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Cites Value of Terraces in Saving Soil

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helped set the stage for making a farming career possible.

Ray's mother had inherited 170 acres of land near Eldora and his father later purchased two adjoining tracts when he became convinced Ray was "serious" about farming.

The farm's first modern parallel terraces, which virtually eliminate the troublesome "point rows" and permit use of six and eight-row equipment, were built in 1966. The terraces have perforated tile inlets which allow excess water to drain from the terraces while topsoil is held behind the terraces.

"We're real pleased with the way the terraces are doing their job," Ray said recently. "It takes a little more time to farm them, but as long as they help save this soil, they're worth it. If your topsoil goes, you don't have much left that's worth farming."

Ray is a graduate of William Penn College at Oskaloosa where he majored in business administration. He was named "Outstanding Young Farmer" in 1966 by the Eldora Jaycees and is chairman of the board of trustees of the First Baptist Church in Eldora. He also serves as a member of Pine Lake Planning Group 23.

Ray's wife, Betty, is employed at the Eldora Community Elementary School where she is director of the learning materials center. She also is a graduate of William Penn College and is presently working toward a master's degree in library science through the University of Northern Iowa.

For the past six years, Mrs. McDowell has presented material at the conservation teachers' fall workshop at the State 4-H camp near Madrid and has developed a bibliography of conservation aids for teachers. She was director of an outdoor conservation program for educationally deprived children at Camp River Side near Steamboat Rock in 1968 and was chairman of the outdoor conservation program for 2,



REGISTER PHOTO BY HENRY BARNETT

The McDowells and their two children, Mark, 12, and Margaret Annette, 10, look over Margaret's butterfly collection.

000 students at the 1968 Conservation Field Days.

Mrs. McDowell received the American Association for Conservation Information Award in 1964 and the WMT Stations Soil Conservation Award in 1968.

She has been a First Baptist Church Sunday School teacher for several years and is currently Sunday School superintendent for the junior high section.

Both of the McDowell children have 4-H projects and are active in church youth groups. Margaret plays the piano and clarinet and Mark plays the trombone.

The McDowells have an attractive farm home which was extensively remodeled and enlarged in 1967. Mrs. McDowell was the "chief architect" of the remodeling project.

The McDowells farrow 450 to 500 pigs annually and maintain an Angus herd of 30 cows. Future plans call for expansion of the Angus herd.

ARTHUR McDOWELL, 67, is secretary-treasurer and general manager of the Poweshiek Mutual Insurance Association. Recently he observed his fortieth anniversary with the firm. He also is a member of the boards of directors of Iowa Mutual Tornado Insurance Co. and Meredith Publishing Co.

Mrs. Arthur McDowell is active in work of the First Friends Church of Grinnell and the General Hospital Auxiliary. She also is assisting with preparation for World Community Day, which will be sponsored by Church Women United on Nov. 7.

THE IOWA Soil Conservation Achievement Awards Program, now in its seventeenth year, is administered by Wilson T. Moon, state conservationist for the SCS, and William H. Greiner, director of the State Soil Conservation Committee. The agencies they serve are co-sponsors of the program.

Other co-sponsors are the

Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners, the Iowa chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America, Iowa State University Extension Service, the Iowa Conservation Education Council, and the State Department of Agriculture.

Regional winners, announced earlier, will be honored at banquets during the coming weeks. Those scheduled so far by county soil conservation district commissioners are:

Iowa County: Oct. 15, at 6:30 p.m. in Presbyterian Church, Marengo.

Van Buren County: Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. in Roberts Memorial Building, Keosauqua.

Buena Vista County: Nov. 17 (details not completed).

Cass County: Nov. 18 (details not completed).

Allamakee County: Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, Waukon.

Hardin County: Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Parish Center, Eldora.



Ray and Betty McDowell with "Babe."



REGISTER PHOTOS BY HENRY BARNETT

Ray McDowell shows his parents the tanks where water run-off is measured and checked for pesticide residues.

State Soil Award to McDowells

By James R. McGuire

(Editor of Farm and Home Register)

ELDORA, IA. — The Ray McDowell family of Eldora and Mr. and Mrs. Arthur McDowell of Grinnell were named Saturday as winners of the 1969 State Conservation Farm Family Award.



This is the highest honor bestowed annually under the Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Award

Program, which is sponsored by the Des Moines Register and Tribune and the Iowa Farm and Home Register in co-operation with conservation and educational agencies.

Selection of the state award winner is based on outstanding accomplishments in soil and water conservation as well as family participation and leadership in community and church affairs.

Ray McDowell, 38, and his wife, Betty, 37, who farm 280

acres of land one mile east of Eldora, have two children, Mark, 12, and Margaret Annette, 10.

The farm, which is owned by Ray's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur McDowell, was one of four farms featured at the 1968 Conservation Field Days.

Half of the farm lies in the Lower Pine Lake Watershed and all run-off from this land is controlled by over three miles of seeded-backslope terraces, 28 water control struc-

tures and over 7,000 feet of tile.

The remainder of the farm has 400 feet of terraces and two water control structures. At present, 104 acres of cropland are protected by seeded-backslope, bench-type terraces.

A water run-off experiment is being conducted on the McDowell farm by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's agricultural research service.

In the experiment, all of the water run-off from a

nine-acre area drains into tanks at a check-point. After each run-off producing rain, the water is measured and checked for fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide residues.

The McDowells will be honored at a recognition banquet at St. Mary's Parish Center in Eldora at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 3. Hosts for this event are officials of the Hardin Soil Conservation District who have played a major role in getting conservation measures adopted on the McDowell farm and other farms in the district.

The district commissioners are Carroll Hobson, Eldora, chairman; Caleb Knutson, Radcliffe; and Kermit Whitehead, New Providence. Rep-

resenting the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in the district are Charles McCarty, district conservationist; Earl Griffith, soil conservationist, and Deane Miller, soil conservation technician.

RAY McDOWELL is a "town boy" who got the farming bug while spending summer vacations on a farm owned by his grandfather, the late R. J. Hadley of New Providence.

Ray decided to go into farming shortly before he was discharged from the army and when his parents

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