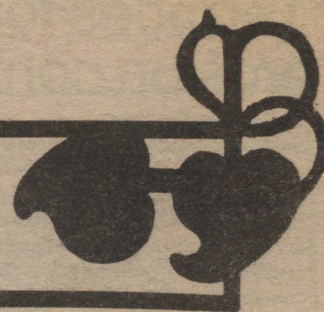




Milford farmer renews interest in conservation methods

By Susan Reiser
Editor

Lyle and Bonnie Overocker, rural Milford farmers, are joining the move to employ more conservation tillage methods in their farming operation.

Overocker, a 30-year farmer, is in the process of changing to ridge tilling, the process of building ridges on 1,470 acres of land for the 1986 planting season.

The Buffalo cultivator, which built the ridges this fall, was purchased this past spring. Overocker and hired assistants, Dave Schwaller and Bill Cook, are in the process of installing duals on the combine to straddle these newly developed ridges.

Less water and wind erosion and less compaction of heavier soil are the two main advantages of using ridge tilling compared to the con-

ventional farming methods.

The disadvantage, Overocker said, was the cost involved in getting started in the ridge till program.

"The six-row cultivator cost \$6,000. I would have liked to have a 12-row but couldn't justify the additional expense. The duals on the combine cost \$3,200 and I spent another \$2,000 for the tires. Already, I'm at \$11,000 without the planter conversion, which is about \$600 a

row, for my 7000 John Deere Maxi-Merge planter," Overocker explained.

To offset the disadvantage, Overocker and District Soil Conservationist Clarence Call said that the use of ridge tilling should produce higher yields at cheaper production costs.

"Ridge tilling is growing in popularity," Call said. "Several young farmers are becoming interested. The expense is sometimes the prohibiting factor," Call added.

In addition to ridge tilling, Overocker is also involved in other soil conservation practices.

This past spring, Overocker was instrumental in installing 1,500 to 2,000 feet of waterways and in the past years has installed approximately 3,000 feet of waterways.

Since 1977, Overocker has planted 50 to 60 trees in a farmstead windbreak surrounding the couple's home.

Although Overocker has been farming since 1955, he hasn't been a

conventional farmer every year since that time. About 15 years ago, Overocker started till planting, another conservation tillage method he employed for seven years.

"I quit that when I felt I was getting too many acres to stay with that practice. I feel it was a mistake now to change back to the conventional methods but I did," Overocker said.

With his new ridge till operation, Overocker plans to split applications of fertilizer in the cornfield only, band at planting and follow up with a side dress at first cultivation.

Overocker discovered the ridge till program through talking to other ridge till farmers in Dickinson County, reading farm magazines and through the local Soil Conservation Service Office, in Spirit Lake.

More information about ridge till farming and other conservation tillage methods can be obtained from the Soil Conservation Service Office, in west Spirit Lake.



LYLE OVEROCKER, left, and Clarence Call, right, examine Overocker's cornfield in southeast Dickinson County. Overocker has started a move towards ridge

planting for the 1986 season. Read the accompanying story for more details about his operation. (Photo by Susan Reiser)

50th anniversary of conservation movement marked this week

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the formal soil conservation movement in our country. Some farmers have been practicing soil conservation for most of that time, and they are fortunate.

They are fortunate from the stewardship standpoint; we all should leave the land in better condition than we found it. But they are also fortunate from a dollars and cents angle.

Most people agree that soil erosion is a long-term problem and that soil conservation, at least for the more expensive practices, is a long-term investment. That's because it takes time for soil erosion to get topsoil in a condition where yields begin to suffer.

In many instances across Iowa, enough topsoil has been lost that crop yields are beginning to suffer. Over time, that continued and increasing erosion and yield drop costs more than you might think.

For example: consider the results of a 10-bushel of corn per acre loss. On unprotected land, a 10-bushel per acre yield drop could reasonably occur over 30 years. Add in the costs of more fertilizer and power, and you could be talking about a drop in returns of \$30 an acre 30 years from now.

If you lose \$30 in 30 years, the average loss each year is \$1 an acre. But remember, soil losses accumulate. Each year's \$1 loss is in

addition to all the previous losses. What do you think you will have lost over that 30-year period?

Think of it as putting money in a jar, each year putting in one more dollar than the year before.

It's \$1 the first year ... \$2 the second year ... and \$3 the third year. The total loss in three years is \$6. After 30 years, can you believe the total is \$465?

So over 30 years, using the 10 bushel yield drop figure, you have lost a total of \$465 an acre. On 100 acres of cropland, that's a \$46,500 loss! Something to think about.

A yield loss of a few bushels of corn over the years might not seem like much. But a gradual yield drop

(Continued on page 2)



LYLE and BONNIE OVEROCKER

Terraces for erosion control

By Dennis Rustman,
Soil Conservation Technician

Terracing continues to be a very much needed erosion control practice in Dickinson County. There are many acres of land in the county subject to erosion that should be protected with conservation practices. Terraces cut soil losses dramatically and offer long term protection for the soil. Terraces also improve water quality and prevent silting of road ditches.

A tile outlet terrace system works by reducing longer slopes into several shorter ones and by removing excess surface water. Terraces are laid out parallel, on the contour, or can sometimes be built parallel to existing fence lines or roads. They are also spaced to fit different equipment sizes.

There are three basic types of terraces; narrow base, grass-back, and broad base. The narrow base terrace is not farmed on either side, but only takes a small portion of land out of production. With this terrace, the intake is next to the toe of the terrace making it easier to farm. Narrow base terraces cost 40 percent less to build than grass-backslope terraces.

Grass-back terraces are farmed on the front slope only. The backslope is seeded down to grasses to protect it from erosion and also provides a wildlife cover. When the terrace is built, it will produce a flatter area to farm. This type of terrace is recommended on 5-14 percent slope.

The third type of terrace is the broad base. This type does not take any land out of production due to both sides being farmed. The broad base is recommended on slopes to 5 percent. The cost of this type of terrace is the most expensive.

There is cost sharing available for building terraces. Up to 75 percent of the cost can be paid by state and federal funds. If you are interested in having terraces built on your farm or would like more information on them, contact the Soil Conservation District Office in Spirit Lake.

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT Fiscal Year 1984 - 1985

District's IM Budget

Receipts

Allocation from State Soil
Conservation Committee \$ 2,370.85

Disbursements

Commissioners' mileage, meals and hotel
while attending meetings out of town \$ 1,549.46
Office supplies and expense \$ 821.39
Total Disbursements \$ 2,370.85

IIIM Budget (State Cost-Share)

Receipts

1983-1984 Allocation from State Soil
Conservation Committee \$25,479.00

Disbursements

Total Spent \$22,195.71
Released to State Soil Conservation
Committee \$ 3,293.29
Total Disbursements \$25,479.00

Receipts

1984-1985 Allocation from State Soil
Conservation Committee \$27,226.00

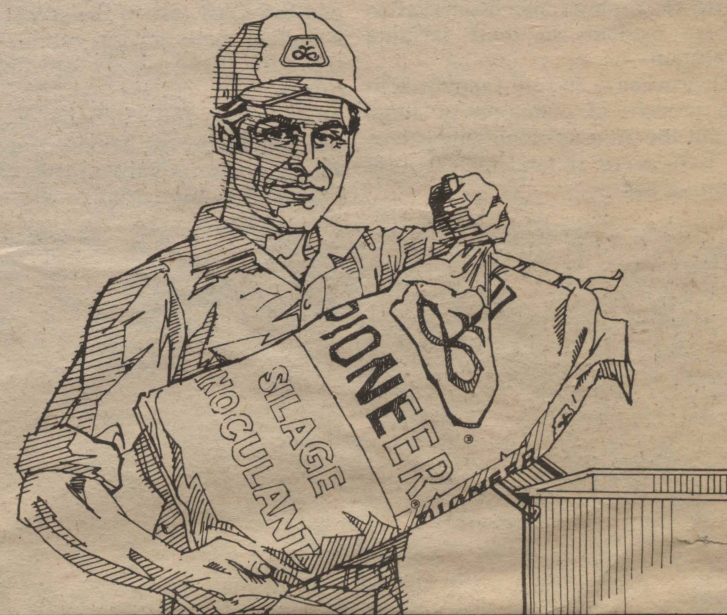
Disbursements

Total Spent \$11,730.51
Total Obligated \$ 8,240.00
Total Unobligated \$ 7,255.50
TOTAL \$27,226.00

Soil conservation Continued from page ONE

over 30 years because of soil erosion soil conservation office about.
mounts up to substantial losses. There's one in every county, and the
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Farmers eligible for agricultural conservation program

By Larry D. Lago,
County Executive Director
WHAT IS ACP?

ACP is a federally assisted cost-share program which emphasizes the identification and solution of soil, water, and woodland conservation and pollution abatement problems on agricultural lands. Further emphasis is placed on completion of enduring conservation practices to solve these problems to protect and improve the nation's food and fiber producing resources. ACP is authorized by the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, as amended, the Rural Development Act of 1972, and Title X of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973. ACP cost-shares with farmers and ranchers the cost of conservation practices to protect basic soil, water,

for carrying out enduring soil and water conservation and pollution measures that farmers and ranchers would not perform without this assistance.

HOW OPERATED: ACP is administered by ASCS with technical and educational functions provided by Soil Conservation Service, Forestry Service, Extension Service and other agencies. Farmer-elected county committees manage program activity at the county level. State ASC

committees supervise state programs and provide overall direction and guidance for efforts in planning and coordinating the program impact on soil, water, woodland conservation and environmental pollution problems.

FARMERS'S SHARE: Private investments by farmers in the cost of carrying out practices equals or exceeds federal input. The incentive provided by the federal cost-share stimulates private investments and

brings practice accomplishments that would not otherwise result.

For the 1985 fiscal year in Dickinson County, 58 farmers with various conservation problems have applied for cost-sharing assistance. These conservation practice needs vary from permanent vegetative cover establishment to terrace systems to field windbreaks to farmstead windbreaks to minimum tillage to sodwaterway to establishing wildlife habitats.

ACP BENEFITS PUBLIC: ACP maintains and improves basic soil, water, woodland, and wildlife resources and helps assure a continuing adequate supply of food, fiber, and timber for America's future.

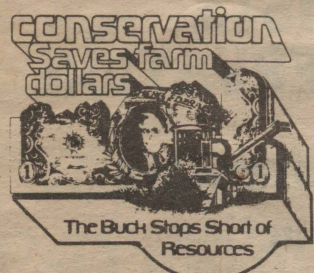
In emergencies caused by flood, drought, hurricane, earthquake, and other natural disaster, Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) funds are also available for restoring damaged farmland.

ASCS Report

Larry Lago

wildlife and woodland resources. However, greater emphasis than in the ACP cost-sharing with problems ACP cost-sharing with problems identified under the National Environmental Policy Act. ACP is available in all agricultural counties. ELIGIBILITY: Farmers and ranchers are eligible for cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent of the cost of conservation and pollution abatement measures to be carried out on agricultural lands. Practices for which cost-sharing is available are those developed by the farmer-elected county committee in consultation with the county program development group with approval of the State ASC committee and the Secretary.

Practices may be approved by the county ASC committee only after assurance that cost-sharing will be



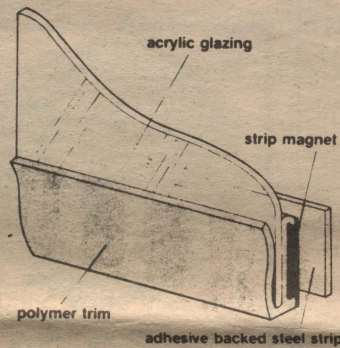
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Here's how it works

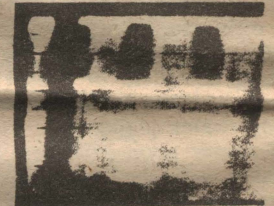
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The infra-red photograph (thermography) shown below traces heat escaping from the front windows of a home on a typical winter early evening at 30°. Heat is shown in light areas. Dark spots represent cold or no heat loss. As you can see, lower windows with aluminum storm windows register substantial heat loss. The upper windows equipped with MAGNETITE windows shown very low heat loss.



(Dark object above is a telephone pole in front of the house. Light across top and sides show heat escaping from eaves and other uninsulated areas.)

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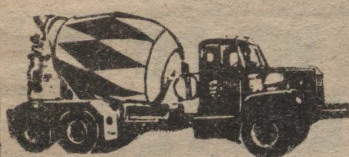
By Clarence Call,
District Conservationist

Dickinson County considers water quality more than the average Iowa county. That is because of the presence of the Iowa Great Lakes. Good water quality should be considered as high on the priority list as keeping the topsoil in place. In fact, the two go hand in hand. The practices that hold down soil erosion also contribute to cleaning up the surface water.

Let's consider conservation tillage, or leaving crop residue on the soil surface, as a dual purpose practice. When the rains come, the stubble or stalks break the force of the raindrops and prevent them from loosening the soil particles. The residue also slows the water down - reducing its erosive effect. The water also has a much better chance of soaking into the spongy mat of crop residue than it would a bare soil surface. Consequently, the water that does reach the lakes will be carrying less silt than it would otherwise.

But what if the water comes in large amounts, say three or four inches in a 24 hour period? This is too much for crop residues to handle on sloping land. Then we should consider a terrace or other structure to hold back the excess water and release it through an intake and underground tile system over a longer period of time. Most of the sediment is held behind the terrace and only the cleaner water is delivered to the lake or stream. This is using a system of conservation practices to check sedimentation and improve water quality.

All conservation practices within the lakes watershed have this dual purpose. Many think of soil conservation practices as having only that single purpose, but they really do improve the water quality as well.



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ASCS PROGRAM ASSISTANTS include, left to right, Donna Treharne, Cindy Lillenthal, Ruby Caskey and Pat Achenbach. [Photo by Susan Reiser]

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Richard W. Hall, Civil Engineer
John P. Vogel, Resource Conservationist
Judith R. Rathel, Area Clerk
Margaret L. Walker, Area Clerk



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Windbreaks guard against blowing soil, snow

The obvious values of a farmstead windbreak is protection of farm buildings from blowing soil, snow, or general high velocity wind damage.

But there are other reasons. One experiment in Montana found that a herd of cattle protected by windbreaks averaged 35 lb. of gain more during a mild winter and lost 10½ lbs. less during a severe winter than an unprotected herd. The windbreaks reduced the wind chill factor, or combined effects of wind and temperature on body heat loss.

Studies show that windbreaks cut wind velocity by 35 percent to 75 percent, depending on tree density. This protection extends a distance of from 8 to 15 times the height of the trees downwind from the windbreak.

If your trees were 25 ft. high, they would protect a feedlot as long as the windbreak and 250 ft. wide, for example. It could also protect your home and reduce home heating costs.

The cooling effect of trees in hot summer months makes the windbreak equally valuable then. Trees absorb large amounts of water from the soil. As some of this water is lost

thru leaves by transpiration, it cools the surrounding air. A single mature tree with a large amount of total leaf surface provides a cooling effect comparable to several home air conditioners!

Windbreaks are used in areas with a high wind erosion hazard to protect immature crops from strong, hot winds as well as reducing the movement of topsoil. These windbreaks also help hold snow on crop fields, increasing spring soil moisture. Studies have shown increased production in fields protected by windbreaks over unprotected fields.

The best planting time for windbreaks is in the spring as soon as the frost is out of the ground. Windbreaks should be protected from livestock.

Cost-sharing is available on farm windbreaks and wildlife areas. However, you must plan your windbreak with SCS technicians to secure this cost-share assistance. Stop in the SCS office during the winter months for assistance in planning your windbreak.



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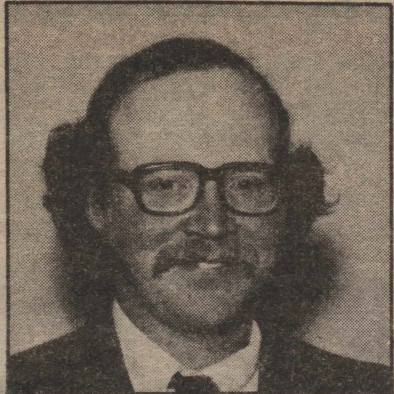
Greenville, Iowa

District Soil Commissioners

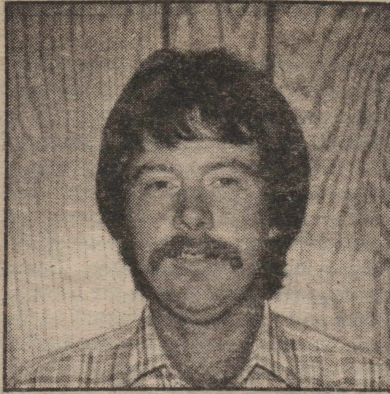
The Beacon Spirit Lake, Iowa
Thursday, Sept. 19, 1985 Page 5C



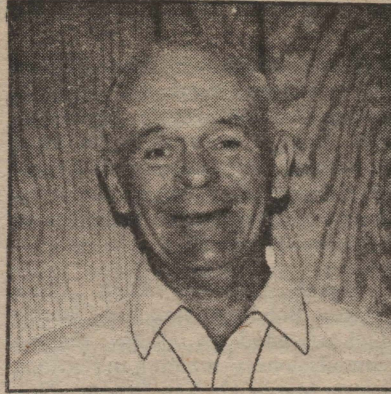
BERG



HOFFMAN



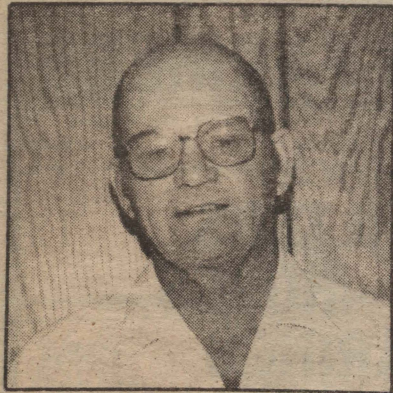
HERBERT



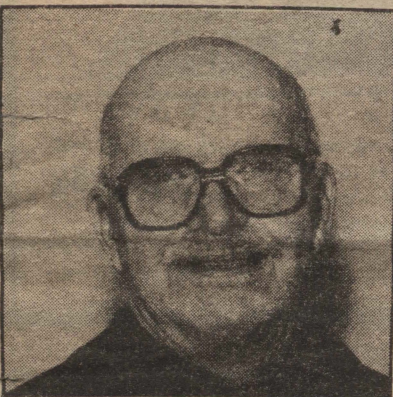
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RETIRED COMMISSIONER

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Robert C. Ingwersen, Vice Chairman
Charles Shorey
Chris Hoffman
Jared Herbert
Maurice Dougal, Assistant Commissioner

OFFICE PERSONNEL

Clarence M. Call, District Conservationist
Dennis Rustman, Conservation Technician
Betty Farmer, State Clerk

Soil Conservation District Accomplishments

Fiscal Year October 1, 1984 - September 30, 1985

Conservation District Cooperators (no. and ac.)	11 - 1,203
Individuals and Groups Assisted (no.)	216
Individuals and Groups Applying Practices (no.)	122
Resource Management System Planned (ac.)	3,300
Conservation Tillage System (ac.)	7,191
Farmstead and Feedlot Windbreak (ac.)	1.0
Field Windbreak (ft.)	4,236
Grassed Waterway or Outlet (ac.)	20.7
Terraces (ft.)	9,300
Subsurface Drain (ft.)	1,570
Tree Planting (ac.)	1.0
Water and Sediment Control Basin (no.)	1
Wildlife Upland Habitat Management (ac.)	1.0
Windbreak Renovation (ac.)	8.5
Cropland Benefitted by Conservation Practice (ac.)	7,945

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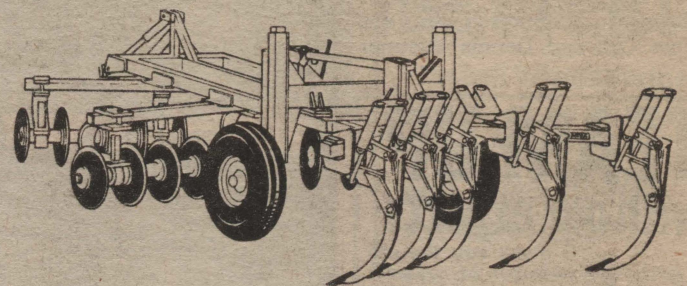


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Stoltenberg, Jones, Sievers win Marc Cox annual contest

October 1, 1984 - September 30, 1985

October - Twelve regular monthly meetings were held during the year 84-85. Only two commissioners missed one meeting each during this year. These absences were caused by the two commissioners being out of the county at the time of the meetings. There was also one special meeting held.

November - Robert C. Ingwersen, Chairman of the Dickinson SCD, was elected Regional Director of Region 2, Iowa Association of Soil Conservation Districts, at the annual conference held in Des Moines on November 26, 27 and 28. Region 2 comprises eleven counties in northwest Iowa. Attending the annual conference in Des Moines from Dickinson County were Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Ingwersen and Mr. and Mrs. Orville J. Berg.

Clarence Call, District Conservationist, spoke to the Spirit Lake 2nd graders on "Trees." He also spoke to the Isaac Walton League on November 20 on "SCS and Wildlife Planning."

December - Clarence Call attended a training meeting on water quality in Des Moines on December 4 and 5.

Commissioners and wives enjoyed their annual Christmas party at Mr. G's on December 4.

January - Reorganizational meeting was held on January 2. Orville J. Berg was elected as new chairman for 1985. Robert Ingwersen was elected as vice-chairman. Chris Hoffman was appointed as secretary and Betty Farmer as treasurer for 1985.

Clarence Call participated in the ILCC seminar on January 7. He also talked on windbreaks at the Farm Bureau meeting held at the home of Mrs. Roger Heikens on January 8. Clarence Call, Dennis Rustman, Conservation Technician, and Betty Farmer, Clerk attended an all day computer training session in Sibley on January 9. Robert Ingwersen, Orville Berg and Clarence Call attended Short Course held in Ames on January 15 and 16.

February - Commissioners and Clarence Call and Dennis Rustman

attended Northwest Iowa Tillage Expo at the Northgate Mall in Spencer on February 21. Ingwersen and Dougal attended drainage meeting in Fort Dodge on February 28. Clarence Call taught the water quality meeting held in Primghar on February 26 and 27.

March - Orville Berg, Chas. Shorey, Bob Ingwersen and Clarence Call attended an all-day regional commissioners' meeting in Pocahontas on March 12. Ken Bruene, Field Representative IDSC, attended the

regular meeting of the commissioners in March. Clarence Call attended all-day area meeting in Cherokee on March 19. Dennis Rustman attended all-day contractors' meeting in Spencer on March 19. Iowa Soil Conservation books were presented to the libraries and the schools in the county by the commissioners. Comic books were presented to the schools. Chas. Shorey was nominated as the outstanding commissioner for Dickinson County in 1985. District winners in the annual Marc Cox Contest were Arnold Stoltenberg, Patrick Jones

and Carl Sievers. Mr. and Mrs. James Dale Jones of Milford attended the annual Marc Cox Banquet held in Sioux City on March 14.

April - Jared Herbert, Silver Lake Township, Lake Park, was appointed

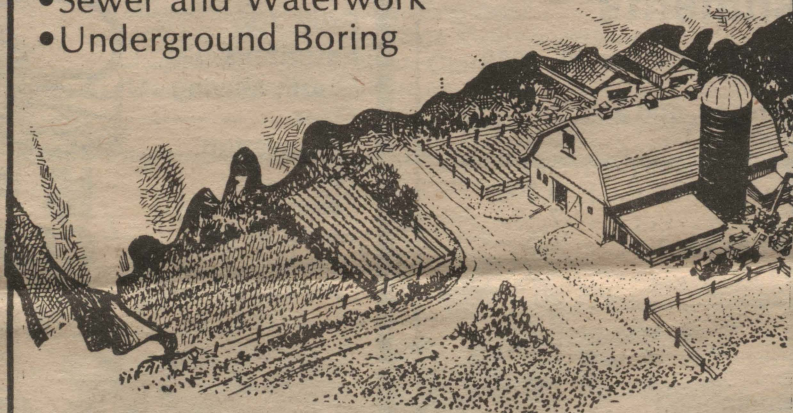
as an assistant commissioner. Commissioners sold and distributed a total of 5,200 shrubs, 3,870 deciduous trees and 521 evergreens in the county this month. Commissioners gave each 6th grader in the county a

(Continued on page 7)

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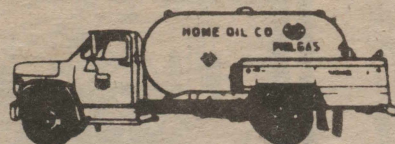
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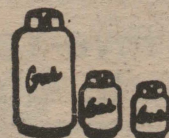
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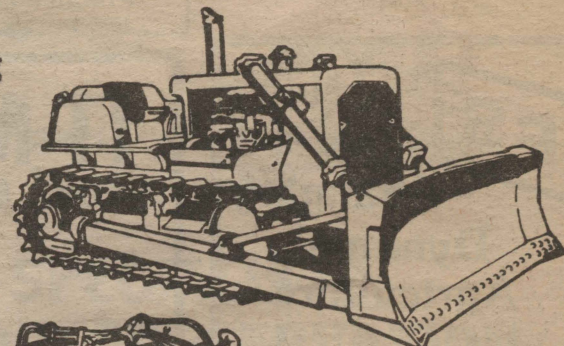
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green ash tree.

May - Soil Stewardship Week was May 12-19. Commissioners provided church bulletin covers, program inserts and children's education supplements to any church in the county wishing them during Soil Stewardship Week.

Clarence Call assisted with Clay County Outdoor Classroom on May 16.

The Dickinson County Mutual Insurance Company and the SCD commissioners sponsored the Soil Conservation Essay Contest. Title chosen was "Clean Water - What is the Answer?" Winners in the junior division were: Julie Adams, Milford, first; Jeff Galbraith, Milford, Second; and Heidi Schoning, th

The commissioners co-sponsored the "ding darling" program conducted by the Excelsior Women's Club.

June - The Dickinson County SCD commissioners paid 1985 dues to the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation Districts, the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts, the Soil Conservation Society of America and the East Okoboji Improvement Association. Commissioners helped

defray the costs of two Dickinson County teachers, Bill Maas and Karen VanNorman, to attend the OUTLOOK program in June.

July - Commissioners and families held their annual picnic at Memorial Park in Spirit Lake on July 10. Robert Ingwersen and Jared Herbert attended "new" commissioner meeting in Pocahontas on July 17.

August - Commissioners contributed \$50.00 to the Youth Leadership scholarship fund. Clarence Call and Betty Farmer attended area meeting in Cherokee on August 19. 25 farmers

attended the ridge-till tour held on August 22.

September - All 6th graders in the county attended an outdoor classroom held at Hogsback area. This classroom is sponsored by district commissioners. Orville Berg, Robert Ingwersen, Chas. Shorey and Clarence Call attended the regional meeting in Pocahontas on September 9. Ernest H. Skow retired, after serving 25 years as a district commissioner. Jared Herbert was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Ernie.

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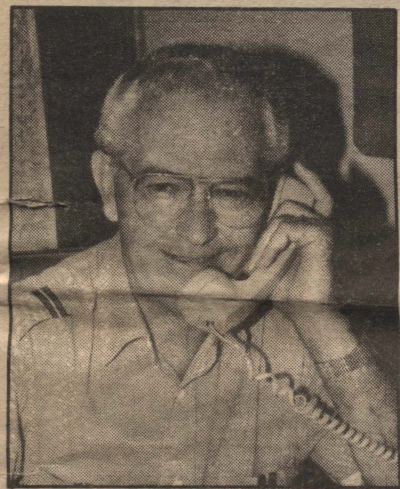
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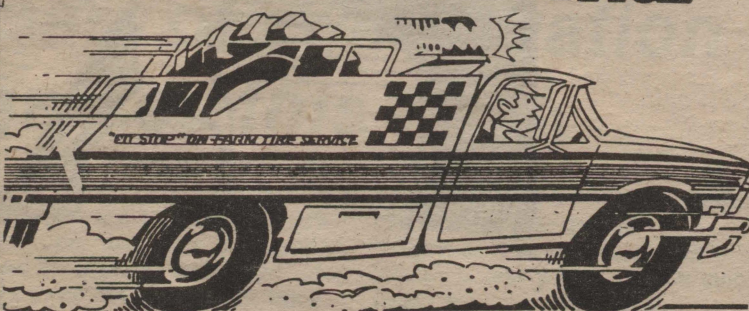


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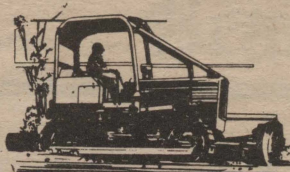
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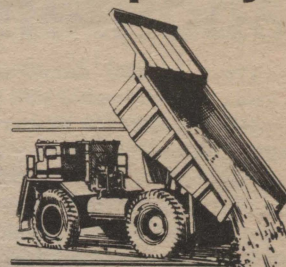
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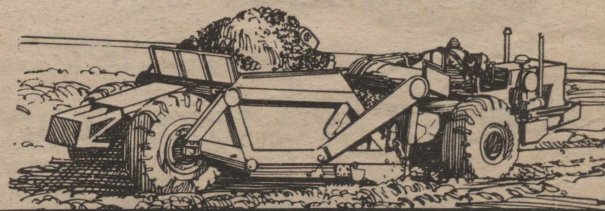
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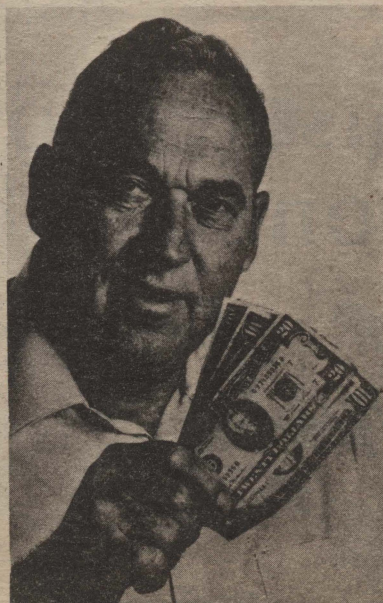
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