

ORGANIZATION HISTORY
OF THE DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

At the request of the Des Moines County Farm Bureau Board information regarding the organization of a Soil Conservation District was presented at their meeting on August 4, 1945. After a short discussion, W. E. Whicher of Danville pointed out that Des Moines was the only county in the three southern tiers that did not have a district. After a favorable statement by L. E. Robertson, County Extension Director Walter B. Eyre was instructed to proceed with the steps for the organization of the district. The committee appointed to handle the set-up was William Parrott of Danville, Hugh Jamison of Mediapolis, George Eversman of Burlington, George Kuntz of Oakville and Ira Lee of Burlington.

This committee met on September 10th at the Farm Bureau Office and selected 130 men from over the county. Those selected were given an invitation to attend a meeting on September 29th. Earl Elijah, Chairman of the Soil Conservation Committee was secured for speaker and a meeting was held at the Shelter House, Perkins Park on Saturday afternoon, beginning at 1:00 o'clock. Forty men representing most of the townships of the county attended. After Elijah's talk Floyd S. Yetter was called on for a statement. Yetter had just been transferred to Burlington where he was setting up a district office for the Soil Conservation Service to supervise four counties in this part of the state. The group engaged in a discussion of the need for soil saving practices. Among those who spoke were J. E. Collar, W. E. Whicher and George Colton of Danville; Claude Oberman, a member of the Board of Supervisors from Yarmouth and Homer Woodward and George Schmeiser of Burlington. The group divided by townships and petitions were passed out to be circulated among the land owners of the county. This was the only meeting held and by the end of November more than 20% of the land owners had signed the petitions representing about 25% of the land in farms in the county. The petitions were filed with the State Committee and December 27th was set for the hearing.

The hearing was held at the City Hall Auditorium. The State Soil Conservation Committee was represented by farmer members Earl Elijah of Clarence, Clark W. Huntley of Chariton and Chris H. Jensen of Audubon. Clyde Spry, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary to the Conservation Committee was also present. Maurice Soultz represented Director R. K. Bliss of the Extension Service. Richard Wilcox of Ames represented the Soil Conservation Service. Also present were Floyd S. Yetter, District Conservationist and Walter B. Eyre, County Extension Director. Highways were icy and it was snowing but in spite of the weather there were fourteen farmers and farm owners who attended the meeting. These men were well spread from over the county and every man present spoke in favor of the establishment of a soil conservation district.

Those present at the hearing are as follows: Tom Lewis and Leonard Beckman of Franklin township; Noah Schrock, John Schrock, Robert Schrock and Edw. B. Wills of Huron township; Hugh Jamison and Albert Peterson of Yellow Spring township; Homer Woodward of Union township; J. E. Collar of Danville township; Glen Romkey of Burlington; Rothel Walker of Benton township and Carl Schulz of Jackson township.

Saturday afternoon, January 26, 1946 from 1:00 to 4:00 was set as the date and time of the referendum. Polling places were set up in all the townships except Augusta which voted with Danville. Polling places and names of judges and clerks who acted at the referendum are as follows:

Benton (Piney Wood School) Rothel Walker, Rollen Upton, F. Lee Walker

Burlington (Farm Bureau Office) Herman Beck, Ira Lee and H. W. Zurmuehlen

Concordia (Concordia School) Herbert J. Wiemann, Carl Koestner,
Norman Smith

Danville & Augusta (Danville School) J. E. Collar, A. M. Wagner,
Jay Walker

Franklin (Sperry School) Tom Lewis, Pearl Thomas, Henry Schulte

Flint River (Town Hall, West Burlington) Raymond Smith, Fred Gross,
Max Beckman

Huron (Huron School) Robert Schrock, Howard Asby, L. E. Robertson

Pleasant Grove (Shelter House) Max Bohlen, Will Stucker, A. W. Oberman

Tama (Dry Branch School) Louis Thompson, Al Wickard, Carl I. Walker

Union (Brush College School) Homer Woodward, Paul Smith, Withrow Roscum

Washington (Yarmouth School) Joe Tonkinson, J. E. Horn, Kenneth Redfern

Yellow Spring (Mediapolis City Hall) Hugh Jamison, Floyd Breder, E. C.
Messmer

Jackson (North Jackson School) Joe Wirt, Elmer Poggemiller, Wm.
Distelhurst

There were 201 Des Moines County land owners who voted for the district while only 8 voted against it. Three commissioners were elected as follows: Noah Schrock of Huron, 108 votes; John L. Blaul of Pleasant Grove, 101 votes and Edwin Cling of Yellow Spring with 96 votes. Tally of votes indicating the votes for the seven commissioners is as below.

TALLY OF VOTES

Township	District		Commissioners						
	For	Against	Adolphson, Avery	Blaul, John L.	Cling, Edwin	Gieselman, Howard	Schrock, Noah	Traman, F. W.	Wills, Edw. B.
Benton	11	0	3	13	3	7	5	4	6
Burlington	21	0	4	13	8	9	16	6	4
Concordia	7	0	2	4	2	7	1	3	2
Danville & Augusta	19	1	6	13	2	14	8	9	5
Jackson	14	0	4	4	7	3	12	10	2
Franklin	16	0	16	12	7	4	4	1	2
Flint River	11	1	3	5	5	8	4	6	2
Huron	20	0	15	3	11	1	14	3	14
Pleasant Grove	17	0	10	11	11	9	5	2	3
Tama	7	3	0	2	4	6	6	6	2
Union	20	0	2	9	4	19	12	8	6
Washington	12	0	8	9	8	4	6	1	0
Yellow Spring	26	3	15	13	24	4	15	2	10
TOTAL VOTES	201	8	88	101	96	95	108	61	58

S/ Earl Elijah, referendum
and election supervisor for
proposed Des Moines County
Soil Conservation District.