewing or hunting. The Iowa Great Lakes Area continues to attract many tourists and hunters for the great recreational opportunities that it affords. This complex will certainly help provide more recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat in the Iowa Great Lakes.

Joan Schneider, A long time resident on West Lake Okoboji and an Iowa Department of Natural Resources Commissioner stated: "I realize the importance of the Welch Lake Wetlands Project. We all must be stewards of our waters and lands, be aware of our natural resources, and take every opportunity to save and protect these assets. The Welch Lake Wetlands Project is doing just that, providing water quality to West Lake Okoboji while at the same time offering the public lands to enjoy and witness wildlife in its natural state. We will all benefit from this project."

1-5-2002

Gull Point expands 30 acres

Back in the leanest years of the Great Depression, local and summer residents around West Lake Okoboji raised funds to help create Gull Point State Park.

Now, a new generation has raised funds to expand that park.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Commission recently approved a 30-acre addition to the park. The Iowa DNR will contribute 25 percent of the acquisition budget for this parcel, while local residents raised the other 75 percent.

Gull Point State Park, which originally opened in 1935, is a 165-acre park located north of Emerson Bay on the west shore of West Lake Okoboji. The park contains trails, picnic areas, a sandy beach and lots of wildlife habitat. A lodge, which some said was the most beautiful erected by Civil-

ian Conservation Corps labor in the nation, is still a popular site for weddings and other gatherings.

Recently, an adjacent 30-acre parcel was platted for 11 house lots with more being planned. Concerned neighbors, led by summer resident Irving Jensen, Jr., sought an alternative to more development on the watershed.

Jensen and others concerned approached the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF), a member-supported, nonprofit organization that protects natural lands. After consulting with the Iowa DNR, INHF agreed to purchase the parcel as a state park addition.

The INHF agreed that if local residents could

GULL POINT

Continued on Page 2

Three join staff at Conservation Service

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

The offices at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have three personnel changes to announce.

Susan Ehret

Susan Ehret, a Lake Park native and an Iowa Lakes Community College graduate, joined the office as an Conservation Aid

as of July of this year.

As a Conservation Aide Ehret spends a good deal of her day field checking and doing status reviews on acres committed to various conservation programs. She also works to get landowners to come to her office to sign up for other conservation programs. Some of the conservation practices she deals with are filter strips and repairing buffers as well as plantings of native grass-

es, trees and shrubs for both soil and water conservation.

"Meeting people, seeing different practices and how they help slow erosion and add to water quality of the area are some of the major things I enjoy about my job," Ehret said.

One of the most challenging

CONSERVATION

Continued on Page 2a

Farmable wetlands pilot program

REGIONAL — "Now is an excellent time to consider enrolling land in the Farmable Wetlands Program," says Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for the Iowa Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agency that provides technical assistance for the new pilot program.

"We have received applications for less than 1/4 of the 100,000 acres slated for Iowa in this pilot," says Brown. "That means there's lots of opportunity for landowners to enroll." According to Brown, this is an ideal time for farmers to consider the program because they have a good chance to see the lay of their land as they're out in the fields this fall.

"Landowners may come across wet spots in their fields that could work well as small restored wetlands," says Brown. Through the Farmable Wetlands Program landowners may enroll wetlands up to five acres in size and adjoining grass buffers in the continuous signup of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Brown encourages landowners to visit their local USDA office to see if the program will meet

their resource needs and operation goals. "NRCS staff is available to help landowners complete conservation planning, including an economic analysis of entering the program," says Brown. "NRCS and FSA staff can then help landowners complete the application process."

Signup for the Farmable Wetlands Program began June 4, 2001, and will be continuous through December 31, 2002, says Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director for the Iowa Farm Service Agency (FSA), one of the USDA agencies administering CRP and the new program. Iowa is one of just six states included in the pilot program, and can enroll up to 100,000 acres.

"Iowa has been a national leader in conservation buffers as well as wetlands restoration for several years. Hopefully this fall Iowa landowners will continue the positive trend by enrolling in this pilot program for wetland restoration," said McLaren.

According to McLaren, program participants who enter 10 to 15 year contracts will receive financial assistance that includes: rental payments based on the county soil rental rate; a 20 percent incentive payment; and a

maintenance payment. These three payments can total up to \$185/acre/year. Landowners will also receive a one-time practice incentive payment and a one-time sign-up incentive payment. Cost-share for installation of practices is also available.

Eligible land must have been cropped or considered cropped in at least 3 of the past 10 years, and be physically and legally capable of being cropped. Land must be wetlands, farmed wetlands or prior converted cropland, 5 acres or less in size. Wetlands in the floodplain of a perennial stream will not be eligible.

The acreage needed for wetland protection through buffers is not to exceed 3 times the wetland acres, or the maximum buffer width of 150 feet from the wetland edge, whichever is greater. The minimum buffer width is 30 feet. Wetland and practice maintenance will be required through the life of the contract. Incidental grazing will be allowed after harvest but will involve a 25 percent payment reduction.

Landowners and operators should contact their local USDA Service Center for more details and to sign up in the Farmable Wetlands in CRP.

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CONSERVATION

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Susan Ehret

come in and check out our programs to see if they are beneficial to them," Ehret concluded.

Tim Moran

Tim Moran, a Graettinger native and also an Iowa Lakes Community College graduate, has been working at the NRCS office as a Soil Conservation Technician since June.

Moran has a degree in horticulture and worked as a Conservation Aide with the office since 1998. Before that he farmed and was employed with the postal service as well.

As a Conservation Technician, Moran designs and installs conservation practices via waterways, terracing and wet-land projects with farmers and other landowners of the area.

things Ehret finds about her work has been learning all the government terminology involved.

Ehret has two sons, Michael, the oldest at 25, is married and has a son, Brandon, who is 21, is engaged to be married soon.

Prior to becoming a Conservation Aide, Ehret worked as a computer operator at Kraft-Sathers in Round Lake, Minn. For recreation Ehret enjoys reading and playing with her grandson.

"The people working out of this office are a great bunch of people to work with. I would really like to see land owners



Tim Moran

farmers and other landowners to continue to apply conservation practices to their land," Moran said.

Steve Anderson

Steve Anderson, the new Clean Water Alliance Coordinator for the Clean Water Alliance, is from Estherville.

He was also educated at Iowa Lakes. He has a degree in Environmental Management from South Dakota State University in Brookings, S.D.

His new position is actually one that was vacated from 1992 until July of this year, primarily due to lack of funding.

Anderson's position is funded in part by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the Dickinson County Conservation

"Keeping up with all the interest people have in these different conservation practices has been a challenge for me," Moran said. "Fall is the busiest season for projects such as these. A new wetland's pilot project has also been a challenge this fall season to implement."

Moran is married. He and his wife, Jennifer, have a four-year-old daughter, Autumn.

For recreation Moran spends time with his family in the outdoors bird watching and fishing.

"I enjoy my work and the people I work with in these offices. I would encourage



Steve Anderson

possible projects and partners that can help out. I like to look at the big picture. Every little project of water quality that gets the public involved working together, in my mind, is the best thing in the world for me and my work."

Prior to working in conservation, Anderson was a seed resource person for Feder Prairie Seed Co. in Minnesota. He has also worked as a technician at Iowa Lakeside Labs and was a Dickinson County Conservation Board intern in the spring of 2000.

"The people in these offices work fluently together," Anderson said. "Any person with water quality or environmental concerns can call me at the office. I'll find the answer or a person that can help."

Any of the new personnel located at the NRCS office, can be contacted by calling (712) 336-3782, ext. 3.

District, and Anderson hopes the remaining third of his funding will be accomplished via grants he has applied for.

As Clean Water Alliance Coordinator, it is Anderson's job to set up Clean Water Alliance meetings in both Iowa and Minnesota. He has a core group meeting set for Dec. 4 in Minnesota on the subject as a first meeting there.

"I am following a long range plan on water quality projects to address, as best I can, that issue in land sales here," Anderson explained.

"It is also my job to identify possible projects and partners that can help out. I like to look at the big picture. Every little project of water quality that gets the public involved working together, in my mind, is the best thing in the world for me and my work."

Gull Point expands 30 acres

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GULL POINT

Continued on Page 2

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By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

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spends a good deal of her day field checking and doing status reviews on acres committed to various conservation programs. She also works to get landowners to come to her office to sign up for other conservation programs. Some of the conservation practices she deals with are filter strips and repairing buffers as well as plantings of native grass-

es, trees and shrubs for both soil and water conservation.

"Meeting people, seeing different practices and how they help slow erosion and add to water quality of the area are some of the major things I enjoy about my job," Ehert said.

One of the most challenging

CONSERVATION

Continued on Page 2a

Farm

or our drivers Craig Borchers, Lori Christiansen and Phyllis Hopp. Christiansen arrived later to help the food collected at Upper Des

REGIONAL

excellent first meeting will be held Monday, Nov. 19, 8 p.m. at the Layne Anderson home.

Wetlands Proj

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PAYBACK**

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Butler named December employee of the month



Maxine Butler (middle) was recently awarded with a plaque, honoring her as the Iowa Division of Soil Conservation Employee of the Month.

Butler was presented with the award on Tuesday by the Division's Acting Director Kennety Tow (left) and the chair of district commissioners, Mark Ingwersen.

Maxine was nominated by Carol Oskvig, District Conservationist and by the commissioners of the soil district. And from this nomination, she was chosen.

"She does an outstanding job as coordinator of all the different programs," said Tow. "In Dickinson County, with the added dimension of the lakes and public lands, we have additional programs. These needs have impacted Maxine's job and she does a tremendous job of helping us."

SCHOOL

Spirit Lake Schools have introduced a new Palm Pilot program, allowing teachers to use the gadgets for class projects.

SEE PAGE 6a

SENIOR SCENE

The Wolfram's have been serving the community for many years, and retirement wasn't enough to make them stop.

SEE PAGE 8a

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Nov. 21, 2001

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**DICKINSON
COUNTY**

"Serving the Iowa Great Lakes"

Adopt-A-Needy-

Bill Northey shares farming trade in Japan

By Joy Hibma
Staff Writer

Although the landscape was drastically different, Bill Northey wasn't having any problems relating. He sat in a farmer's shed listening to a group of men. At times the discussion was lively, but he was surprised. They were similar to those he'd had at home — the focus was around the joys and problems of farming — only this time the discussions were in Japan.

Several weeks ago, Nov. 10-17, 2001, Northey encountered seven days of unique experiences. Along with 16 other Iowans — many farmers or those involved in the farming business — he travelled to Tokyo, Japan to help coordinate future relations. The meetings, the trade show and conversations

JAPAN

Continued on Page 2a

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DCN From Page 1

JAPAN

Continued from Page 1a

focused around soybean contracts.

"It was a learning experience. The Japanese are a very sophisticated soybean industry, and many were interested in working directly with us," Northey said. "By us coming over there and also being farmers ourselves, it showed we were people who cared and would stand behind our product."

Northey was representing the group called Innovative Growers. Made up of 36 farmers from Northwest Iowa, the farmers have created their own co-op, looking for ways to diversify and stay alive in a difficult farming environment.

"Many of these are farmers who are wanting to find speciality productions and higher value product crops to grow," Northey said.

The trip to Japan was a part of this plan. Northey joined others from Iowa, in correlation with the Iowa Department of Economic Development, all trying to make connections with Japanese soybean companies.

Northey, along with his partner, Dave Dvorak from West Liberty, Iowa, met with individual companies in numerous situations — in separate meetings, the trade show or just by meeting with farmers.

"We found that Iowa has a good reputation, and the Japanese like working with

they use it in so many different ways, but mainly to eat."

Three ways the Japanese use a lot of soybeans are food products called tofu, natto and miso.

The natto is a fermented bean, while the miso was crushed, fermented and mixed with wheat. It was often used in soups. A person didn't use a lot to get its taste.

"It was interesting to try. While, I liked the tofu, I couldn't stand the natto. To me, it smelled like beans that had been spilled by a ben and stayed there for awhile. They'd then get in your boot and started to smell," Northey said. "I've never tasted those, but these were nasty, and I won't try them again."

While meeting with trading companies like Mitsubishi Corp., Sumitomo Corp. to smaller family companies, Northey found quite a few interested in developing future relations.

Many he traded e-mails with and received business cards. And in most meetings, there was an interpreter.

In each one there were heavy discussions, with each one trying to feel each other out. But there were those where relations look promising.

The problem is it takes time to develop set contracts — a lot of issues have to be gone through.

Things like how much sucrose or proteins do they want in their speciality soybeans, what does this customer want, how will it be priced to how to they want them delivered.

"There's a lot of work to do now, establishing these things. We'd like to weed the companies down to around 15," Northey said.

Many of contracts take up to three years to establish relationship. Depending on the company, they want the Iowa farmers to send them samples the next two years from harvest.

"This way they'll know if they want to work with you. But once it's established, it's pretty well set in stone," Northey said. "Much of it is finding what the customer wants, and some of the companies can do that better than others, especially the bigger ones. Because if the one that ordered it doesn't find it exactly the way they want, the company can find another customer that likes

And some of this Northey hopes will start this next year.

"Some of the companies said they'd have us send some over next fall and then they'd see how they'd like it," Northey said. "We just want a chance to do it right."

Once a contract has been set between Japan and Innovative Growers, it goes to a farmer in the group. But the farmer doesn't have to take it, he has a choice to take it or wait for a better one. And each farmer will most likely growing a different kind of bean, as a customer might something different than another.

"We don't want to force someone to do something that will cause people to lose money," Northey said. "We're going to do our best to find the contracts that will be worth more to the grower so they'll want to do it."

The group hopes to end up with different size trading companies, as each one will have a different emphasis. The larger ones have more customers, so if one doesn't work out they can find another.

But Northey said these companies aren't always as close to the customer.

"The smaller family ones usually emphasize the quality more than the price. And they know their customers," he said.

With all the meetings, not much time was left to explore the city. Although there were times where several of them got up early and saw the Imperial Palace, the U.S. Embassy or went down to the Fish Market.

What Northey enjoyed the most was seeing the different farms. A Japanese farmer that Northey knew from a previous experience took him and several others to visit farms two hours north of Japan.

Many of these farmers grew buckwheat, wheat, soybeans, vegetables like carrots, cab-



contributed photo

Bill Northey, President of Innovative Growers, visited a Japanese farm with his partner Dave Dvorak from West Liberty, Iowa. The Tokyo farmer shows some of his soybean crop.



contributed photo

Northey stands in front of one of the Japanese buildings in Tokyo.

farmers directly," Northey said. "And the interesting thing, was many of them had visited Iowa, some up to 10 times."

Many of the Japanese farmers or soybean brokers have visited Iowa. Coming usually during August and September, their purpose is to see the soybeans grow.

"To them, it's a serious business and that's all they do — buy and sell soybeans," Northey said. "It's important

etables. But usually all of this was grown on 5-7 acres of land.

"Everything was miniature compared to us in the U.S.," Northey said. "You should have seen their eyes when we said how much we farmed. But then our eyes raised, when they told us they were getting \$100 a bushel."

Northey found it interesting seeing how farmers there live. He could also see why everything was miniature.

For the farmers in Japan, the roads around weren't very wide, making it hard to use large equipment. And because many didn't have many acres, they just used a five-foot combine with a four-foot head.

"It was fun to compare farming styles. They're so much different, but then so much the same. They still struggle to make a living just like we do," Northey said.

Some similarities was how land is valuable to the farmer, and many continue because they want to pass it on to the next generation.

"They also don't want to be the last one to be on the land, some have had their farms in their family for over 300 years," Northey said. "And they also realize that if they sold, they'd lose their identity and who their family is. It's interesting, because although their system is totally different, they struggle with many of the same things."

But working together, Northey hopes it will help both cultures — helping each farming country transition into a new farming environment.

Bill Northey shares farming trade in Japan

By Joy Hibma
Staff Writer

Although the landscape was drastically different, Bill Northey wasn't having any problems relating. He sat in a farmer's shed listening to a group of men. At times the discussion was lively, but he was surprised. They were similar to those he'd had at home - the focus was around the joys and problems of farming - only this time the discussions were in Japan.

Several weeks ago, Nov. 10-17, 2001, Northey encountered seven days of unique experiences. Along with 16 other Iowans - many farmers or those involved in the farming business - he travelled to Tokyo, Japan to help coordinate future relations.

The meetings, the trade show and conversations

JAPAN

Continued on Page 2a

Computer recycling project races to success

By Mike Jordan
Staff Writer

It was just 18 months ago that Tom Koster along with the Iowa Lakes Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) office began putting a project in place to recycle computers.

That project, now known as RACE (Refurbishing Available Computers for Education), has a center in Spencer that has already completely gone through 600 computer systems refurbishing 250 of them - all with volunteer labor.

But how does RACE work? According to Koster, project administrator for RACE - very well. "The type of waste we are targeting here, through our program, is all computer related. It includes processors, monitors, keyboards, printers, printer ink cartridges, mouse, internal hardware and software," Koster explained. "It has been estimated that across our nation some 5.5 million out-dated computers could be headed to the landfills this year, that is not good for our environment. Computers contain a number of toxic mate-

rials including lead, chromium, cadmium and mercury that have the potential of contaminating our ground water as they break down over time in a landfill. It is the goal of RACE to refurbish or recycle 1,000 computers a year. In so doing, we could keep as much as 50-70,000 pounds of computer waste material out of area landfills."

The RACE center accepts computers from anyone. Normally the computers bound for recycling are dropped off at the center but occasionally RACE will pick one up.

And once at the center, what becomes of the computers? Koster explained RACE's method of operation. "We depend entirely upon volunteers to help us with the refurbishing and recycling of the computers. A computer is 100 percent recyclable. Volunteers come to the RACE center and work to dismantle the computer components. The components are cleaned up. Then the process of wiping the hard drive is done to take off all the information that has been stored on it. Then we reinstall Windows 95 on the refurbished com-

puters."

Before the refurbished computer leave the RACE center, they are checked over to make sure everything works on them including the CD Rom and the floppy drives. Once they are ready to be moved out, the center contacts non-profit organizations in need of computers, notifying them that a computer is ready for them to pick-up.

Many area schools have benefited from the RACE center's computer. Schools use them for key boarding, word processing, e-mail and spreadsheet work, according to Koster.

In fact, the RACE center is developing a K-12 partnership program with area schools where students not only benefit from the use of the refurbished computers but also have the opportunity to work at the center dismantling the systems. "These projects at the RACE center enable students to develop critical thinking and decision-making skill

RECYCLING

Continued on Page 2b

RECYCLING

Continued from Page 1a

in hands-on work with the recycling of computers. It also helps them understand the inner workings of a computer better and helps them learn the importance of being a productive community member as well," Koster declared.

The goals of RACE are:

- Produce a packet of educational materials to provide programs and seminars for schools and communities on how they can play an important part in the reduction of computer waste by recycling used computers instead of disposing of them in landfills.
- Refurbish and provide at least 1,000 computers per year to schools and other non-profit organizations after they participate in the training program.
- Provide students, teachers, and businesses with hands-on training in computer hardware. Promote greater awareness regarding the use



DCN photo by Mike Jordan

Wilber Freeburg, a volunteer with the RACE program, works at a table in the center dismantling a printer.

of "real world" technology, career options, education and training needed for those options.

•Link senior volunteers with youth in a mentoring role.

•Recycle printer car-

tridges, both ink jet and laser, from area homes, schools and businesses.

Presently RACE receives computers for recycling from the five counties in Northwest Iowa.

In Dickinson County, RACE is teaming up with Waste Management Inc., operator of the county's landfill, thanks to the efforts of Koster and Waste Management's District Manager, Terry Smith. "Waste Management has been good to work with on this computer recycling project," Koster added. "They have been open to helping us keep computers out of their landfill. We are hoping to set up a similar recycling situation for computers with the city of Spencer now that they are operating their own landfill site."

RACE has really begun to recycle and refurbish computers on a larger scale in the last six months. They have

dedicated two large rooms at the center to storing, dismantling, refurbishing and holding computer systems.

RACE recently received a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to help them with their project. The \$29,000 grant funds have been used to progress the RACE center project as well as help with the salaries for its employees.

"I encourage people to call RACE before junking their computers or putting them on the roadside as refuse for collection," Koster concluded. "I hope recycling of computers catches on so we can expand our recycling area as well."

Anyone wishing to donate a computer to RACE may do so by contacting Tom Koster at the Iowa Lakes RC&D, 14 West 21st St. Suite 1, Spencer or they may call (712) 262-2083 to make arrangements to drop off their computer.

Water Quality Commissioners approve funding

By Phil Brown
Staff Writer

In what is generally regarded as a landmark event in the long history of water-quality protection efforts for the lower Great Lakes, the Dickinson County Water Quality Commissioners (WQC) met Monday to consider 13 water-quality project funding applications, totaling \$184,900. The commissioners agreed to fund 11 of these with its \$100,000

budget for 2002 — culminating their first year of project solicitation.

One of the Friends of Lakeside Lab proposals was combined with one from the Dickinson County Conservation Board for a joint project.

Two proposals not funded were those of the Iowa Great Lakes Resources Conservation and Development for refurbishment of computers

FUNDING

Continued on Page 3a

Terril High School captures honors at Envirothon

Two Terril High School teams captured second and fourth place, respectively, at the Seventh Annual Iowa Envirothon Contest held April 22 at Springbrook State Park near Guthrie Center.

Terril's Team 1 placed second in the overall competition and also received first place honors in the oral competition, during which they presented their solution to a current environmental problem involving invasive species.

Terril's Team 2 placed fourth in the overall competition, and captured first place in the forestry section of the contest.

Students participating in the contest were challenged to sharpen their critical thinking skills while exploring environmental issues in

five categories. Categories included aquatics, forestry, wildlife, soil, and a current environmental issue involving invasive species.

Iowa Envirothon is a unique educational competition sponsored by the Conservation Districts of Iowa; local Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Iowa Farm Bureau;

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; Division of Soil Conservation; Iowa Pork Producers; Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society; and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For information on participating in next year's Iowa Envirothon, contact Kristin Wallace at the Conservation Districts of Iowa, 641.774.4461.



Pictured with Coach Marc Benedict are team I members Shawn Morris, Ryan Sawyer, Michael Wempe (front row, left to right) Mike Kerschner, and Pat Fairchild (back row back left to right).



Pictured with Coach Benedict are team II members Matt Groenewold, Katrina McGranaham, Brian Mehan (front row, left to right), Olesia Schitko, and Lawton Westergard (back row left to right).

Lower Gar water quality discussed

By Jane Shuttleworth

Special to the DCN

Approximately 40 people gathered at the Maritime Museum Tuesday afternoon to listen to DNR staff explain the agency's efforts to improve the water quality of Lower Gar Lake. Lower Gar was listed in a 1999 report by the DNR and the Environmental Protection Agency as one of 157 impaired waters in Iowa. Impaired is a regulatory term used to describe lakes, streams and rivers that do not meet their state-designated use. According to Iowa Code, specific water bodies can be classified to meet one or more designated uses such as fishing, contact recreation or drinking water. In Iowa, 1600 water bodies have a designated use. Remaining water bodies have not specific designation. Lower Gar Lake is designated as a Class B water meaning its water quality should support aquatic life. In the Iowa Great Lakes watershed Upper Gar, Little Spirit Lake, and Milford Creek are also listed as impaired.

Bill Ehm described the regulatory process used to classify waters as impaired, and Vera Williams explained the data-gathering and public input steps to create and implement a plan to improve water quality. A key step in this process is to identify pollution sources, and if they derive

quality to meet its designated use. Every lake and stream is different, and often there is no common agreement as to what people want or how much money should be spent," Williams emphasized. That is why we need to know from you what you want us to look into as possible options to improve the quality of your lake."

Audience members had many questions and suggestions. Concern was expressed on the impact of boating on water quality. Because Lower Gar averages four feet deep, boat traffic can aggravate water quality by stirring up phosphorus-releasing sediments. Others expressed interest in lowering the lake level and allowing it to return to its original wetland condition as the first settlers discovered it. Several audience members expressed concern about the impact of leachate from the nearby landfill on the water quality of Lower Gar. Another audience member asked if dredging weren't the logical solution to improving Lower Gar. "Everyone in Iowa wants their lake dredged."

LOWER GAR

Continued on Page 2a

ure by lowering again penetration and therefore the production of oxygen by plants through photosynthesis. Low oxygen levels can cause fish kills and degrade habitat for aquatic organisms. Sediments also transport phosphorus, a plant nutrient, into the water. Phosphorus stimulates algae blooms that can deplete oxygen as they die and decompose.

REAP A

Arnolds Park will be Resource Enhancement. DNR officials announced the assembly, which will begin at 7 p.m. at the REAP Coordinator's residence of regis Clay, Dickinson, Emmet and Sioux counties, are Resource Enhancement. Held in even-numbered years, the program for the next year will share information with the future and give citizens a chance to see REAP projects in the cities across the state. Government areas to provide participation.

"Assemblies are the next step in learning more about REAP. They bring natural resource districts together to share information on projects REAP grant."

A second essential component of the REAP program is to be

Spirit Lake Lib

The meeting room at the Spirit Lake Public Library is available for use by educational, civic, cultural, and public information groups or for library-sponsored programs. Recently a memorial gift by the family of Pearl Chosen enhanced our meeting room with the replacement of the countertop and sink, as well as the purchase of new flatware. We appreciate this gift from the Chosen family.

Does your middle school student need to complete his/her Accelerated Reader Points for this quarter or get a head start on the next one? Don't forget that the public library has many AR books available for students in the Spirit Lake, Okoboji and Harris-Lake Park school districts. They are marked with the reader level and number of points; the lists from the schools are also available at the library.

Some new juvenile fiction AR titles are the Newbery winner "The Single Shard" by Linda Sue Park (also available in audio tape), "Alison Who Went Away" by Vivian Vande Velde, "Rowan Hood, Outlaw Girl of Sherwood Forest" by Nancy Springer, "Love

Through Chosen community re

Terril High School cap at Envir

FUNDING

Continued from Page 1a

for education computer clean-up day; and, the Dickinson County Emergency Management Agency's application for a contaminate spill response unit.

Orville Berg, commission president said, "I'm really happy with the way the meeting went. We came to a good consensus, and I think everyone in the room was pleased with the results... the way we put the budget together... I think we made some real strides for water-quality. It was a well coordinated effort by a diverse group — they (commissioners) have lots of different perspectives, all of which were well aired in a friendly and effective manner... and I think everyone left (the meeting) pleased with what they'd been able to do."

Commissioner Jane Shuttleworth, observed: "The approved projects provide a balanced mix of environmental communication and education along with monitoring and implementation of good land-use practices." Project applications approved were:

1. Friends of Lakeside Lab: Lake and Watershed Monitoring — \$34,550

2. Clean Water Alliance Project: CWA coordinator's salary — \$21,000

3. Dickinson County Soil and Water Conservation District: Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project coordinator salary — \$16,034

4. Lakeside Lab/Dickinson County Conservation Board: Joint Internship for Environmental Education — \$10,000

5. IDNR-Fish and Wildlife Bureau: North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant (NAWCA) — \$5,000

6. Friends of Lakeside Lab: Clean Water Alliance Communications Plan — \$4,000

7. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation: Natural Resource Inventory — \$3,740

8. Jackson Co. (Minn.) Planning and Environmental Services: Iowa Great Lakes Color-Infrared Digital Photography Project — \$2,500

9. Spirit Lake High School: Science Class Using Probes for Water Monitoring on the Little Sioux River — \$1,469

10. WQC: Administration Operating Expenses — \$892

11. Silver Lake Sportsmen's Club: Silver Lake

Sediment Pond Project — \$815

Commissioners said the two non-approved projects had considerable merit, but did not relate as specifically to water-quality issues as did other applications.

The 22-member WQC is the result of a two-year effort by a volunteer group of Dickinson County citizens concerned about the chronic lack of money to finance water-quality improvements for lakes and streams in Dickinson County.

The Dickinson County WQC is thought to be a first-of-its-kind in Iowa. Commissioner Dave Thoreson, enthusiastic about the broader implications of the WQC's achievement, commented that: "Local groups (throughout the state) that are really interested in conservation and environmental work could start looking to an organization like this (WQC) to get things done."

The WQC will be funded each year by tax revenues, as may be determined by each incorporated town and by the county. It will use the money to fund water-quality improvement and maintenance activities like public

education, environmental needs awareness and information dissemination; creation of grass waterways and wetlands; erection and maintenance of storm water runoff facilities; dredging; bank stabilization; water treatment and monitoring; invasive (plant) species removal; and, watershed protection outside the county (Jackson Co. Minn.) which affects water-quality resources in Dickinson Co. The WQC scope of interest also includes funding for urban and agricultural best-management practices in the county.

The WQC implements provisions of 28E of the Iowa Code enabling inter-governmental agreements. All incorporated and unincorporated areas of the coun-

ty are represented on the WQC according to a formula based on their respective taxable property values.

WQC members are: Ron Walker, Arnolds Park; Greg Drees, Arnolds Park; Wayne Northey, Dickinson Co.; Darryl Halling, Dickinson Co.; June Goldman, Dickinson Co.; Jeff Rolfes, Lake Park; Mel Berryhill, Milford; Bob Sewell, Milford; Dave Thoreson, Okoboji; Jane Shuttleworth, Okoboji; Carlton Mitchell, Orleans; Dean Dodds, Spirit Lake; Bob Cosens, Spirit Lake; Pat McNorton, Spirit Lake; Everett Houge, Superior; Marc Benedict Terril; Brad Jones, Wahpeton; Timothy Wilson, Wahpeton; and, Orville Berg, West Okoboji (WQC Chair).

Rolfes, Dodds, Houge, and Benedict did not attend the meeting. Tim Fairchild attended as a Terril alternate.

The municipalities and the county have appointed alternate representatives to attend WQC meetings when needed.

In other business, commissioners approved a future distribution of \$95,000 over the next three years for NAWCA on a project-to-project basis. They also reviewed the conflict of interest provisions stated in the open meeting section of the Iowa Code. No action was taken.

WQC project funding for 2003 is expected to be \$200,000.

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LOWER GAR

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REAP Assembly comes to Arnolds Park

Arnolds Park will be the site of the March 19 region 3 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Assembly, DNR officials announced recently.

The assembly, which will last approximately two hours, will begin at 7 p.m. at City Hall. DNR Director Jeff Vonk and REAP Coordinator Kevin Szcronski will lead discussions. residents of region 3, which includes Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto and Sioux counties, are urged to attend.

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Assemblies, held in even-numbered years, help define and direct the program for the next two years. They are designed to share information with the public, collect input and ideas for the future and give citizens the opportunity to identify potential REAP projects in their area. The meetings are held in 16 cities across the state spanning each of Iowa's 17 Council of Government areas to provide the most statewide representation and participation.

"Assemblies are the most effective vehicles for Iowans to learn more about REAP, and maybe more importantly, help bring natural resource development and enhancement projects to their own community," said Szcronski. "Information presented at the assemblies will be useful to those people working on projects and who have hopes of receiving a REAP grant."

A second essential component of the assemblies involves electing five representatives from each region to serve on the REAP Congress to be held this summer. The Congress

makes recommendations regarding REAP to the governor, Iowa Legislature and state agencies.

Since 1989, more than \$7.7 million in REAP funding has been spent for various projects in region 3. Recently funded projects include \$3,600 to the City of Storm Lake for creation of the "Main Street" Museum (Buena Vista County); \$125,000 for acquisition and development of the Little Sioux Wildlife Area in Spencer (Clay County); \$75,000 for acquisition and development of the Lake Link Trail in Arnolds Park (Dickinson County); \$74,000 for acquisition and development of the Kiwanis Park in Spirit Lake (Dickinson County); \$122,706 for facility development at Elinor Bedell State Park in Dickinson County; \$81,550 for purchase of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation tract at Fort Defiance State Park in Emmet County; \$167,120 for the Peterson Prairie acquisition in Lyon County; \$75,000 for acquisition and development of Sewell Park in Palo Alto County; and \$103,568 for soil and water enhancement projects at the Rock Valley wellhead in Sioux County.

REAP is a multipurpose program designed to enhance and protect Iowa's natural and cultural resources. Elements of REAP include conservation education, open space development and acquisition, soil and water enhancement, historical resource development, roadside vegetation and state park facility improvements. REAP is funded through Iowa's Environment First Fund and from the sale of REAP license plates.

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REAP A

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Coach Benedict are team s, d, Katrina McGranaham, Br ight to right), Olesea Schitcc ck (back row left to right).

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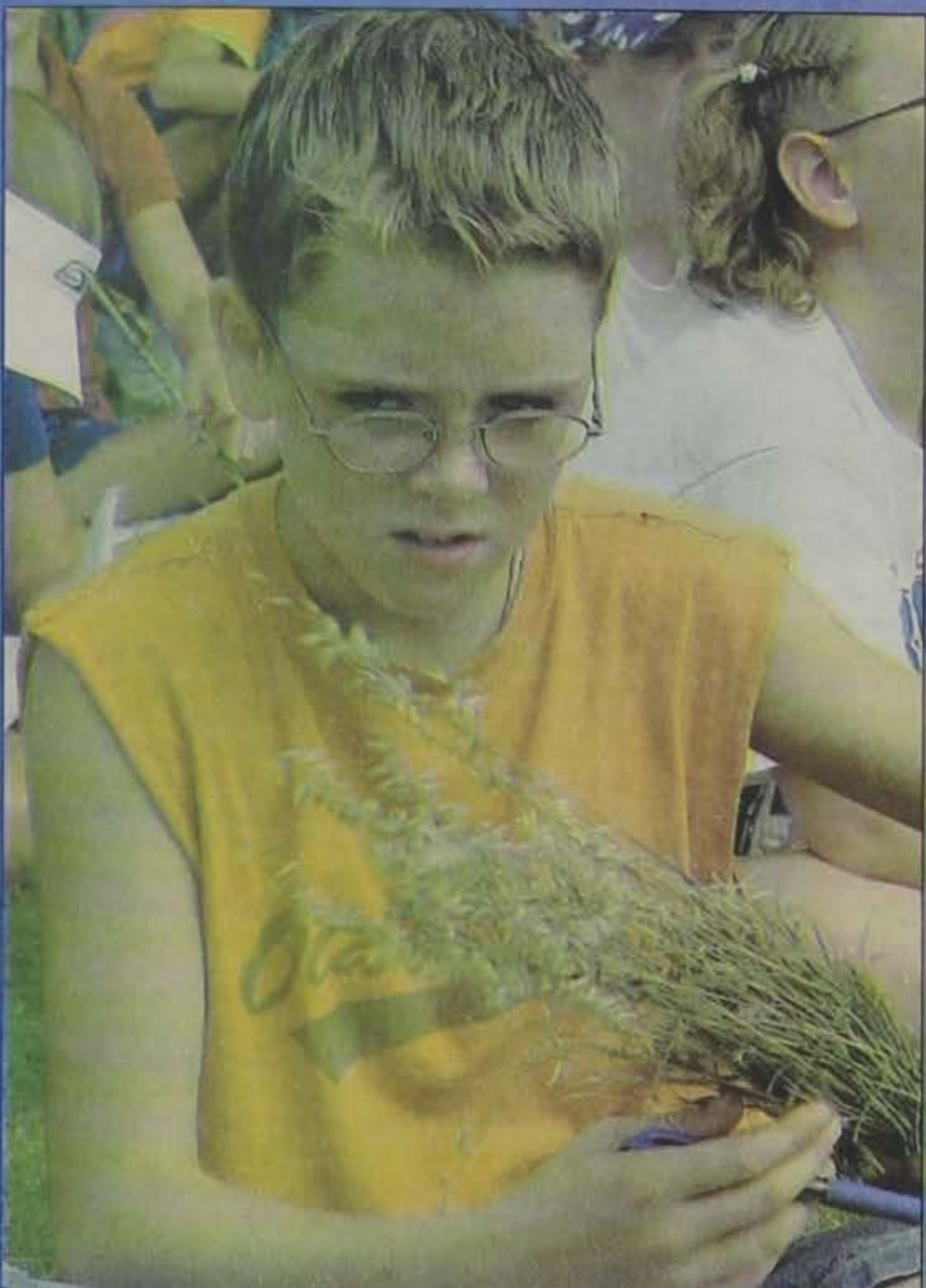
Continued from Page 1a

from point source or non-point sources. Point sources are pollutants that come from single, identifiable origin, such as a factory pipe outlet. Non-point source pollution, such as agricultural runoff, come from a variety of sources and is far more complicated to control. Lower Gar suffers from non-point source pollution as a result of soil erosion from agriculture. However, the DNR stated that most of the current impact on aquatic life is a result of sediments already accumulated in the water since the introduction of intensive agriculture over 100 years ago. As a result of sedimentation, Lower Gar Lake suffers from excessive turbidity. Turbidity affects aquatic life by lowering light penetration and therefore the production of oxygen by plants through photosynthesis. Low oxygen levels can cause fish kills and degrade habitat for aquatic organisms. Sediments also transport phosphorus, a plant nutrient, into the water. Phosphorus stimulates algae blooms that can deplete oxygen as they die and decompose.

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Sixth graders learn about



All four Dickinson County School Community Schools, joined together on Thursday, Sept. 5, to teach 225 sixth graders about the ecology of Northwest Iowa grass being passed around. [Top]: Ecosystems" map for the rest of the Coordinator, taught each of the class aquatic life. [Bottom middle]: Tim M. eral sessions on Iowa wildflowers and County Naturalist, explained to the Lakes water quality.

Residents voice concerns on hog confinement

09-21-02
By Kate Brincks
Special to the DCN

Residents of the Milford area gathered Wednesday evening to discuss a hog confinement which is set to be constructed in Okoboji Township in Dickinson County.

A Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permit was issued Sept. 3, 2002, to Albert Gerhardt to build the facility.

According to Wendell Williams, who facilitated the meeting at the old Town Hall in Milford, the confinement would effect more than 40 residents in a two mile radius.

"I've always loved nature ... love fresh air, love wildlife, love the country," said David Welle, who lives about three-fourths of a mile northwest of the confinement. "I hate to see that all come to an end because I know the smell can be very unpleasant. Frankly, if you don't want to be outside you might as well be in town."

Residents voiced concerns about decreases in property values, young people leaving the state, air quality,

HOG CONFINEMENT

Continued on Page 2

HOG CONFINEMENT

Continued from Page 1

water quality and a lack of notification about the confinement. According to Williams, Horseshoe Bend Park and the Little Sioux Lutheran Church are also in the two mile radius.

"I personally feel betrayed by the lack of neighborliness," said Williams.

According to the DNR permit, the confinement would house around 4,000 feeder to finish hogs in two buildings.

"Quite frankly, the permit has been issued and without a lot more factual gathering on somebody's part, probably the T's have been crossed and the I's have been dotted," said Williams.

The Dickinson County Board of Supervisors received a letter dated Aug. 13, 2002, to make them aware of that a proposal to issue a permit from the DNR was being considered. After the county was notified of the proposal, they then had 15 days to file a timely request for a hearing before the final permit was issued.

Supervisor Dave Gottche said it was not made public that the supervisors had received the letter.

"We had talked to other boards of supervisors, but unless you had some specific thing to object to or bring out in the hearing, the DNR is going to issue the permit anyway," said Gottche.

The manure management plan says the manure will be injected or surfaced applied followed by incorporation in the spring and fall seasons to see-

tions 15, 17, 21 and 28 of Okoboji Township and 17 and 21 of Excelsior Township or 940 acres. The manure management plan also states the environmental concerns are low to medium.

Democratic State Rep. Greg Stevens was also on hand for the meeting. He said the DNR had probably already been out to check separation distances, which deal with how far the facility will be from the buildings and publicly used facilities.

"We're going to need hogs in Iowa," said Stevens. "It's good thing for Iowa to have them."

Stevens said these operations are still considered agricultural and therefore, the county has no authority over agricultural land.

Overall, Stevens and Williams said they needed to find more out about who will be running the operation.

"If it's a good manager than a lot of the problems will go away, but that's the problem," said Stevens. "We don't know the management."

It was decided at the end of the meeting that one neighbor would contact a representative of the company building the facility to see if they would be interested in attending a town meeting concerning the issues that had been raised. Another neighbor would contact an attorney who has some experience in these matters to see if the group could retain that individual to pursue any legal action.

County residents form non-profit organization to battle Milford hog lot

09-25-02
By Anitra Wolf
Editor

Citizens concerned with a hog confinement under construction outside of Milford have banded together to form a non-profit organization.

The organization, pegged "Save Dickinson County's Environment," was formed at a meeting on Monday night at the Milford Community Building. According to documents created by it's founders, the organization's purpose is "to support and fund the litigation process against a large

industrial hog confinement facility being constructed in Okoboji Township ... and future-like facilities and to support a future legislative effort."

Leaders Wendell Williams and Cheri Eichman led the meeting, stating there were three things they wanted to cover: to give background, to explain the legal actions, and to mobilize the troops.

Williams opened the meeting stat-

ion Coordinator Steve ing the issue, he has t facility has been pro-

g Stevens has attend- ing the hog lot.

nodding their heads ers and grandmother readers I can just s read that I had to sh some yet to come. I learned in her marie some of the things s lowing piece that de She recently e-ma one I knew everythin as I get older, when noted, "I must be ge

HOG LOT

Continued on Page 3

Sixth graders learn about



YOU MOVE TO HERITAGE LANDING
FOR APARTMENTS, YOU'LL LEAVE
SOME THINGS BEHIND.

And you'll have the
ding, your senior living apartment will be
t and paint brush, to name a few. Because

the program but didn't make a firm decision.

Students have been increasing across the state, and they feel it's important to
that route for educating their children.
a certified teacher to contact parents four times per quarter (two face to face
or e-mail).
helps with lesson planning, teaching strategies, curriculum development and

Continued from Page 1

ing that the new non-profit organization would be pro-farmer and that it is working to discourage large-scale industrial hog confinement facilities in inappropriate county sites.

He then stated that one such site is being constructed in Section 28 of Okoboji Township, approximately 1.25 miles from the Horseshoe Bend Park. The facility is owned by Albert Gerhardt and construction has already begun.

Legally, the organization has been working with lawyer David Stein, Jr., as well as an Algona lawyer with experience in hog confinement issues. It was suggested by these lawyers that a non-profit organization be formed to fund a litigation process.

Five apparent deficiencies were uncovered, and a letter to cease and desist was issued to the Gerhardts. While Williams was hesitant to uncover any of these deficiencies, he did cite two later in the meeting. First, he said that a notice was not published to inform the public of the hog confinement permit. And second, on several communications, the legal descriptions were incorrect. Williams said further details will be released later on in the litigation process.

Cheri Eichman then took over the meeting to initiate a committee organizational process. She introduced each of the sub-committees of "Save Dickinson County's Environment" and invited attendees to join the effort.

But before splitting into committee groups, Williams and Eichman invited the citizens to speak.

Water Quality Commission Coordinator Steve Anderson said in researching the issue, he has learned that another hog lot facility has been proposed in Dickinson County.

State Representative Greg Stevens has attended all three meetings regarding the hog lot.

"One way Iowa is too lenient is that we don't give the people any say," said Stevens. "You have to work with the local people for siting and get everyone involved. Without local control, we're never going to have a handle on it."

Supervisors Wayne Northey and June Goldman were also in attendance and pointed out that they will do whatever possible to help the organization in their effort.

"I just want you to know that we have joined your battle, and we want you to call on us to do whatever we can at this point," said Goldman.

As expected, things got a bit heated when the supervisors were asked why they didn't inform the public of the hot lot permit. But Williams was quick to get the group back on track.

"We could point fingers all night long," he said. "But the fact of the matter is that we've got to deal with the cards in our hands."

Which is what the organization plans to do. Committees formed at the Monday meeting are planning to meet this week. Future meetings will be announced at a later date.

To learn more about the organization or to get involved, contact Wendell Williams at (712) 338-4958 or Cheri Eichman at (712) 338-2061.

Residents voice concerns over confinement

By Kate Brincks
Special to the DCN

Residents of the Milford area gathered Wednesday evening to discuss a hog confinement which is set to be constructed in Okoboji Township in Dickinson County.

A Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permit was issued Sept. 3, 2002, to Albert Gerhardt to build the facility.

According to Wendell Williams, who facilitated the meeting at the old Town Hall in Milford, the confinement would effect more than 40 residents in a two mile radius.

HOG CONFINEMENT

Continued from Page 1

water quality and a lack of notification confinement. According to Williams, Bend Park and the Little Sioux Luthie are also in the two mile radius.

"I personally feel betrayed by the lack of notice," said Williams.

According to the DNR permit, the facility would house around 4,000 feeder pigs in two buildings.

"Quite frankly, the permit has been without a lot more factual gathering body's part, probably the T's have been dotted," said Williams.

The Dickinson County Board of Supervisors received a letter dated Aug. 13, 2002, from the DNR stating that a proposal to build a hog confinement in the county was being considered. The county was notified of the proposal, 15 days to file a timely request for a hearing before the final permit was issued.

Supervisor Dave Gottche said it was public that the supervisors had received the letter.

"We had talked to other boards of supervisors but unless you had some specific thing or bring out in the hearing, the DNR would issue the permit anyway," said Gottche.

The manure management plan says that the manure will be injected or surfaced applied in the spring and fall seasons.

"I've always enjoyed the fresh air," said Williams, who is a physical therapist and comes to the meetings to help for long term health. Reside decreases people's health.

Continued from

opens too. A installs and main

center's entrance on Highway 71. Pride Sign also placed the letter signs for both the Pearson Gallery and Lauridsen Theatre on those buildings as well in preparation for the center's grand opening celebration this weekend.

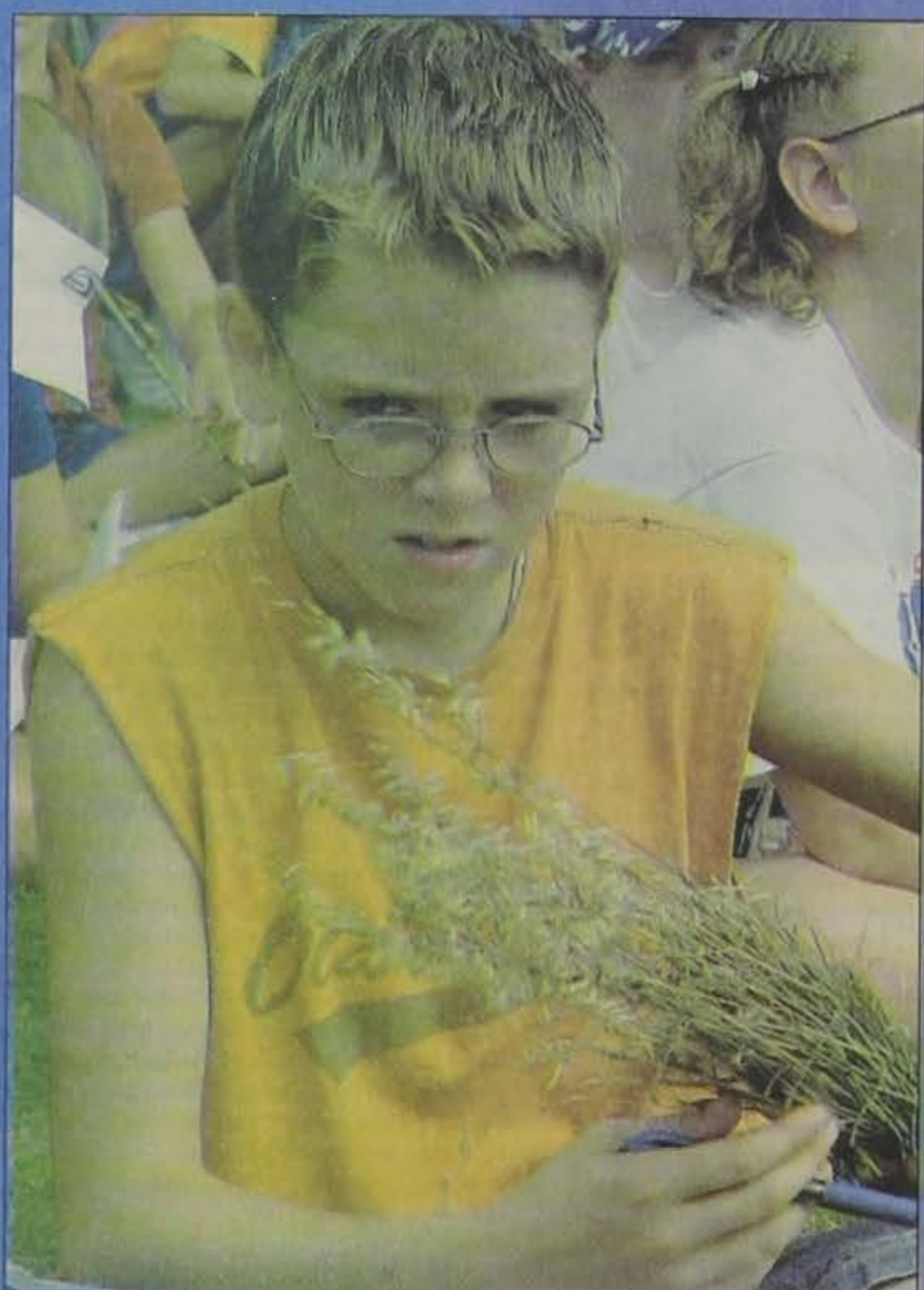
DCN photo by Mike Jordan

Fellowship of

By Joy Hibma
Staff Writer

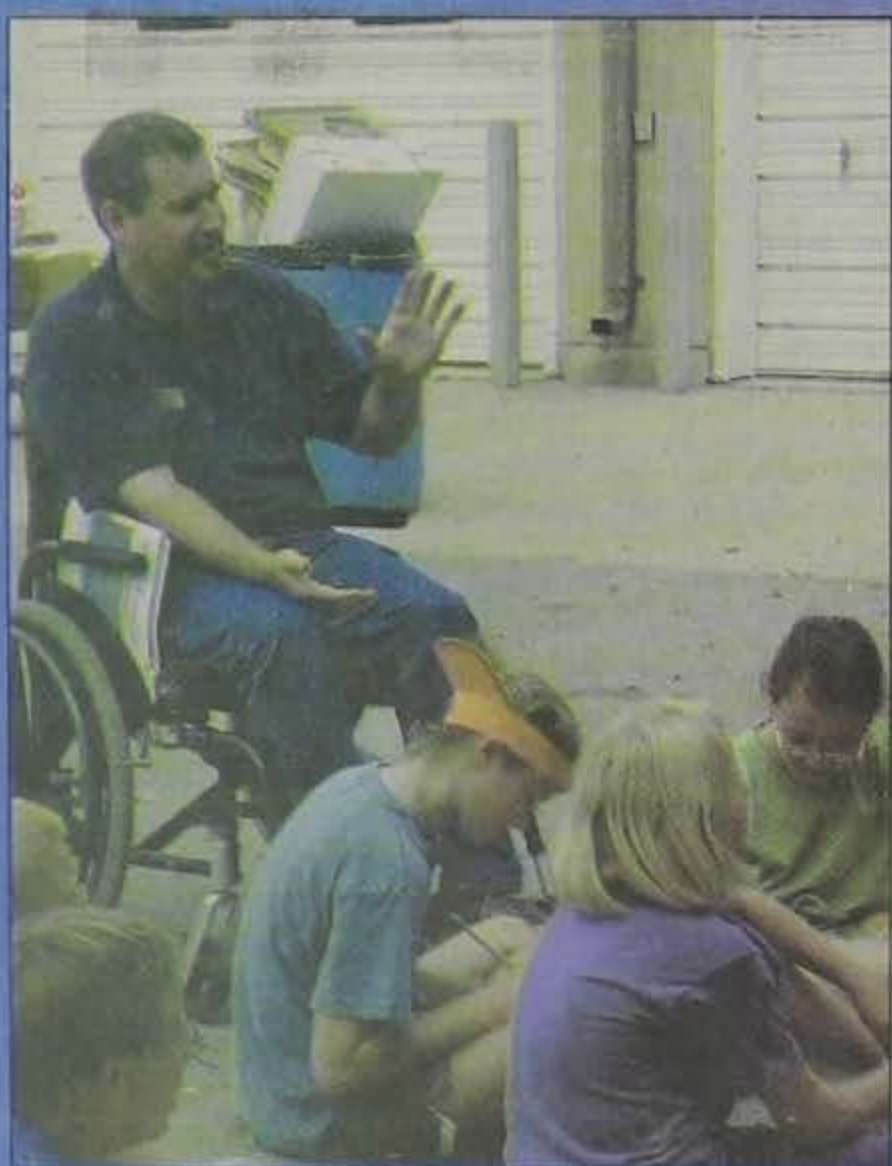
John Sandy got involved in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes when he was a freshman in high school. It changed his life, gave him purpose and helped him realize w

Sixth graders learn about nature



All four Dickinson County Schools, Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake and Terril Community Schools, joined together with the Dickinson County Soil and Water Commission on Thursday, Sept. 5, to teach 225 sixth graders about the environment, how nature works and the ecology of Northwest Iowa. [Top left]: Dustin Whelan looks intently at a group of grass being passed around. [Top]: Ashley Colwell and Sarah Webb hold up a "Aquatic Ecosystems" map for the rest of their classmates. [Bottom left]: Tom Koster, Help-A-Habitat Coordinator, taught each of the classes about the local ecosystems, especially the area's aquatic life. [Bottom middle]: Tim Moran, Soil Conservation Technician, NRCS, taught several sessions on Iowa wildflowers and grasses. [Bottom right]: Barbara Tagami, Dickinson County Naturalist, explained to the students about IOWATER testing — the Iowa Great Lakes water quality.

DCN photos by Joy Hibma



Sept 5, 2002

Pat McNorton

Water Quality Commission Coordinator

- Try to stay out of areas that normally have large populations of mosquitoes. If you cannot, then consider using some type of insect repellent.

Ok.... so you think you've got the home of your dreams, you live in the country and have a home with a view

Copy of letters on back
of article.

process have been identified by attorneys for the local citizens' group concerned about the facility under construction.

One of those discrepancies has fallen upon the shoulders of the supervisors in that they failed to let the people of the county know that construction of this confinement operation was being considered; then failing to demand a hearing to contest the permit, following the Aug. 13 letter from the DNR.

The DNR's permit may also have some discrepancies in it as well. According to the "Save Dickinson County's Environment," group, the organization formed by concerned citizens living around and near the confinement facility, a legal description on the permit is incorrect.

The organization has retained the services of Milford attorney, David Stein, Sr. and are working with an Algona attorney, Thomas Lipps, who has experience in dealing with hog confinement operation issues.

At Tuesday's Dickinson County Supervisors meeting, which was moved to the third floor courtroom of the Dickinson County Courthouse to accommodate the large number of people attending that portion of the meeting, Supervisor Chair June Goldman began the discussion of the 2:45 agenda item. She reminded those assembled that this meeting was not a public hearing on the confinement feeding operation, but just an agenda item up for discussion regarding the application for a construction permit for the operation.

At the start of the discussion, Assistant Dickinson County Attorney, John Bjornstad, stated that his office had been working with Stein regarding the Iowa code on this issue. Bjornstad indicated that from that information it was determined that the DNR permit issued for the confinement feeding operation was flawed ... that there was supposed to be notice to the public, and the people were to be given the opportunity to make public comment about how they feel about the confinement facility.

"The public did not have an opportunity to make comment, yet the DNR went ahead with the permit," Bjornstad said. "We feel the DNR did not follow the law. We intend to write the DNR, pending the boards' approval. We would like to write a letter to the DNR, suggesting the permit process be restarted to allow local citizens to make their concerns known to the supervisors on this issue."

Stein commented that, "Assuming they have a valid permit, the construction of the confinement facility will continue." Then he asked the supervisors for a letter of support to ask the DNR to restart the process and inform the developer of a number of discrepancies they (the organization) think are in the permit process.

Stein went on to say that he has filed a temporary and permanent injunction on behalf of the six or seven homeowners living within the area around the confinement operations' construction.

The supervisors directed Bjornstad to send a letter to the state DNR office, notifying them of their request for a restart of the permit process, and to point out the discrepancies identified in the permit issued.

Several county residents voiced their concerns, during the meeting, at the DNR's actions and the failure of the supervisors in notifying the people of the hog confinement operations intentions to construct a facility in the county.

Goldman then hinted that the Aug. 13 letter was missed in the supervisor's work load of letters that day, but that normally, in the past, the DNR had followed up on their correspondence with the supervisors ... when they got no reply from them, on such issues.

Jack Gerhardt, of Dutch Creek Farms, was also present at the meeting. He said, "We filed a manure management plan with the

'This is a serious matter and a serious amount of money. To say that you were unaware after August 13 would be misleading. We filed a plan, and also filed an unnecessary building permit with your department to make sure everybody had due notice.'

JACK GERHARDT

county auditor dated May 28. We are simply following the rules that we have as producers to follow. Everybody has a responsibility in this process, including the DNR and the county supervisors. When they failed to carry out their responsibilities, we got no feedback from the area and assumed it was safe to build. I've got nothing against Dickinson County. We were invited in by a landowner (Tom Kaiser) that wanted manure on his crop ground. That is often how we are invited in. We proceeded on that basis. So, unfortunately, I've been led astray by this group also, and at this point I am the only one out any money."

"This is a serious matter and a serious amount of money. To say that you were unaware after August 13 would be misleading. We filed a plan, and also filed an unnecessary building permit with your department, just as an abundance of caution, to make sure everybody had due notice of the project," Gerhardt continued, "And so now I'm the bad guy, and you folks stand idly aside and ... no offense ... but I've got a lot into this and unless somebody can show me a way out, I need to pursue this program."

No action was taken by the supervisors, at the recommendation of Stein, on the publishing of a notice regarding the hog confinement operation construction permit in the county.

Stein indicated that it was probably not beneficial or appropriate to do that now since the courts will have to rule on the permit issue

as to its validity and the possible discrepancies in the permitting process.

Stein believes the Dickinson County District Court will deal with the issue by mid-October.

Dutch Creek Farms, Inc. is owned by Jack, Dick and Albert Gerhardt, all of Fairmont, Minn.

Courthouse survey begins to take shape

Cory Peterson, of the local Iowa State University extension office, met with the supervisors regarding the first draft of options outlined for possible questions on the random survey the supervisors will be taking for the county's courthouse. That first draft included a front page explanation of the present layout of the courthouse as a reference guide to the questions that follow on page two.

It was determined by the supervisors to have the 600 random samples taken from the registered voters of the county. It was also decided upon by the supervisors to have six options available to those filling out the survey as to what they would like to have done regarding the courthouse. Those options will include location, remodeling, adding on to the present location, new construction at a new location, and one of the options is for other suggestions on a courthouse for the county.

A cost choice range will also be included with an explanation as to the per thousand valuation property tax cost and an example of it.

The supervisors will meet with Peterson next week to construct a final draft of the survey's content. It will be tested and then sent to those randomly selected for the survey by the second week of October.

Peterson indicated that the process will take about six weeks, with tabulation of the results to be done the first two weeks in November.

Vern Ryan, survey consultant for the project from Iowa State University, has targeted the end of December as the time for his summary of the survey results, according to Peterson.



Ver for Letters To Editor Re: hog lot

Martha Rogers, President
Music Parents Association

Save Dickinson
County's Environment

Ok... so you think you've got the
home of your dreams, you live in the
country and have a home with a view

Copy of letters on back
of article

Group goes to court to block Milford hog lot

09-25-02

Angry residents find county supervisors missed deadlines to challenge lot

By Greg Drees

Journal correspondent

MILFORD, Iowa — Opponents of a 4,000-head hog lot planned near Milford sought court action Tuesday to stop the project.

Also on Tuesday, Dickinson County supervisors were taken to task by a representative of the proposed project during a meeting of the board attended by an overflow crowd of area citizens.

The site, which already bears a Department of Natural Resources permit, is southwest of Milford in Okoboji Township, close to Horseshoe Bend Park.

Tom Kaiser is a longtime Milford-area farmer in whose name — Kaiser

Production Facility — the permit has been granted. Kaiser will manage the facility for Alex Sucher and Albert Gerhardt, who do business as Dutch Creek Farms of Fairmont, Minn.

Now that the project has essentially been approved and is public knowledge, many county citizens are outraged at what they say is the secrecy that surrounded the authorization.

Jack Gerhardt, representing Dutch Creek Farms, was among those at Tuesday's meeting of the supervisors in Spirit Lake.

Billed on the agenda as a discussion on the permit for the confinement feeding operation, the gathering had to be moved from the regular board chambers to an upstairs courtroom in the Dickinson County Courthouse to accommodate the crowd.

commodate the crowd.

Gerhardt, after listening to attorneys for Save Dickinson County's Environment, a group seeking to halt construction of the facility, pointed to the supervisors and said, "This board has acted negligently, and has failed to carry out its responsibilities."

In the first public response from Dutch Creek Farms on the issue, Gerhardt explained that the company has followed every rule established by Iowa Code and the DNR in securing its permit and beginning construction.

"We assumed it was safe to build on the site since we heard absolutely no response from the supervisors," Gerhardt said. "We have proceeded all along on a legal basis, and we've been led astray. You were notified of our ma-

nure management plan for the operation on May 28, followed by a certified letter on Aug. 13. You responded to neither and were presented a window of time in which to conduct your business, which you failed to do."

David Stein Sr. of Stein Law Firm of Milford, one of two firms representing Save Dickinson County's Environment, said he filed a lawsuit in district court on Tuesday asking for a temporary injunction against the confinement operation, and also a permanent injunction on behalf of six landowners who reside close to the operation.

Dickinson County Attorney Ned Bjornstad, also working on the case on behalf of the supervisors, said his office is investigating what it believes to be discrepancies in the permit process and

errors by the DNR in correspondence procedures with the board.

"We think the permit process that the feedlot went through was flawed, and we will seek to have that process revisited," Bjornstad said.

Other people in the audience expressed disappointment with the supervisors for not making the permit application public and for not responding to the DNR's registered letter within the required 14-day period.

"I acknowledge the oversight," board chairwoman June Goldman said, "and unfortunately there was an inadvertent gap that we largely ignored."

Until only recently, the hog lot issue

SEE HOG

continued on page A9

rules, standards and statutes of state law governing such confinements.

A certified letter was sent to the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors on Aug. 13 informing them of the DNR's intention to grant the permit. The board had 14 days in which to contest the permit and to appeal for a hearing. Without a response from the supervisors, the permit was granted on Sept. 3.

Supervisor David Gottsche, whose constituency is in the heart of the proposed hog lot location, said the board had nothing with which to base an appeal to the DNR in opposition to the plan.

"We had been talking to supervisors in surrounding counties who are dealing with hog lot issues, and we saw nothing within the realm of an appeal procedure," Gottsche said.

In light of the subsequent public outcry, however, Gottsche said he regrets not making public the notification from the DNR.

"Hindsight is 20/20," he said, "and if a similar situation were to arise again, you can bet there will be correspondence."

A trio of public meetings, organized by Cheri Eichman of

of us in the neighborhood began to notice two excavation holes being dug on the site," Eichman said. "It was the first anyone knew of the project."

Eichman has spearheaded the volunteer-driven non-profit organization, Save Dickinson County's Environment, that is raising funds for legal support in opposition to the project. The group has retained the law firms of Peterson and Lipps of Algona — whose office has extensive experience in livestock facility litigation — and the Stein firm.

As farmers themselves, and having raised hogs on a small scale in the past, the Eichmans and others made it clear they are not opposed to sustainable agriculture.

"Nor are we anti-animal," Eichman said. "We are against large-scale, industrial, commercial facilities that pose dangers to the air, soil and water."

Added Eichman, "Tourism is a profound benefit to the county, and no matter how well-designed this facility may be, it would still impact the area with an incredible amount of animals and animal waste. And if one gets established, how do we prevent others from entering the county?"

sponsible group.

"They are an A-plus operation," Kaiser said, "and they are very experienced."

He said every step of the construction is planned under Iowa Code.

"Why would the DNR approve it if it was a bad venture?" he said.

As to his own history of land-use management, Kaiser said he has always farmed responsibly.

"I have utilized CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) set-aside and buffer strips in my operations," he explained, "and have always been concerned about the environment, and this hog operation will be no different."

At Tuesday's supervisors' meeting, environmental issues were raised, including concern over whether the manure management plan would call for the injection of manure on land directly above an alluvial aquifer that feeds the Iowa Great Lakes.

"We have followed all of the guidelines established by the DNR," Gerhardt responded.

The supervisors did not set a date for a public hearing on the matter, choosing instead, upon advice from counsel, to wait for responses from the court.

green waste. Since green plant material, it is natural that do arise from burials whether it is plastic. One problem is the smoke small particles of unburned make life extremely difficult respiratory problems, and the

Burning of green waste our water quality. When around the lakes, they use sewer, the gutter or on the this so that the next time strong wind the ashes were not the smoke, but the as

The ashes are what are left that didn't burn and then with the smoke. These are really high in potassium and The material may also cause cancer causing substance. When you burn that carcass, it's like a high temperature, but with certain insulations. So while burning does not leave anything behind, what is left behind is no

ts present fall produ

"It's a play within a play," she said. "The actors are trying hard to produce a good production, but it's not going to happen."

In real life, "An Evening of Culture" was a nightmare. From the opening number, the actors' lines, the set starts to fall apart and the cast to leave the stage in between scenes.

However on stage, the play is a delightful



(Left) H-LP's Molly Mitchell (Juliet's rest of the cast know her point of view production of "Faith County II: Culture." (Above) Ursula Merkle (La tells her friend Kim Macafee that she pinned in Okoboji's production of "B

DCN photos by Joy Hibma (left) and

Mostly cloudy tonight with a chance of showers and thunders.



Nebraska

continued from page 1

seemingly had evolved quietly. Now, however, an entire community is up in arms over the proposal.

According to Bob Palla, a staff engineer for the DNR, the site was inspected by the agency to determine if separation distances were met. Once that was favorably assessed, a review was conducted in the DNR's Animal Feeding Operations office in Des Moines, and it was determined the site met the rules, standards and statutes of state law governing such confinements.

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A trio of public meetings, organized by Cheri Eichman of

rural Milford, were held last week at the Community Center in Milford to air concerns among county citizens. Some 70 persons attended the first two meetings, and about 100 attended the most recent meeting Monday night. Eichman, who lives with her husband Jack on their farmstead about a mile northeast of the hog lot site, said she was surprised by the revelation of the construction permit.

"On Monday, Sept. 16, some of us in the neighborhood began to notice two excavation holes being dug on the site," Eichman said. "It was the first anyone knew of the project."

Eichman has spearheaded the volunteer-driven non-profit organization, Save Dickinson County's Environment, that is raising funds for legal support in opposition to the project. The group has retained the law firms of Peterson and Lipps of Algona — whose office has extensive experience in livestock facility litigation — and the Stein firm.

As farmers themselves, and having raised hogs on a small scale in the past, the Eichmans and others made it clear they are not opposed to sustainable agriculture.

"Nor are we anti-animal," Eichman said. "We are against large-scale, industrial, commercial facilities that pose dangers to the air, soil and water."

Added Eichman, "Tourism is a profound benefit to the county, and no matter how well-designed this facility may be, it would still impact the area with an incredible amount of animals and animal waste. And if one gets established, how do we prevent others from entering the county?"

Kaiser, who has farmed in the area for years and will manage the hog lot, defends the operation.

"Critics have exaggerated the situation," Kaiser said, "and are basing their assumptions on the history of bad press surrounding hog facilities."

Kaiser said he believes that Dutch Creek Farms, which owns and operates a number of large-scale operations in several states, is an environmentally responsible group.

"They are an A-plus operation," Kaiser said, "and they are very experienced."

He said every step of the construction is planned under Iowa Code.

"Why would the DNR approve it if it was a bad venture?" he said.

As to his own history of land-use management, Kaiser said he has always farmed responsibly.

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Global Temperatures

Location	Temperature	Conditions
Key West	87	78
Kansas City	74	47
Juneau	53	47
Jacksonville	78	73
Jackson, Miss.	73	65
Indianapolis	70	46
Houston	87	67
Honolulu	85	73
Helena	59	47
Harford Spgld	74	51
Greensboro, N.C.	75	57
Great Falls	50	43
Grand Rapids	61	49
Flagstaff	77	39
Fargo	64	35
Fairbanks	53	35
Evansville	78	46
El Paso	85	65
Duluth	55	32
Denver	89	42
San Francisco	60	50
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