



Conservation achievement

Richard and Steve Currier of Indianola were recently honored for conservation achievement by the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District. The Curriers are using the conservation tillage, contour farming, waterways, terraces, field borders, pasture planing, ponds and a windbreak. Three generations of Curriers, beginning with Richard's father, Harold, have been cooperating with the soil conservation district since 1946. They are shown by one of their ponds which was built in 1995.

3-8-00

Photo submitted

Iowa ag land to be protected with USDA easement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service is allocating \$278,000 to protect unique farmland in the Loess Hills in western Iowa. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the Nature Conservancy will match those federal dollars; the combined funding will be used to purchase perpetual conservation easements on 920 acres in Plymouth, Monona, and Woodbury counties.

The easements are a first for Iowa through USDA's Farmland Protection Program.

Through the FPP, NRCS enters into agreements with states, tribes, local governments, or non-governmental organizations to protect farmland by purchasing

conservation easements.

Conservation easements have been negotiated on five agricultural properties in the Loess Hills with landowners who were concerned about their land being threatened by development.

Three of the parcels are in Plymouth County near Broken Kettle Grasslands. One parcel is in Woodbury County along the Loess Hills Scenic Byway and another is in Monona County near Sylvan Runkel State Preserve.

Iowa was one of 28 states approved earlier this week by USDA to receive FPP funds; the total for all states was \$17.5 million.

NEWS RELEASE

The terms of three Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, Arlan Becker of Milo, (Belmont Township); Mike Finck of New Virginia, (Virginia Township); and Patti Hill of Milo (Union Township); will expire on January 2, 2001. Successors will be elected at the general election November 7, 2000.

Any qualified elector residing in the soil and water conservation district, which is all of Warren County including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner, except that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any one township. Incumbent commissioners are Charles Spain of Norwalk ((Linn Township) and Damen Moffitt of Indianola (Washington Township); therefore, residents of these townships would not be eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil and water conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same manner as for other elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petitions can be obtained from the County Auditor.

These petitions, signed by 25 eligible electors, must be filed with the County Auditor at the Warren County Administration Building, 301 North Buxton, Indianola, no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 25, 2000.

Individuals elected in November 2000 will serve a term of four years commencing January 2, 2000. Soil and water district commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water program in the county. For further information pertaining to the responsibilities of a commissioner, contact Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District office, 909 East Second Ave., Ste. B, Indianola, Iowa 50125 or phone 961-5264.

Conservation NEWS

Check Wetlands Before you tile

Anyone considering tiling should check with the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District office to see if wetlands exist in the area to be tiled. USDA farm program benefits could be lost if wetlands are altered by drainage (tiling, or ditching), removal of woody vegetation, filling or other alterations. Be sure to check on the wetland's status before tiling, not after.

Consider Your Spring Tillage Options Carefully

Producers should check their conservation plan before considering spring tillage options on highly erodible fields. Many of the conservation compliance plans in Warren County require a conservation tillage or no-till farming. Using a conservation tillage system to achieve conservation compliance requires that crop residue remain on the soil surface after spring planting.

A large amount of fieldwork was completed last fall. This will limit the options available for residue management during the spring tillage season. To control erosion, residue levels ranging from 30 to 70 percent are typical. Each tillage operation can reduce the amount of available residue on the soil surface by 15 to 40 percent. Caution should be taken when planning spring tillage in order to achieve compliance plan requirements. Failure to do so could affect eligibility for USDA program benefits.

Sign up Now for Conservation Work

Landowners are encouraged to make plans for their 2001 terrace construction projects. Applications are accepted throughout the year, however, early sign-ups are encouraged as there is limited funding available.

The Warren Soil District Commissioners give priority approval to terrace projects which can be completed during the summer construction season. Summer projects are encouraged on oat and hay ground to spread out the contractor's workload. There are several advantages to summer construction work. The advantages include less compaction to crop fields; ground conditions are usually more favorable for efficient, less costly earthmoving projects; and contractors are more readily available.

Another strategy, for your consideration, is to install tile and intakes before planting and plan to complete the earthmoving portion after harvest.

USDA will cost share up to 50 percent of the cost for tiling, installing intakes and earthmoving to construct terraces.

Landowners who are planning a terrace project for 2001 may sign up now at the Soil Conservation District Office, in the USDA Building. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff will arrange to make farm visits to determine feasibility of projects and provide cost estimates. Again, applications are accepted throughout the year, however, early sign-ups are encouraged due to limited funding. For additional information on conservation practices contact the NRCS Office at (515) 961-5264.

WWW Noxious Weed Site

The Agricultural Research Service USDA and put together an excellent Internet site listing Noxious Weeds in the U.S. and Canada. Click on the state and you get a complete listing of Iowa's noxious weeds. Here is the list of what the Iowa Legislature has deemed noxious in Chapter 317 of the Iowa Code:

12 Primary Noxious Weeds that cannot be present in the field or in crop seed:

Quackgrass	Perennial sow thistle	Canada thistle
Leafy Spurge	Hoary Cress	Buckthorn
Tall Thistle	Musk Thistle	Bull thistle
Field Bindweed	Russian Knapweed	Horsenettle

15 Secondary Noxious Weeds that cannot be present in the field:

Velvetleaf	Cocklebur	Wild Mustard
Wild Carrot	Red Sorrel	Buckhorn Plantain
Curly Dock	Smooth Dock	Poison Hemlock
Puncturevine	Multiflora Rose	Wild Wunflower
Teasel	Shattercane	Purple Loosetrife

What exactly is a riparian?

Have you ever looked at the title of the latest government program and wondered what the heck is that? The NRCS Riparian Buffer program could be looked at that way. To be perfectly clear, riparians are not extraterrestrials and buffers have nothing to do with missile defense.

Riparian is an academic's word for streamside. The area along a stream, which supports plants that can tolerate high water levels and occasional flooding, is considered riparian.

A buffer, in this case, would be a strip of land used to protect the stream from siltation, erosion, and excess fertilizer.

Conversely, a riparian buffer protects the land above it from being washed into the stream and helps prevent stream channels from becoming excessively deep. Deep channels can lower water tables, making less

water available to crops or other desirable plants.

What does the USDA Riparian Buffer Program do?

The Riparian Buffer Program was created to help farmers plant a protective area of trees, shrubs, and deep-rooted grasses adjacent to flowing streams, and some other water sources, in order to protect the stream below and the land above. It can be used to increase the width of existing buffer plants or can start right at the stream.

Because this is considered important, the landowner receives incentive payments, annual rental payments based on the soil productivity rating and cost sharing varying from 50 to 90 percent of the actual implementation costs.

Anyone with land that might fit this program may call the Warren County NRCS Office at (515) 961-5264 or stop by the office for more information.



ANDREA MELENDEZ/THE REGISTER

Trail guidebook

BOOK

Fourth edition of the Iowa Heritage Foundation's trail guidebook, "Iowa By Trail," is now available. It offers seven new trails (including Summerset) that weren't in the 1997 edition.

COST

\$10 postpaid (includes tax and shipping plus a free Iowa DOT's "Iowa Transportation Map for Bicyclists"), with special pricing for orders of 20 or more. Also available in bike and book shops around the state. For details, call the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation at (515) 288-1846 or see www.inhf.org and click "What's New." An updated list of Iowa trails also is on the site.

Summerset Trail

The 11-mile trail between Carlisle and Indianola crosses the Middle River and 14 bridges. It officially opens this weekend.

KEY:

- Summerset Trail
- Trail Bridges
- Restaurants



SUMMERSET RISES

\$1.2 million trail between Carlisle and Indianola officially opens

By BOB MODERSOHN
REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Like a new restaurant, a new recreation trail is a welcome addition on the scene. It gives people another choice. The \$1.2 million Summerset Trail connecting Carlisle and Indianola officially opens this weekend. The north end opens in Carlisle on Sunday; the south end opens in Indianola on Oct. 6.

Those are dates for ceremonial dedications. The trail is already unofficially open, based on the number of people using it.

"People have been riding the heck out of it" for weeks, said Jim Priebe of the Warren County Conservation Board.

Over the past few weeks, workers have been smoothing joints between the 11-mile, asphalt-covered trail and its 14 bridges.

At times, the northern stretch of the trail leaving Carlisle looks like a Utah salt flat. You can easily see a mile ahead.

Tractor crossing signs are common, giving the trail a strong rural flavor. Black-eyed Susans line the trail's west side,

sometimes blocking the horizon.

Ironically, said Neil Ruddy, Carlisle's city manager, "the north half is the flat half and that's the area that is in wetlands reserve."

Almost everything east of that half of the trail — some 1,500 to 2,000 acres — is part of the Federal Wetlands Reserve Program.

"Gradually, it will become less like farmland and more like wildlife habitat," Ruddy said.

Near the halfway point at Summerset, a sign points to a pop machine standing next to a cottage owned by Iowa Rep. Steve Richardson.

After crossing the Middle River (heading south), the countryside becomes more rolling, Ruddy said.

"It's quiet. There aren't many roads." Heading into Indianola, there's a 180-foot increase in elevation. This is the only real grade on the trail, but it makes the

INSIDE THE BOOK

- Hundreds of major and minor trail updates, ranging from the expanded Raccoon River Trail to new tourism contacts. Includes maps of 47 trails.

- List of upcoming trail projects still on the drawing boards.

- Includes e-mail and Web contacts, while keeping phone numbers for contacts.

ON THE WEB

- Internet-friendly Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation Web site at www.inhf.org. Click "Explore Iowa" or "What's New."

- Web pages link sources for each trail. It's part of a larger revamp of the INHF Web site. People wanting to discover Iowa's natural resources should get into the habit of checking the "Explore Iowa" button. More trail and non-trail features will be added there over time.

See SUMMERSET, Page 6E

Trail opening

WHAT: New Summerset Trail connecting Carlisle and Indianola

HOW LONG: 11 miles

WHEN IT OPENS: Folks are already riding the trail but dedications are being held in both towns.

SUNDAY IN CARLISLE: Opening ceremonies will take place at the first trail bridge south of Highway 5 at 1:30 p.m. Park at the high school at the southeast end of town and cross the highway to the trail. Proceed southward to the bridge. The permanent trail head will be built on 165th Place near Highway 5.

OCT. 6 IN INDIANOLA: 11 a.m., at Doghouse Bikes, 403 E. Euclid, a block east of U.S. Highway 65-69 (right near the city's trail head spur, to be built next spring), free bike inspections and patch kits. A ride begins at 1 p.m. Dedication is at 4 p.m. at the permanent trail head, the McVay Trail, one block east and one block south from the bike shop, behind Hardees.



IOWALIFE

The Des Moines Register GC

Hunting, fishing will be allowed

SUMMERSET, from Page 1E

ride a cakewalk on the way back.

In Indianola, there are several eatery options only a couple of blocks from trail's end. A choice of shops sells ice cream, burgers, submarine sandwiches, sit-down meals and beverages.

Plus, you're only one stoplight away from an easy pedal to the town square.

Carlisle has Casey's and FISS (that's Fogle's ice cream, subs and salads) near where the trail meets Highway 5.

The Summerset Trail project began five or six years ago when the two towns envisioned making the old Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way into a recreational

facility, Priebe said.

Lisa Hein of the Iowa National Heritage Foundation helped with federal transportation enhancement and state recreation trails grants for building the trail. The Union Pacific Railroad donated existing structures like bridges, rocks and culverts.

The joint project between the two cities and Warren County is now complete except for establishing trail heads.

Warren County will assume 50 percent of future trail maintenance; Indianola, 35 percent; Carlisle, 15 percent.

Carlisle's trail head, to be completed this fall, will be located at 165th Place and Highway 5. It will hold 10 to 15 cars.

For now, though, trail users should park at the high school parking lot and cross Highway 5. The trail presently begins, or ends, at Highway 5 and the dedication ceremony will be held at the first trail bridge south of the highway, Ruddy said.

In Indianola, a 660-foot section leading to the trail head will be finished next spring by the city.

There's still an unresolved debate over the state-owned Banner Wildlife Area near the middle of the trail. It has been a patrolled area, but not a controlled area, for several decades.

Within the public hunting and fishing area is a shooting range tucked amid earthen mounds. It has been a favorite spot for

sportsmen to practice target shooting for more than 30 years.

Ruddy said the area should be a controlled area or its use discontinued.

Priebe agrees: "The Warren County Conservation Board doesn't feel that the way the range is set up is safe. There's limited supervision and no set or enforced hours for shooting."

The DNR is trying to address the problem, said Priebe.

"So, it's become a hot potato," Ruddy said. "It's a legitimate recreation use, just like the trail use."

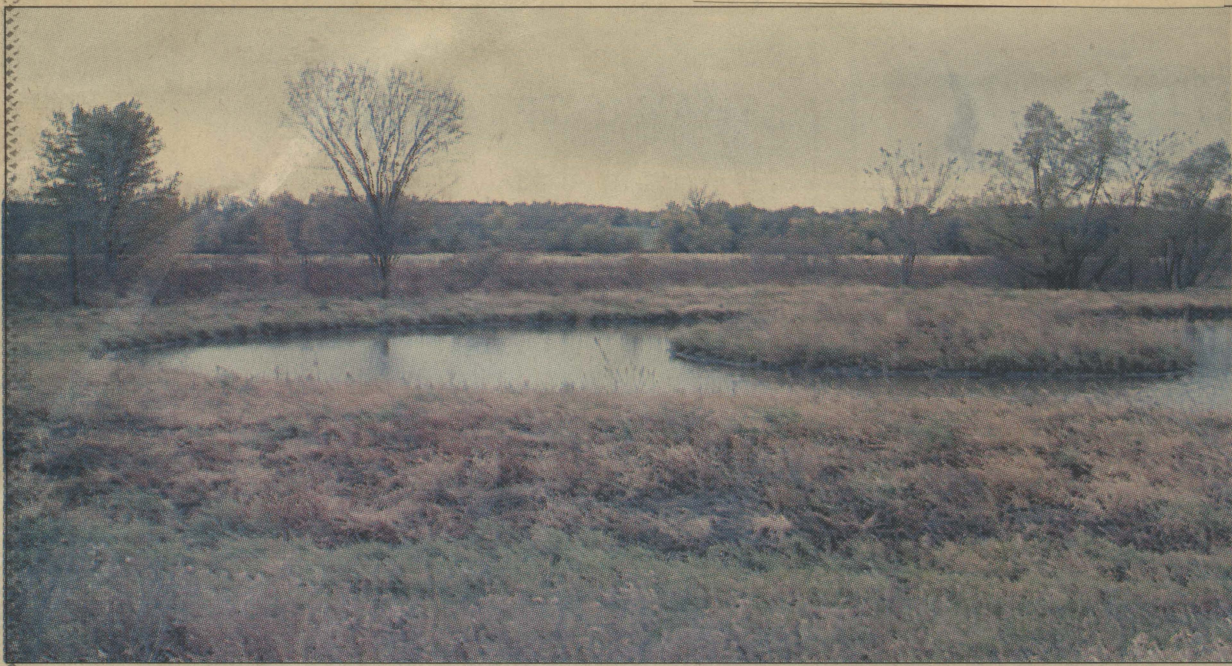
Al Farris, administrator of the Fish and Wildlife Division for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, believes the trail and wildlife areas can co-exist with part-time monitoring of the range area and possibly setting hours for its use.

"We plan to leave it open for public hunting and public fishing," he said.

Norma Hiemstra of Des Moines rode the Summerset Trail last weekend with her husband and friends.

"We heard the shooting and it wasn't a problem, as far as we were concerned," she said.

Reporter Bob Modersohn can be reached at (515) 286-2521 or modersohnb@news.dmreg.com



Newly constructed wetland and wildlife areas will look like this one, also located along the Summerset Trail.
RHT photo/Jon Britton

Wetlands program enhances views along Summerset Trail

By Amanda Campbell

Record-Herald Staff Writer

Riders along the newly dedicated Summerset recreation trail can take in native vegetation and wildlife as they ride along Warren County's wetland corridor thanks to the Wetland Reserve Program.

Landowners have enrolled a total of 1,600 acres of land between Carlisle and the Banner Wildlife Area in USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetland Reserve Program.

The four mile stretch is made up of land taken out of production from six different farms.

Workers are seeding for prairie grass, plugging drainage ditches, excavating ponds for standing water and constructing some shallow water pools to attract waterfowl and other wildlife.

"We are undoing all existing drainage practices to revert the land to what it was before it was farmed," said Dale Falkner, NRCS district conservationist.

Falkner said many of the shallow water pools were constructed near the recreational trail and Dubuque Street for people to enjoy.

The program started four years ago and 90 percent of the project is now completed. Falkner expects the corridor to be completed next year.

In 1998, landowners Steven and

Michael Lawyer enrolled 207 acres from their 474 acre farm.

"The land tended to get flooded once every three years and that makes it difficult to manage from a crop standpoint," Steven Lawyer said.

Lawyer said he enrolled in the wetland program because its goal is to revitalize wetland habitats and animal life.

The organization buys conservation easements the appraised value of the land. In return, landowners agree to take the land out of production.

"The program pays almost full value because it takes the land out of production," Steven Lawyer said.

The landowners involved with the project still own the land and pay taxes for the property. The permanent easement prevents any present and future owners from developing or farming the land.

The Lawyers recently sold the residual rights to their enrolled land to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, an organization that supports the Wetland Reserve Program.

"Once the land is in the program, you still pay property tax on the land, but you can't get revenue off the land," Steven Lawyer said.

However, he said that it was no economic hardship to put the land into the wetland program.

The foundation has acquired three properties in the corridor to peruse the goal of the program.

"Sometimes people don't want to enroll if they are going to have to maintain the land afterwards without getting any crops from the land," said Bruce Mountain, land projects director at Iowa National Heritage Foundation.

The Department of Natural Resources bought 750 acres of the wetland reserves for public hunting.

"The reason it was important to us is because we got to buy it at a much reduced price," DNR Wildlife Biologist Chuck Kakac said. "We buy only the remaining residual rights on the land and put it into public ownership."

Kakac said the land has been used frequently since the DNR purchased it.

Falkner said the prairie grasses and marsh areas will filter and improve water quality.

The area will trap sediment and reduce the amount that would normally flow into Lake Red Rock Reservoir.

Land adjoining to the Lawyer's property has also been enrolled in the program by owners, Donald Van Ryswyk, Dwight Johnston, Jim Penick, Paul Alexander, Jim Goodhue and Glenn Meacham.

2002 Conservation Achievement Award Winner

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Section D
OCTOBER 2, 2002

www.indianolarecordherald.com

Lacona farmer awarded

By **ROB DANIEL**
Record-Herald Staff Writer

Lacona area farmer Kevin Ball is the 2002 Region 6 winner of the Warren County Conservation Achievement Award.

Ball was presented the award last month for his work on his land in creating areas more suitable to wildlife. Among the changes to 400 of his 700 acres, he created terraces, grassed waterways and a pond as a suitable habitat for wood ducks, as well as keeping silt out of the Red Rock area, preventing further erosion of the land. "It's supposed to be a wildlife pond," he said.

Ball has been in the farming business since 1980, when he started renting land after working on his grandfather's farm while growing up. At first, he was in hog production, raising feeder pigs. After 1993, he got out of the hog business and moved into growing soybeans and corn as well as raising

cows.

Ball moved into preserving some of his land after discovering much of his land was not suitable for crop production.

"It's steep enough that you might not raise a good crop," Ball said.

That need for preservation grew into more projects. He planted more grass for wildlife such as deer and turkey.

"I mowed it twice this year," Ball said, "trying to get it seeded down."

He also built 4,000 feet of terraces behind his house, a move that helped gain him the award, Ball said.

In October 2001, Ball built his first four-acre pond. There are now seven ponds filled with fish on his land.

"They built it for wildlife and to keep silt out of the Red Rock," he said.

The ponds have yet to present a viable problem with mosquitoes to this point, though he may develop one later with the spread of mosquitoes with the



Kevin Ball is the winner of the Conservation Achievement Award.

RHT PHOTO/ROB DANIEL

West Nile Virus.

"You won't know until one bites you," he said.

Ball lives on the farm with his wife Lori and four children.

Soil and Water Commissioners will be elected in Iowa

May 29, 2002

This year Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will be elected in 100 districts throughout Iowa. The Commissioners are elected volunteers, and have been working with voluntary, private land conservation in Iowa since as early as 1939. SWCD Commissioners help guide soil and water conservation programs in the district and watersheds, identify local issues and concerns, and influence state and national conservation programs. SWCDs work closely with a number of local, state, and federal agencies, par-

ticularly the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship — Division of Soil Conservation and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

This is a great opportunity to become involved in environmental work at the local level. Iowa's SWCDs are a largely unrecognized but very effective tool utilized to improve soil and water quality. Five commissioners, elected in general elections on a non-partisan basis for four-year terms, govern each district. If you are qualified to vote in a general elec-

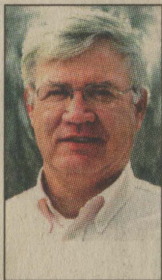
tion, you're eligible to be a candidate for election to your county's soil and water conservation district board.

Nomination forms, including a petition, are available in the county auditor's office. At least 25 eligible voters must sign the petition. Remember to file it with the auditor's office by the Aug. 30, deadline in order to be on the ballot in November. Only one person per township within a district can be represented on the district board.

Section B
December 18, 2002

Faulkner to retire

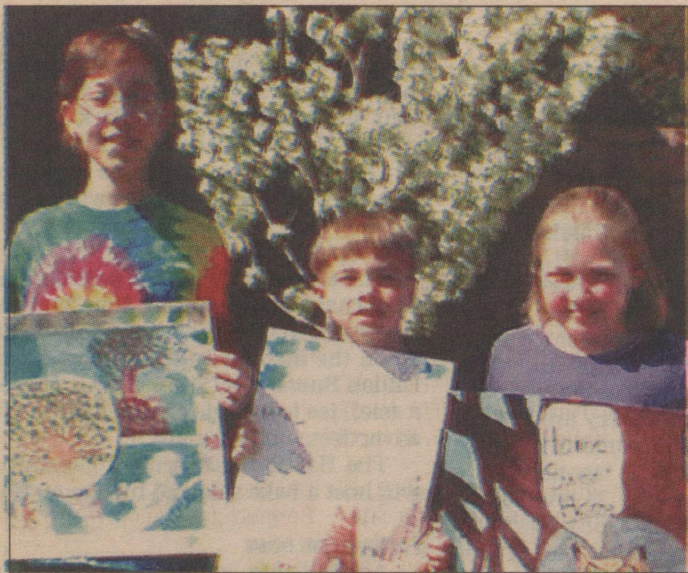
Dale Faulkner, district conservationist in the Warren County NRCS office will retire from 32 years of service Jan. 3, 2003. An open house will be held Thursday, Jan. 2, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Warren NRCS office, 909 E. Second Ave., Suite B in Indianola.



Dale Faulkner

May 22, 2002

GIFT OF TREES



Winners of the 2002 Gift of Trees poster contest have been selected by the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Commissioners. There were 49 entries from Warren County Schools. Each winner receives \$25, with district finalists now being judged for state level awards. Winners are **Colin Shaul**, first-grader at Oviatt Elementary in Norwalk, son of Chris and Maurice Shaul, Division 1; **Emma Niedermayer**, third-grader at Emerson Elementary in Indianola, daughter of Nick and Lisa Niedermayer of Indianola, Division 2; **Dianna Krejsa**, fifth-grader at Whittier Elementary in Indianola, daughter of Steve and Bev Krejsa, Division 3.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
February 20, 2002

Scholarships to be presented to graduating seniors

Scholarships will be presented to Iowa high school seniors to be used for their first year of college education while pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or natural resources.

Application deadline is March 1.

Contact local high school counselors' offices for application form and award guidelines or the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District Office located at 909 E. Second Ave., Suite B, Indianola or call (515) 961-5264.

Contest open to K-12 students

The Gift of Trees Poster Contest is open for grades kindergarten through 12 in all of Warren County Schools. Deadline to have posters submitted is Friday, March 29, 2002. Anyone interested may con-

tact his or her local school for contest rules/judging criteria or the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District office at (515) 961-5264 for more information and/or poster contest entry form.

2nd chance for enrolling in soil plan

By DON MUHM

Register Farm Editor

Farmers who failed to get erosion-prone cropland entered into the 10-year Conservation Reserve Program will get a second chance to submit bids May 5-23, state Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) officials learned Friday.

Land-idling contracts accepted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture could go into effect either later this year or in 1987.

Producers wanting to put fragile cropland into the reserve yet this year would have two options, the Iowa ASCS said. They could either destroy 1986 crops planted on land to be placed in the conservation reserve in order to comply, or delay the start of the contract period until after this year's crops have been harvested.

The first annual payments would be made after Oct. 1, at the rate bid and accepted.

If farmers fail in this May bid enrollment, officials said, a third signup period for the 1987 crop year will be announced later this summer.

Most of the bids in the first round of conservation reserve bidding that began March 3-14 were considered too high. Three-fourths of the bids were rejected in that initial round of bidding.

The average bid accepted in Iowa was \$67.20 an acre, with bids ranging from as little as a few dollars per acre to a high of hundreds of dollars. This compares to a U. S. average of \$41.82 for the 838,356 acres of highly-erodible cropland that will be idled.

In Iowa, where 40,951 acres went into the reserve in the initial bidding round, the bids accepted ranged from an average of \$90 an acre for cropland in north central Iowa to \$65 in southern Iowa. The average bid accepted in northeast Iowa was \$85, while the average in western Iowa was \$75.

Nationally, the USDA had hoped to idle 5 million acres this year under the new measure, where annual payments are made for putting fragile cropland into grass, trees or wildlife habitat areas.

The goal in Iowa had been 476,000 acres, with bids submitted on 287,819 acres. Not a single bid was accepted in two Iowa county units — East Pottawattamie and Grundy — with only one or two bids accepted in 14 counties. The most bids accepted came in Woodbury County where 21 reserve contracts involving 3,524 acres were accepted. There will not be an assigned conservation reserve goal this time.



*E-mailed to
Mike Rolands
for publication
1/5/02*

News Release

For immediate release

CONTACT:

Leroy Brown, State Conservationist,
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, 515 284-4260
Marcia Roll, WHIP Program Specialist, NRCS, 515-323-2256

Funds for Wildlife Habitat Practices Will Be Widely Available

The 2002 Farm Bill increased funding for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) by ten-fold, greatly increasing the availability of wildlife habitat cost-share funds across the state. Based on historic funding levels, Iowa could receive up to \$1 million per year for WHIP. Some significant funding is anticipated before September 30.

Under WHIP, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps landowners prepare a wildlife habitat development plan and provides 75 percent cost share payments for implementing practices, such as planting native vegetation, enhancing woodlands and streambank restoration.

Iowa WHIP funds will be targeted at three main habitat types: woodlands, grasslands and riparian/fen areas. WHIP also includes a smaller educational component, which can be used by schools and others to develop outdoor classrooms and demonstration areas. Funding for the educational component will not be available until 2003.

All privately-owned land is eligible for WHIP. Land owned by county conservation boards, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and non-profit groups is also eligible. Contracts are for 10 to 15 years and are limited to \$25,000.

"WHIP presents a great opportunity for landowners to develop and enhance habitat, which will benefit wildlife, as well as those Iowans who enjoy the outdoors," says Leroy Brown, state conservationist for the NRCS in Iowa.

Brown says applications are now being accepted at local USDA Service Centers. The WHIP signup is continuous. NRCS will periodically rank applications until all funds are obligated.

WHIP was originally established under the 1996 Farm Bill. It provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to landowners to address wildlife concerns and objectives. The NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment.

Indianola teacher takes over as principal in Martensdale-St. Marys

Teacher takes nine years of experience with him

By **AMANDA CAMPBELL**
Record-Herald Staff Writer

Indianola eighth-grade teacher Anthony Asmus will take over as principal of Martensdale-St. Marys Elementary School this summer, replacing Barbara Niemeyer who has accepted a position as Carlisle's elementary principal.

Asmus taught eighth-grade English at Indianola Middle School. He has been teaching for nine years. He taught for five years at Hampton-Dumont schools in North central Iowa and he has been at Indianola Middle School for four years.

Asmus said he always knew he wanted to get into school administration.

"I still wanted to be with the kids," he said. "But I wanted to work with parents as well."

Indianola Middle School Peggy Phillio principal said Asmus would be missed.

"He has been an excellent teacher at the Middle School level and we are excited for his new job opportunity," she said. "We wish him the best of luck."

Asmus completed his degree in elementary and middle school education at the University of Northern Iowa. He also minored in reading

education. Asmus has spent the last two years earning a master's degree from Drake University.

Asmus said he is looking forward to working in a small community.

"They have a lot of pride in their community and their school," Asmus said. "They believe in the school and their kids and they will do what it takes."

Asmus graduated from Dows High School in Dows, a town smaller than the Martensdale community.

"I am very excited about this position," he said.

Asmus said his experience in reading would be an asset in his new position.

"Reading is the basis of all classes," he said. "I will bring my reading expertise to Martensdale-St. Marys."

Martensdale-St. Marys superintendent Peggy Huisman said Asmus would bring his experience to the district to help improve student achievement.

"He is very dynamic and has a lot of good, strong teaching experience," said Huisman. "He's a great teacher and we are lucky to have him join our team."

While at Indianola, Asmus served on several committees, such as the Indianola Education Association, the safe schools committee, the school improvement committee, the faculty advisory committee and the negotiations committee.

Asmus said he wants to create a fun, energetic atmosphere at Martensdale-St. Marys.

"I want it to be a place where people like to work," he said.

THIRD GRADERS VISIT THE PENICK FARM



Carlisle and Whittier Elementary students visited the Penick hog farm in Indianola on Aug. 18.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

On Aug. 28, 90 Carlisle Elementary School students and 12 Whittier School students toured the Mike and Tracy Penick hog farm in Indianola.

On this field trip, there were four different stations for the students. The highlight in the five past years has always been holding baby pigs, but since the Penicks are liquidating their hog herd, some changes were made. The first station this year was in the farrowing house and seeing where the baby pigs were born. After the farrowing house, Mike gave each student an ear of sweet

corn to feed to the Landrace pigs.

Dorothy Naberhaus and Martha Martens, both members of the Farm Bureau women's committee, hosted the second station. They took turns reading a book called "Welcome to Our Farm." After the book reading, Rex Hoppes, regional manager, explained the nursery to the students and allowed them to look inside.

The third station was the John Deere farm machinery, and was hosted by Joe Dunn explaining what each piece of equipment was, the function and the cost.

Deloris Sweet, AITC chair, hosted the fourth station. Sweet talked to the students about the many things made from pigs and shared much information about the farm.

The Ag in the Classroom Committee also gave each teacher a packet to take back to school and give to their students. Inside were pork puzzlers, agriculture magazines, bookmarks, stickers, pencils and erasers, all having to do with pigs. After finishing their pig sugar cookies and drink.

August 2003

Poster contest seeks food for the future

Record-Herald - 3/11/03

Food for the Future is this year's theme for the annual 2003 Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest. Making sure we have an ample supply of food for now and the future is an important task that requires:

Conservation practices, stable economy, ample water, transportation systems, hunger relief, educated citizens, productive soils and a variety of food crops.

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and the Auxiliary of the Conservation Districts of Iowa, co-sponsors of the Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest, are seeking students K-12 to participate in this fun and educational experience. Posters should be made on regular poster paper 8 1/2 x 11 up to 22 x 28 inches only. Any medium may be used such as paint, magic marker, pencil, cut and paste, crayon or whatever inspires the student. No three-dimen-

sional projects will be accepted.

Judging of each poster will be based on conservation message 50 percent, visual effectiveness 30 percent, originality 10 percent, and universal appeal 10 percent. All entries must be sent or brought to the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District office, USDA building, 909 E. Second Ave., Indianola, by March 28, 2003.

A \$25-monetary award will be presented to the local winner in each of the following divisions: division I, grades kindergarten through first; division 2 grades two through three; division 3 grades four through six; division 4 grades seven through nine, division 5 grades 10 through 12 Each winner will then advance to regional competition, and then state competition. Please contact the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District (515) 961-5264 or your local school if you have questions.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

E-mailed to
Mollie and Mike Rolands @ Record Herald
1/6/03

News Release

Urban Resources & Borderland Alliance Network

1513 North Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, IA 50021 PH 515-964-1883 (Ext 3) FAX: 515-964-8613

For Immediate Release

January 6, 2003

For more information:

Jennifer Welch 515-964-1883 X3 or www.urbanwaterquality.org

Jennifer.welch@ia.usda.gov

Conservation Workshops for Growing Cities Announced

In March 2003, federal law requires many communities to implement their own storm water management programs. To help professionals and city officials understand and comply with National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems Phase II storm water program regulations, three workshops will be held in this winter. The full-day sessions are designed to help those involved in community planning, development, and storm water management stay in regulatory compliance while offering strategies to lower costs and reduce pollution and the potential for flooding.

Sponsored by Urban Resources and Borderland Alliance Network (URBAN) and others, the conferences are:

Implementing Effective Local Erosion Control Programs--Instructor Jay Michels helps developers, managers, engineers, and elected officials use proven, cost effective techniques to help implement Phase II of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES). Attendees will examine how communities have developed successful erosion control and storm water management programs that keep costs low, use smart urban planning, and utilize locally available assets. Held January 24, 2003 at Farm Bureau, 5400 University Avenue, West Des Moines. The cost is \$75.00; \$70 if registration is received by January 17th.

Focus on Prevention--instructors Jay Michels and Jay Riggs examine construction site design strategies to prevent topsoil loss and the pollution, costs, and fines that can result. The conference will focus on conservation measures including building site design, innovative storm water management, and incorporating cost-share and incentive programs. Held February 11, 2003 at Farm Bureau, 5400 University, West Des Moines, IA., the cost is \$75.00; \$70 if registration is received by March 7th.

Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control training--CPESC is a professional credential sponsored by the Soil and Water Conservation Society and the International Erosion Control Association. Instructors Jay Michels and Jay Riggs

.....more.....more.....more

.....Conservation Strategies Workshops for Growing Cities Announced
(continued)

conduct a one-day tutorial designed to help individuals expand their knowledge of erosion control and storm water management, which could lead to taking the CPESC certification test. The training will take place March 20, 2003 at Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU), 1735 NE 70th Avenue, Ankeny, IA. The next day, March 21, 2003, a CPESC exam will be administered to test-registered students. Training cost is \$100; \$90 if registration is received by March 7th. The testing fee is additional. For more information about the certification process and how to qualify to take the exam call 828-756-4484 or visit www.cpesc.net.

Registration for all three sessions is \$200; \$125 for the first two sessions if received by January 16th. For more information or to register, www.urbanwaterquality.org or contact Jennifer Welch at 515-964-1883, Ext. 3.

The training is sponsored by URBAN, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Dallas, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story and Warren counties, Iowa State University, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship--Division of Soil Conservation, and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Bobcats on the rebound

Elusive cats prowl Lake Ahquabi

By **EMILY A. ROUSH**
Record-Herald Staff Writer

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Iowa State University last week presented the early findings of a three-year bobcat study in Iowa.

The program, held Oct. 12 at the Warren County Conservation Board Annett Nature Center, drew about 50 people. The meeting gave residents information about bobcats and cougars in Iowa, debunked myths about the cats and gave people information on how they can help with the study.

In 2001, Iowa State University and the DNR started a pilot program to conduct research on the cats. The collaborative effort took off last year when the program received funding from the Iowa Wildlife Fund and federal money earmarked for conservation from money from offshore oil drilling. The estimated cost of the study is \$250,000 plus salary time for the DNR.

The Bobcat Ecology Study, which is beginning its second year, studies the habitat, population, reproduction and survival rates of bobcats in mostly wooded areas of southern Iowa. Counties in the study are Warren, Marion, Clarke, Lucas, Monroe, Decatur, Wayne, Appanoose and Davis.

Due to increased trapping and a loss of habitat due to agriculture, bobcats were listed on Iowa's endangered ani-



This radio-tagged adult female bobcat lives near Lake Ahquabi State Park south of Indianola. The bobcat was photographed with a motion sensed trail-master camera. Tracking the cats using the motion sensor cameras has not been effective. Captured bobcats are tracked using radio collars.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

IOWA BOBCATS

If you have spotted a bobcat or captured one, call Todd Gosselink at the Iowa DNR bobcat research station at (641) 774-2958 or call Warren County Conservation Board at (515) 961-6169.

mals list in 1977. In 2001 they were moved up to a threatened species and then to protected in 2003.

From 1999 to 2003, there were 856 reports of bobcat sightings in Iowa as well as 189 trapped bobcats and 108 found as roadkill. These sightings took place in the southern counties in the study, along with some sightings along the Missouri River and a few in northern counties.

There have been 23 bobcats, which are twice the size of house cats, tagged for the study including one in Lake Ahquabi State Park south of Indianola.

The cats that have been cap-

tured are weighed and measured, and their teeth are checked to determine their age before they are released equipped with a radio collar to track their path.

Researchers use a high frequency collar or a global positioning system collar which records the animal's location. The GPS collars are on a timer and will eventually release, falling off the animal's neck. The collar is then located and the data recorded by the collar is collected.

Wildlife research biologist Todd Gosselink said residents can help with the study. If a person has spotted a bobcat, they should call a local conservation board or the Iowa DNR bobcat research station.

A trapper who has accidentally captured a bobcat, even if it died due to the capture, should also contact the DNR. The DNR will record where the animal was captured, take measurements and tag the animal before releasing it back into the wild. If the animal has

died, they will also collect the carcass.

They will remove stomach contents, remove the reproductive tract, collect DNA samples and take measurements of the carcass.

Bobcats are named so for their short tail, which is about 5 to 6 inches long and has black fur on the top of the tip of the tail. Females weigh an average of 17 pounds, while males are larger at an average 23 pounds.

ISU graduate student Stephanie Koehler, who spoke at the meeting, said the cats have pointed ear tufts, a beard and retractable claws. Bobcat tracks are about 2 to 3 inches wide with four pads and a three-lobed heel pad. (Dogs and coyotes have a two-lobed heel pad and claws do not retract.)

Big Cats

The study is also looking at the more rare mountain lion. These cats are extinct in Iowa, but are not protected because they are considered a Western animal.

There have been three mountain lions found in Iowa — two were shot and one found as roadkill. The cougars have a solid color, round ears and a long tail. Their tracks are larger, about 3 to 4 inches wide. Cougars also have a three-lobed heel pad.

To disperse rumors about the 75 to 150 pound animals, Gosselink said from 1979 to 1995 there were 300 people killed by domestic dogs, but from 1993 to 2003, there have only been five attacks per year by cougars and less than one death. These attacks took place in Western states. Despite reports, he said the DNR did not release cougars in Iowa to control the deer population.

Soil and water conservation district poster contest deadline March 31

The Living Soil is the theme for the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District poster contest. The contest is open to all students kindergarten through 12th grades that are residents of the state of Iowa.

Rules are:

- The poster is to be 8.5 inches by 11 inches up to 22 inches by 28 inches.

- Each poster will be created and constructed by the competing student.

- Each poster must have a completed entry form attached to the back of the poster.

- Posters should remain flat when submitted for judging.

- Posters will be judged on entry's conservation message, visual effectiveness, universal appeal and originality.

- The state winning posters will be displayed during the annual 2004 Conference for Conservation Districts of Iowa.

- The five state winning posters will be submitted to the national competition with those awards to be presented at a convention of the National Association of Conservation Districts in 2005.

Enter by contacting your local school or the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District (515) 961-5264 for entry information. Contest deadline is March 31. Prizes are provided by Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Co. for regional and state winners in each division.

Record-Herald 2/25/04

'The Living Soil' is theme of 2004 Stewardship Week

The 2004 Soil and Water Stewardship Week observance is set for Sunday, April 25 through Sunday, May 2. "In generation after generation, it is important to bring attention back to the central theme, the living soil sustains all life on earth," said Arlan Becker, chairman of the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District. "Without the soil, nothing lives. Our conservation district works to protect healthy soils that, in turn, support a healthy environment, and healthy environments support healthy life," he added.

Modern farmers and ranchers who practice soil conservation are doing their part to keep the living soil alive. Lessons from the past, such as the catastrophic Dust Bowl of the 1930s, have shown what can happen when the topsoil is not protected from wind and water erosion. Today, private land managers employ a host of conservation practices,

such as minimum tillage, to protect the topsoil that feeds the nation.

Soil health becomes more important when you learn that millions of beneficial organisms are going through their daily routine of eating, breathing, living and dying in the soil. One cup of fertile soil may contain as many bacteria as there are people on Earth. In one acre, an area about the size of a football field, there may be a ton or more of microscopic bacteria. That's equal to the weight of two full-grown cows.

We eat the food, drink the water, breathe the air and enjoy the views, but only a few of us walk the fields and forests on a regular basis and understand what those lands need from us in order to sustain the living soil. However, the local district has suggested three things each of us can do in our own backyards to be better stewards of our soil resources:

1. Protect the soil from wind

or water erosion by keeping healthy plants growing on the surface.

2. Restore and maintain organic matter in the soil, such as grass clippings or tree leaves (compost).

3. Protect soil life by using the least amounts and least toxic materials to control pest problems.

There is an assortment of educational materials for Stewardship Week for students of all ages. Churches often use this informational material in their Sunday school classes. To review what is available and would benefit your students, stop by or call the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District office to order the number of materials needed. Office location, phone number and hours: USDA Bldg., 909 E. Second Ave., Suite B, Indianola, IA 50125, (515) 961-5264, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

EPA places four insecticides on restricted use list

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) placed four of the most widely used corn rootworm insecticides on its restricted use list. Many other popular chemicals, such as Bladex 1 are now also restricted use pesticides.

Restricted use means these products can

only be sold to farmers who have a Private Pesticide License, which they received after attending meetings and are certified on safe use and handling.

Cornbelt growers are urged to become certified private pesticide applicators or renew their license before the 1987 growing

season if they wish to purchase products with restricted use labeling. Pesticide dealers are responsible for checking licenses to see if farmers are certified to buy restricted use products.

Growers should contact their county extension agent or pesticide dealer for details

on how to become certified. Depending on state guidelines, becoming certified means completing a class or test. Last year, well over 40,000 Midwest growers became certified in order to purchase the restricted use products before the growing season began.

surplus the Blues could retain, sometimes

Set-asides trimmed to 5 percent

By DIRCK STEIMEL

Register Business Writer

The U.S. Agriculture Department on Tuesday trimmed to 5 percent the amount of a farmer's normal acreage of corn he must leave unplanted to qualify for federal loans and subsidy payments during 1992.

The set-aside is down from 7.5 percent for 1991 crops of corn, barley and grain sorghum and the lowest requirement since the early 1980s.

The Bush administration's move, announced by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Edward Madigan, was designed to strike a compromise in a heated battle between corn growers' organizations and some agribusiness groups.

Unwanted, But Expected

Corn growers' groups, including the Iowa Corn Growers Association, had pushed Madigan to leave the set-aside at 7.5 percent. A sharp cut or elimination of the set-aside, they argued, would prompt farmers to produce a bumper crop in 1992 that could flood markets and drive down farm income.

Agribusiness groups, including grain trading giant Cargill Inc., lobbied for eliminating the set-aside. Global grain supplies are already at low levels, they said. They argued the set-aside was hobbling America's farm sector and causing the country to lose market share to foreign competitors.

The 5 percent set-aside was expected by farm groups and is a "starting point," said Evan Stadlman, executive director of the Iowa Corn Growers Association.

With a smaller set-aside and the prospect of a larger harvest, the government needs to work harder to market U.S.-grown grain around the globe to protect farm income, Stadlman said. The Bush administration should push harder to open up foreign markets in trade negotiations and should become more aggressive with export subsidies that are designed to offset subsidies used by the European Community, he said.

Doesn't End Argument

But agribusiness groups were disappointed with the USDA announcement. "We felt that it was time to eliminate the acreage reduction requirement. It would have sent a strong signal," said Steve McCoy, director of the North American Export Federation, an organization of grain exporting companies.

The set-aside allows the European Community and other exporting nations to boost production and undercut U.S. sales, McCoy said. Farmers would be better off if the United States "rededicated itself to the export market," he said.

The jockeying over the set-aside level is not over. Madigan has until Nov. 15 to modify the acreage reduction program, or ARP, if the total supply of feed grains changes significantly from current estimates. "World and U.S. 1991-92 ending stocks of feed grains are historically low, which makes the initial ARP announcement subject to adjustment, particularly in light of uncertainties around the world," he said in his announcement.

Unless it is modified, the 1992 program will require a farmer with a 100-acre corn base to idle five acres to qualify for loans and subsidy payments designed to make up the difference between market prices and targets set by Congress.

However, 15 percent of the farmer's planted acres would not qualify for subsidies because of budget cutbacks imposed in 1990.

CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS ON THE PRAIRIE

Harold and Kay Whipple of Lacona are hosting a "Conservation Conversations on the Prairie" event on their Bluebird Family Farm, beginning at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, July 19.

The event is an opportunity for area residents and conservation organizations to network and explore new partnerships and projects that will enhance conservation in Iowa.

The event includes walking and riding tours of Whipples' prairie, introductions of guests and dinner. The Iowa Learning Farm Conservation Station also will be on site.

Those interested in attending need to contact Harold and Kay Whipple by July 12. Interested persons can e-mail or phone Whipple with their name, address, e-mail, phone number and organization affiliation. Whipple can be reached at (641) 534-3039 or by e-mail at hkwhip@iowatelecom.net.

The Bluebird Family Farm is located at 22307 S23 Highway, about one-half mile north of the intersection of G76 and S23 highways, in Lacona.