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CONSERVATIONIST

Page 20

August, 1961

Number 8

STORM LAKE COMES TO LIFE - AGAIN

Malcolm K. Johnson

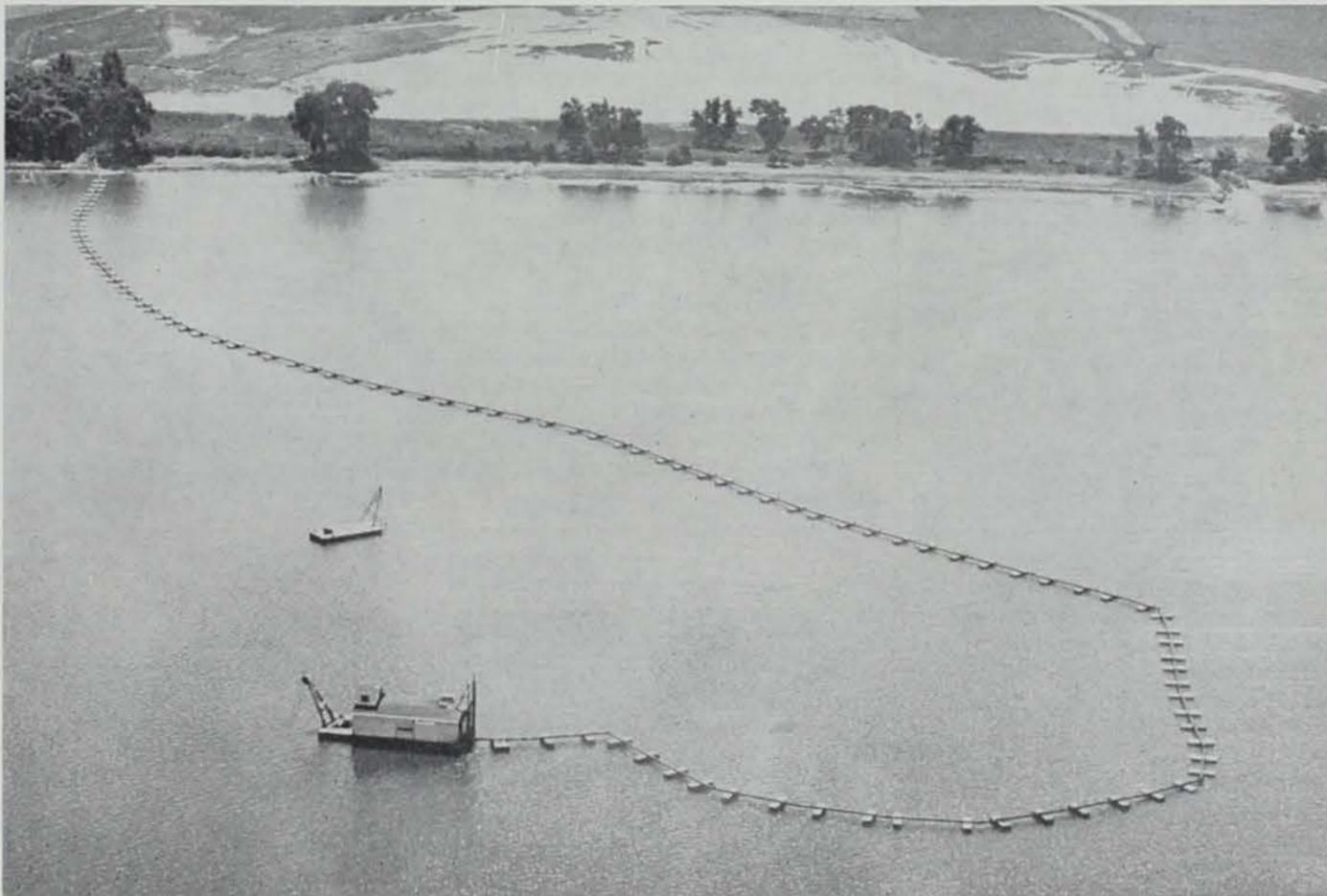
Water, and the lack of it is rapidly becoming one of the major problems facing our society. Years ago when a lake went dry for a season it didn't disturb people as much as in this day when a great part of our spare time is oriented towards water use and recreation. Saving the life of a body that's been dying for 14,000 years is no simple task. We can stave off the drought for a period, but the end result is almost certain. Only by certain measures and the expenditure of much money can the useful life of any of our natural lakes be prolonged indefinitely. Storm Lake is getting the treatment.

Operating near the south side of the lake, a huge dredge owned by the Conservation Commission is removing silt from the lake bottom at the rate of 13,000 cubic yards per week. The actual yardage of material pumped through the pipeline is much more than that but the rest is water. It carries nearly as much water as the amount of silt for efficient operation of the dredge.

In 1959 the Iowa legislature appropriated \$120,000 for work to go on with the \$50,000 raised by the community for "saving the lake." A part of the funds were expended in moving the dredge from Lizard Lake and in rebuilding the hull last fall after which a successful trial run was conducted. Pumping began in earnest in the latter part of April of this year.

A Fathom of Silt

Lowering the bottom of a 3,060-acre lake by six feet involves a tremendous amount of silt. It can be done in one year nor in five. Completion date is scheduled 3 years from now. Sound like a long time? Just a drop in the bucket when compared to the amount of time required to put the lake here in the first place. From the arid lands to the west, the winds sweeping across the prairie picked up fine particles of sand and dropped part of the load in a lake. Geologists estimate that in a hundred years the air borne deposits accumulate six inches in an area. Therefore, since the



George Tovey Photo.

Strung out across Storm Lake, the dredge line is steadily pumping the bottom of the lake to the south shore behind the dike. Aptly named, the lake severed the line several times during early summer storms. Waves five feet high often appear in the squalls.

lake was formed about 14,000 years ago there should be approximately seven feet of silt covering the bottom and this is the case. More silt in some spots is due to erosion of the now unprotected lake shore and from the watershed, but in small amounts compared to that carried by the wind.

The underlying problem however, is not one of dirt removal. Storm Lake and its small watershed are sitting on top of Iowa. As the natural lakes are in essence a small exposure of the local water table, the lake level during any given period will reflect the proximity of ground water to the surface of the land. Lowering the lake bottom will help keep a useable quantity of water available for recreation and also reduce the effect of freezing. During the dry cycles, fish kills have been common with only a couple of feet of water between top and bottom, a good freeze takes most of the

water and contained oxygen away from the fish. Conversely, during wet years with the water table high and the bottom lowered, the lake would be about 14 feet deep, six feet more than the normal depth at crest level. In short, plenty of water for fishing, boating and related activities.

Can We Afford It?

Many times the question has arisen whether the expensive and time consuming dredging is justified. In reply, who can assess the value of our fourth largest natural lake in terms of human values? What price do you place on a recreation center of proven worth? Since long before the turn of the century, the clear blue waters played host to thousands of tourists and vacationers. Steam powered excursion boats, sail boats and smaller craft plied the two mile length of lake. Fishermen and bathers found unending sport—except during the dry cycles. The

lake's history has been one of radical ups and downs, up with the water table and down with the drought; the shallow, saucer-like lake bed making any change very noticeable. Other nearby lakes of greater depth suffer the same fluctuations, but without causing so much trouble.

It seems that every generation sees Storm Lake at an extreme low. A story I heard recently bears this out. While in conversation with a man about the plans for Storm Lake, he mentioned that not many months back a resident of the area walked across the lake, as did his father as a youth and also his grandfather at a similar age. This cyclical pattern agrees with studies made of the rising and falling water table.

Without considering dollar benefits, the lake improvement will allow much more use of the lake for longer periods of time during the

(Continued on page 160)

Iowa Conservationist

Published Monthly by the
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
East 7th and Court, Des Moines, Iowa
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CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE.....54,800
Two Years \$1.00

Entered as second class matter at the post office in Des Moines, Iowa, September 22, 1947, under the Act of March 24, 1912. Subscriptions received at Iowa Conservation Commission, East Seventh Street and Court Avenue, Des Moines 8, Iowa. Send cash, check or money order.

RESPONSIBLE ACTION

The announcement by developers of a new Lake Macbride housing area that they voluntarily plan to build a sanitary sewage system and treatment plant for the proposed development is unusually good news. This action by Nordon, Inc., represents responsibility of a high order in the best interest of public welfare.

The main purpose of the sewer systems and treatment plants in residential areas adjacent to Lake Macbride and the Coralville Reservoir is to prevent pollution of the waters used by the public for swimming, boating and other types of water recreation.

The question of controlling sanitation in these newly developing areas of Johnson County has created public concern. The matter was considered recently at a conference of officials of the state board of health, the conservation commission, the county, and others. The plans of Nordon, Inc., to prevent any possible pollution were announced as efforts toward control continued.

This voluntary action by Nordon, Inc., sets a worthy precedent for others contemplating similar developments in such areas.—*Iowa City Press Citizen.*

BACK ISSUES NEEDED

Many requests come in to the central office of the Conservation Commission asking for back issues of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST. Now and then we hear from some readers who have saved their copies from the start and decided that they take up too much space so want to get rid of them. Perhaps we in the office can do both sides a favor.

If you have a complete set that you don't want or copies dating back from volume one through eight, drop us a card. If you feel a small fee would be in order, mention that too.

Any takers?

The common crow normally flies at a speed of about 30 to 40 miles an hour.

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

DAD — JUST THIS ONCE — LEAVE YOUR ROD AT HOME

Malcolm K. Johnson

The last time you took your stalwart son (or daughter) fishing, who caught the fish?

All too often the well intentioned parent takes his eager, embryonic Izaak Walton down to the river and both return home glum and downcast. Could it be that pop's proximity to water got the best of him, and son stood around for a couple of hours just watching the old master reel them in? Then, when given the tackle, he tired of the sport in a few minutes and said the awful words, "Let's go home."

The point behind these thoughts is that in this day too many youngsters are growing up without warm memories of the first fishing excursion. They can't flush with re-lived excitement from experiences unknown. Ignorant of, or soured on the world's greatest sport, they've been short-changed.

Think closely, dad. Has your boy declined a fishing invitation because it was "too much trouble" or "not much fun?" Have you wondered because *your* son, the last member of a long line of fishermen, would rather stay home and pass the day in inactivity? If your ears are growing a little red you have some fence to mend. You owe that boy of yours at least one happy day of fishing.

For the first time out go to a pond or lake in the evening. Fishing is generally more active there than on a river. Go where you know bluegills or bullheads are plentiful. They don't have to be big, just hungry. Give that child your full attention while he catches the fish. Take them home, even if small, let him help clean them and fry up those first-caught fish.

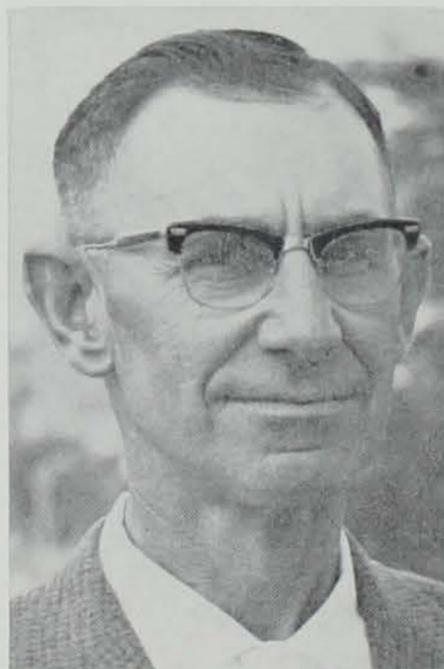
Every sequence in the chain of fishing events is important. He should know how to pull—gently, but firmly—a night crawler from his burrow, how to bait a hook and set it when his finned prey makes a run, how to use a stringer, clean the fish and best of all, he should sniff the fragrance of frying just before the awaited meal.

Whether you're an expert or an amateur dad, this is a debt you owe your son.

NEW COMMISSIONERS



George Tovey Photo.
Robert E. Beebe.



George Tovey Photo.
Ed Weinheimer.

Commencing their duties at the July commission meeting at Spirit Lake were the two recent appointees Robert E. Beebe and Ed Weinheimer. Both men will serve for six years. They replaced outgoing chairman George Jeck and former chairman Helen Crabb.

Robert Beebe originally came from Burlington, Iowa, where he was born in 1913. He received his B.A. and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of Iowa and has practiced law since 1938 except for a three year period during

World War II when he acted as a special agent for the F.B.I. Mr. Beebe is now a member of the law firm Kindig, Beebe & McCluhan in Sioux City. He has served as assistant county attorney for Woodbury County, is past president of the Iowa State Junior Bar Association, past president of the Sioux City Bar Association and a member of the Izaak Walton League.

Ed Weinheimer, a farmer from Fontanelle in Adair County, still lives on and operates the farm where he was born in 1907. Ed

OFF SEASON CASUALTIES TOO HIGH

Paul Leaverton

During the first five months of 1961 there were 41 hunter casualties reported in the state; four of these were fatal!

During January and February at the tail end of the rabbit season, there were 27 hunter casualties of which two were fatal.

For March, April and May there were 14 casualties; two of which were fatal.

Hunting activities at time of accident:

- 24 were hunting rabbits
 - 5 were hunting fox
 - 2 were shooting pigeons
 - 10 were target practicing
- Of the twelve causes of accidents:
- 8 were unloading or loading gun
 - 5 were in line of fire
 - 4 were from ricocheting bullets
 - 3 victims were out of sight of shooter
 - 3 stumbled and fell
 - 3 from triggers caught in brush or other objects
 - 2 weapons fell from insect rest
 - 2 from horse play practical fast draw
 - 2 defective weapons
 - 2 dropped a gun
 - 2 were removing loaded weapons from vehicle
 - 1 was clubbing game

The causes for fatalities were: one stumbled and fell, one caught the trigger on an object, one was in line of fire, and one unknown.

Practically all of these accidents could have been avoided by using a little more care and caution while hunting or target practicing.

The Iowa Cooperative Hunter Safety Course is available to all one without cost. See your local conservation officer for details.

So far since November, 1959 when the State Conservation Commission launched the Co-operative Hunter Safety Program, statewide, 2,140 students have graduated from the four to six hour Hunter Safety Training Course. There have been 833 volunteer certified as NRA Hunter Safety Instructors.

This program is just getting started in Iowa. We expect at least 20,000 people will have taken this Hunter Safety Course by time hunting season rolls around this fall.

Better see about it now.

graduated from high school in Greenfield and attended Iowa State University. He is a master swine producer, past president of the county, past committeeman of the ASC, served on the county hospital board, the church council, the American Lutheran Church, the voting delegate for the Farm Bureau in his county and is a leader in the 4-H club in his community.



Jim Sherman Photo.

fish grow bigger, but not many cause as much excitement on the end of a line as a size-sized largemouth bass. This time of year they really bust the water when hooked.

PPIN' THE PEEPHOLES in the editor's notebook

When it comes to late summer fishing for bigmouths on our well-limed farm ponds, the now and then angler would do well to keep a couple of things in mind. Some say that the good bass fisherman thinks (and talks) like the bigmouth he seeks. . . . I don't really think it's that bad, but understanding a few principles of the helps improve the catch by a deal.

During middle and late summer there are few good ponds and ox-lakes that aren't fringed for a few feet out to the point of near-complete cover with algae and various water weeds. There's no need to explain how this hinders bass fishing. Countless times I've heard friends and fellow anglers explode in anger about the "green garp," "green glop" and other colorful descriptions related from print. Dry flies pick up and sink, wet flies become red with it and don't look like Treble hooked plugs become tangled. Fishermen get mad.

Early in the summer when worms and small flies are so proficient at catching bass the weeds and algae haven't bloomed and are no problem. As the season progresses, so does the green cover and the angler too must change his ways. Larger bodies of water, top-run-lures, noisy and colorful are

in order. I think that half the fun of bass fishing is the sight of a big one dancing on his tail trying to throw the hook. Perhaps the underwater devices and baits will catch more fish, but the excitement of pulling in a real tail-dancer raises by blood pressure just thinking about it.

Just lay out a popper a foot or two in front of the weeds, cattails, or whatever looks like a good den. Small poppers about the size of a fingernail seem to take more bass, but the big poppers will attract correspondingly larger fish with less reaction from over-ambitious bluegills. Don't be too eager about the retrieve. Let the rings widen, then give a little twitch. As a rule the "ker-chuff" of a striking bigmouth comes soon after the popper hits the water although a wise grand daddy will think twice—that's how he grew so big. At times they will follow and rise just when the line is being lifted for another cast from close to shore.

Color doesn't make a great deal of difference. Red, yellow, green, white, and black all do the trick. The lighter colored ones do better by me and not so good for others, so any recommendations from this source would be getting out on a limb. (Those yellow and black ones don't always work anyhow.) More important than either size or color is where and how they are fished.

THE BOOM AT BAYS BRANCH

Stan Widney

From a desolate marsh area in the fall of 1959 to one of Iowa's best fishing artificial lakes in 1961.

One chilly October Saturday in '59, my son and I drove out to Springbrook State Park to see if the bass were still biting. Before we got there though, we took a most memorable detour. Instead of taking the regular route through Guthrie Center we decided to investigate a State Conservation Commission sign on a gravel road just short of Panorama. The sign said, "Bays Branch," and I remembered hearing something about a dam being built there.

So we turned north on the gravel. A couple of miles later we saw another sign that directed us to turn east and a few minutes later we topped a hill and there before us lay a new road, graveled parking area, dam, and the headquarters buildings of the unit game manager of Bays Branch, in fact it had everything but a lake.

The place was completely deserted except for 20 or 30 coots on a little patch of water below the dam. We drove across the dam to a hill where we could look north up the long valley where a little creek meandered between slopes still green and lush. That was obviously the bed of the new lake but we couldn't even imagine it. A bridge about a mile and a half up the valley intrigued us so we de-

Here and there in the green border around the pond are small open peepholes, a foot or more across. Drop your popper on a leaf at the edge and pull it in the water with a twitch and wait and so on. Work slowly and be ready to set the hook. A fly rod, cane pole, or long spinning rod has the advantage in this type of a "dapping" situation.

I believe I'm safe in saying that most fishermen are an indifferent lot. They don't let temperature, wind, air pressure or humidity bother them. What the weather was, is, or will be is of little concern; they just go fishing whenever and however they can. Not that it makes any difference (they'll go anyway), but the bigmouth have a record of hitting best during the hottest and sultriest time of the year. It only takes a couple of cool nights to make folks think there isn't a bass left in the pond, when all the time the lunkers are just lazing around watching the world (and lures) go by.

Of course the time to really take them is early morning and late evening, unless you have some time in between. On some still nights when even the bluegills are quiet and nothing other than water spiders are disturbing the pond surface bass fishing is really hot.

Got a good supply of poppers? Tomorrow might be the day.

cided to go on and see if the creek was any wider at that point.

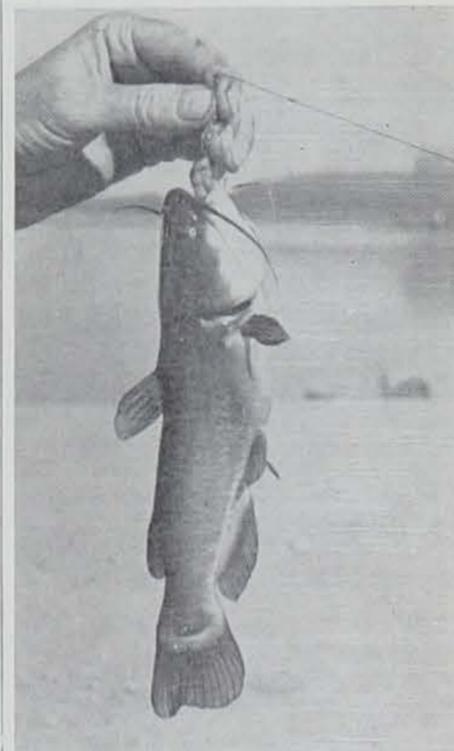
It wasn't, but we did see further progress in the lake's development. Piles of rock and brush dotted the valley and just to the west of a bridge another parking lot was laid out in fresh gravel.

We travelled the same route again in June of this year. The gravel road north from Panorama was worn and dusty from much use. We topped the hill above headquarters and stopped to take in an almost unbelievable sight. The lake itself looked like it had always been there, nestled between the hills and curving off to the north as far as the eye could reach. Cars filled the parking area and, in every spot not posted as a refuge area, fishermen lined the shore. Boats were plentiful and, when we went on to the bridge, we could hardly get through the cars. The parking area was filled there too and a few over-night campers had pitched their tents in the vicinity.

We saw well filled stringers of fish too—bass, up to a pound and a half and northern pike up to 26 inches that had grown from fingerlings in a year and a half in the rich waters of the lake. Bullheads up to two pounds, stocked at six to eight inches, were not uncommon.

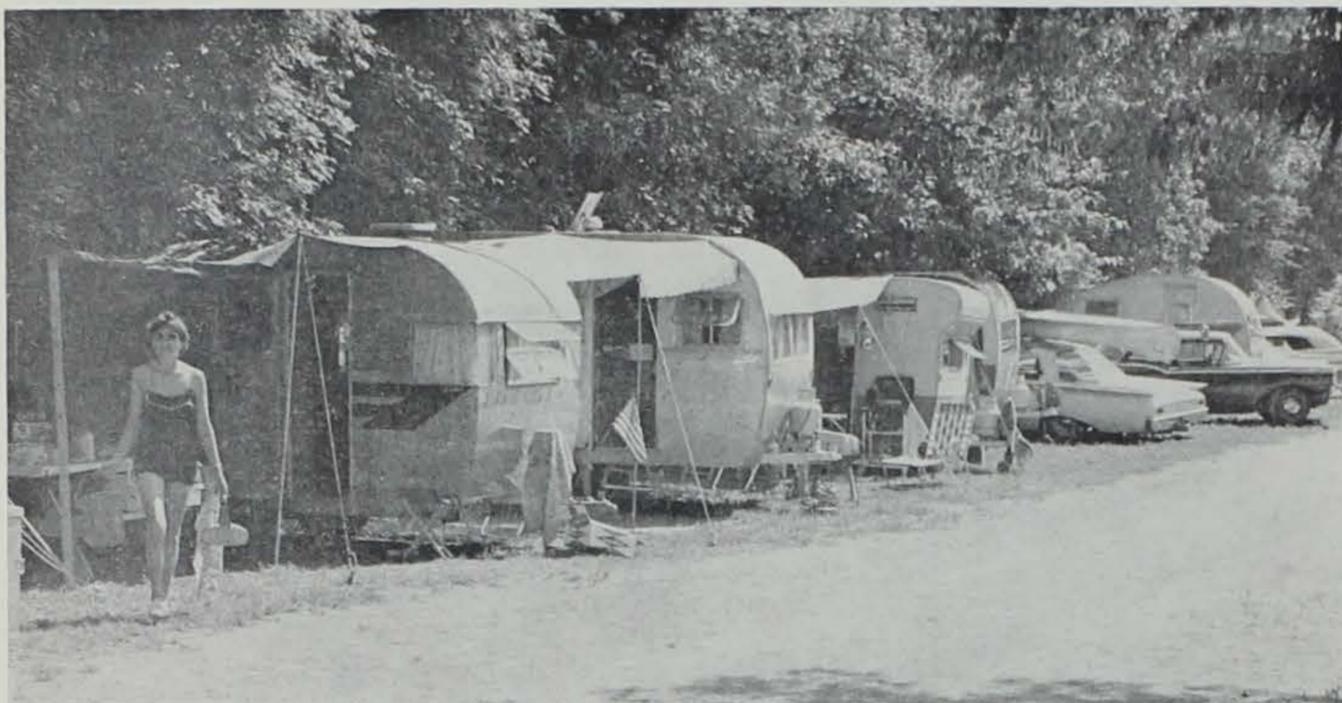
And that isn't all by any means. As early as the fall of 1960 Bays Branch was taking its place as one of the most used hunting areas in mid-Iowa. Both ducks and geese flocked to the lake, and in the fertile uplands, planted to cover and food for wildlife, pheasants, quail and rabbits were moving in.

So the Panorama region is booming, due to the foresight and know-how of conservationists. Future development will be constant to provide intensive wildlife and fish management.



Jim Sherman Photo.

Bullheads taken from Bays Branch range up into the two-pound class. Bass likewise have grown to that size and northern pike to 24 inches. They've done this in two years of extremely fast development.

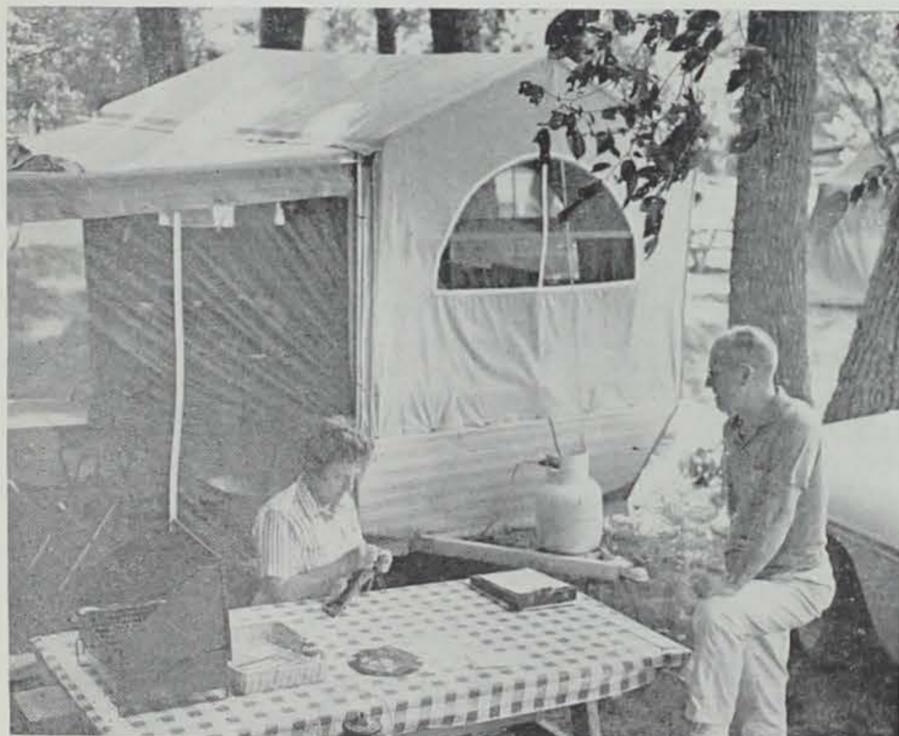


Campers on the fourth of July brought forth every type and description of outdoor sleeping, eating, and recreation equipment. With numbers of campers increasing by 30 per cent annually, parks are crowded. Gull Point at Okoboji harbored 1,400 campers.

Jim Sherman Photo.



Campfires fall by the wayside as charcoal briquets and grills become more popular. Although the romance of wieners and hot burgers cooked over smoking hickory oak is lost, charcoal manufacturers have at least made the briquets out of the famous cooking woods. A person can also buy a smoked-flavored sauce for meats.



This half tent and half trailer combination has been used in 27 states. The owners are now touring the Iowa parks and have seen 14 of our 91 state parks and preserves.



No, it's not a bird house! The car-top sleeper can be set up in about seven minutes away from curious or hungry bears, skunks or snakes. It has a 3/4-width mattress.

ROUGHING IT THE MODERN WAY

Malcolm K. Johnson

In case you hadn't noticed, nearly one out of ten of your neighbors is a camper. The number of people enjoying overnight and weekend camping has increased so much since the boom began after World War II that the parks are hard pressed to take care of them. As one man put it while having a leisurely cup of coffee in front of his trailer, "Believe I'll stay home next weekend and have a little privacy." He was, of course, exaggerating. The campgrounds are overrun on holidays, but during the rest of the season there's lots of room.

Back before the fad caught on, townspeople looked askance at travelers who wanted to stop overnight in city parks and farm pastures. Sleeping under canvas was all right for Boy Scouts, but for sensible adults—never. What then could have changed the whole outlook of our society as regards out-

door living? You could say that many of the youthful campers grew up with a love of life in the open, in the woods or by the river bank. You could say a lot of other things too. One contributing factor among young married people is the desire to take themselves and their children to the woods and natural areas before such places are swallowed up by the sheer numbers of our population. For others, sleeping out is a means to an end; the vacation dollar can be stretched into longer trips through several years of camping.

Comfort and Convenience

When national attention is focused on one subject you can be sure business and industry are going to respond. And how! From the simple wall tent and small trailer have evolved a multitude of accessories, gadgets, and sleeping accommodations. Tents have con-

vinced through pup, pop, and cabin style designs. Trailers grew too. Longer and higher, but mainly in the development of space saving features. Gas powered heating, lighting and refrigerating systems make the modern vacation trailer a truly mobile home. At this time they represent the epitome of convenience in the woods. Not all campers can afford or even desire the features available in such units and many have compromised and taken to the hybrid form of a tent on wheels. The tent trailers probably offer the best of both types of outdoor cover. Easy to pull and quick to erect, the canvas covered trailers are showing up in ever increasing numbers in the parks and on streamside pull-offs.

Besides all of the standard rigs, many innovations have appeared which start with sleeping in the back of station wagons, progress to boots over the back of the wagon and conclude with tent combined with station wagon. Other

obvious deviations include tents on top of the car, some with enclosed ladders. There is literally no end of different methods to accomplish one purpose, that sleeping comfortably outdoors.

Up-rooted from the backyard charcoal grills are often seen along with the familiar gas camp stove "LP" burners and lanterns too replacing equipment that sometimes caused headaches in locating white gas. Aluminum and plastics have been widely incorporated into camping gear. Light and non-rusting, they lend themselves well to portability and freedom from maintenance.

Still, there's a bit of nostalgia shrouding the old timer just before a fishing foray at the lake who opened his 15-year-old juniper hammock and said, "Who's roughing it? This is the easiest way I know of," then slipped behind the mosquito netting for a mid-morning nap.

photo feature by Jim Sherman



In Brook Park this do-it-yourself plywood trailer was set up in a few minutes. Spend a weekend or holiday in a park if you want to see every kind of equipment.

Called a "sleeper," beds are in one end, cooking utensils in the other. With a lower center of gravity, they pull easier than trailers that are high enough to stand in.



A recent innovation in canvas tents, the "wing" tent offers quick erection, more room, ventilation, and comfort. This once radical design is now quite popular.

Peeling spuds for supper, mom has a decided change of scenery from home. The tent-trailers cost and weigh less than their all-metal counterparts. Some have more space.



For campers, "shepherd's huts on wheels," offer features such as compactness and the ability to go anywhere. You can't stand up inside, but then you have to sacrifice something when "roughing" it.

Like a stack of flap-jacks, a camper fills his air mattresses one at a time with an auto tire pump. Sure beats lung power.

FINAL RITES FOR GEORGE TOVEY



George Tovey.

Services were held Tuesday, July 11, in Des Moines for George Tovey, 47, commission photographer since February, 1958.

The suddenness of his passing was a shock to his many friends in the Conservation Commission office and in the field where his quiet, unassuming ways and subtle wit were well known.

Many of his articles on a variety of subjects appeared in the CONSERVATIONIST as well as scores of photos bearing his signature. To his credit belongs the splendid color film, "Spring Comes To The Woodlands" acclaimed by thousands of conservation organizations and schools throughout Iowa as one of the best ever produced by the commission.

George was a Des Moines boy, graduating from North High here. He attended the University of California at Los Angeles and was a World War II veteran, serving overseas in the Army. He was unmarried and lived with his sister in Des Moines.

Excerpts from a talk given recently to a garden club by George Tovey.

Photography being a medium of communication similar in its creative aspects to the art of writing, it follows that an individual practicing in that medium will produce results which bear the stamp of his own individual style. Just as a group of writers given identical information will differ widely in their finished results, so too will a group of photographers, given identical subject material, produce photographs which reflect their background and methods.

The art of writing has been in use for thousands of years—photography is comparatively new and, relatively speaking, our attitude towards it is still in the dark ages. One rarely hears a group of writers discussing the relative

merits of pens and ink and paper, and if one of them refers to his typewriter it is a casual reference to a tool which helps him to write. Just as there is no particular type of pen suited to the writing of mystery stories, there is no wildflower camera. In this case the only extraordinary feature demanded of the camera is the ability to work close to small subjects, and there are many ordinary cameras which will do this. If we wish to make slides and project them we will use a 35 mm. camera; if we wish to publish or display these pictures a somewhat larger film might be used.

In this meeting you have a tremendous advantage over me, and the novice botanist. That is knowledge of the subject material—where and when it is to be found; how it looks; what it is called; its appearance while in a stage of development; its appearance at the height of bloom; its unusual features, and how it differs from similar plants.

Not so with photography. Discussions of cameras, film, developers, are prolonged and go into much detail. The picture, its composition, its purpose, its impact, its use, its story, seem to many photographic groups a minor consideration.

Perhaps this is as it should be—photography is still so technically involved, though we have made great strides in ridding ourselves of annoying mechanical details. However, an element of superstition creeps in. The thought, "If I had a better camera I would make better pictures." One never hears the writer say, "If I had a better pen I would write better stories."

In photography, as elsewhere, there is no backstairs into heaven.

But we are here to talk about producing images of wildflowers and use these images in any way we see fit.

When I first began making pictures of wildflowers I was struck by a fact that runs true throughout nature; the great rarity of the perfect individual. And if we have the time and the discernment and are painstaking, this is the type we will seek for our picture. We can find many flowers but we will pass by those with bent stem, those with torn leaves, or whose petals are distorted or missing, and we will find the best specimen available.

Let us suppose that now we have found our subject there is a shadow falling squarely across it. Just as life is a series of choices and comparisons, so in making a picture we have a series of choices to make. Shall we snap the picture and hurry on or shall we wait for the shadow to move? The choice has already been made for us by our very nature—the nervous and impatient person will snap and move on. The calm, unhurried person will wait for the shadow to move.

COMMISSION MINUTES Meeting Held at Spirit Lake July 5-6, 1961

General

Clyde M. Frudden of Greene was elected chairman and Dr. A. N. Humiston of Cedar Rapids vice-chairman of the Conservation Commission for the next year.

The position of assistant director is to be discontinued upon the establishment of a new department of planning which will be headed by Lester F. Faber.

Travel was authorized for two foresters to attend the State Nurserymen's Meeting at Howell, Michigan August 22-24, and for two biologists to attend the Mississippi Flyway Council at St. Louis, Missouri, August 2-4, and for two men from the engineering staff to confer with the Fish and Wildlife Service July 9 in Minneapolis.

Reports were made by the various sections of the commission to acquaint new commissioners Beebe and Weinheimer with the activities and functions of the department.

Fish and Game

The commission approved two land options for 176 acres of land in the Otter Creek Area in Tama County for \$12,039.80.

A land trade with the Fish and Wildlife Service in DeSoto Bend Area was considered.

The commission accepted a gift

If a person is in a hurry he can move from this one to that one snapping as his fancy dictates. At the end of the afternoon he may have quite a collection of pictures—some of which may be truly outstanding.

If time permits—and it too seldom does in these days of speed—it is possible to take great pains in the making of a single picture. Flowers are often bobbing in the wind. A wind screen may be set up—a sheet of transparent material that will shut off the wind yet not interfere with the light. Or we may be after a more spectacular result and rearrange the light more to suit ourselves. We may make our picture against the light, using the sunlight to backlight the subject and using a flashbulb or reflector to provide the front light.

Now—how to take better pictures. There's only one way to take better pictures, and that is, you must want to. A teacher can present information, but it seems to me our great teachers make us want the information, and then we go out and get it for ourselves.

And, there's the expression, "how did it turn out?" How did your pictures turn out? The pictures turned out exactly the way you turned them out. There's no element of the unknown there. It's just a matter of turning them out the way you want them to turn out. It takes more time, but you have to turn them out—they won't just turn out by themselves.

of eight dollars from a Minnesota trout fisherman for the trout stocking fund.

The commission approved purchase of 12,000 yards of sand and the repair of a washout on the river north of Vinton.

Parks

The commission took an option to purchase the 25 acre Cheever Prairie area for \$5,000 pending approval of the executive council.

The commission heard an explanation of the legislative appropriation made by the 59th General Assembly.

The commission approved purchase of a 40 acre tract adjacent to the west side of Maquoketa Caves State Park for \$5,500.

Permits for the construction of two docks on a fish and game area on the north side of Clear Lake were refused.

Construction of a retaining wall and sand fill on one lot on Emerson Bay at West Okoboji Lake was approved.

County Conservation Activities

The following land acquisition and development items were approved. Delaware County, 10 acres in addition to Kenna Access for \$20,000 to be used as school forest, picnicking and fishing access. Jackson County, a gift of 11.2 acres on south edge of Maquoketa for shop office, and picnic area. Jackson County, gift of 8.15 acres at Johnsonville Access on the Maquoketa River to be used for boat launching, fishing and picnicking. Polk County, gift of 37.25 acre Mall Area adjacent to Berwick and Four Mile Creek. Poweshiek County, a delegation met with the commission explaining the lease of four acres for a baseball field which was approved.

Bremer County, development of picnic, parking and camping facilities in Brandt Park. Chickasaw County, development of a small pond and park facilities at Sauk Park. Franklin County, development of game cover on the Hawkins Game Area. Poweshiek County, development of elaborate light bleachers with dressing room, toilets, concession, and dugout for the little league baseball field at a cost of \$40,000. Calhoun County, development of picnic camping and fishing facilities at Featherstone Park on North Twin Lake.

BIG FISH GOES BACK IN LAKE

A 22-pound catfish was taken from Lake Darling recently and put back.

It was taken from the lake by members of the Fishery Crew from Lake Wapello as they conducted fish population survey.

The huge flathead measured 24 inches in length and weighed 22 pounds. After weighing and measuring "Mr. Big", the conservation officers put the fish back in the lake.—Fairfield Ledger.



Jim Sherman Photo.

How much forest land do we have? Ask the hunter and he'll say not enough. Not only hunters, but everyone should be concerned with our forests, corner woodlots, and stream bank timber. Besides adding to the present acreage, we need better management.

HOW MUCH FOREST DOES IOWA REALLY HAVE?

Professor George B. Hartman

Most Iowans including many members of the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST, forestry is thought to be more abundant in other states such as Oregon, Idaho or Alabama. But, sure, Iowa has a lot of forest. Yet the facts do not support this opinion.

According to the latest survey of the forestry situation in the nation and in Iowa, the *Timber Review* lists Iowa as having about 2,620,000 acres of forest. Besides this area the state has another 664,000 acres of timber along the streams and water courses which are in strips too narrow to be classified as forest. We have another 600,000 acres in windbreaks and field shelterbelts. Then, there are an estimated 750,000 acres which are either pasture or forest, a part of which should be in forest.

The 2,620,000 acres now classed as forest accounts for 7.3 per cent of Iowa's land area. Most people would admit that any use of land for agriculture accounts for over seven per cent of the state's total area must be important to our economy and a concern to us all.

Each of Iowa's timberland belongs to farm owners. About one-third of Iowa's 193 thousand farms contain a farm forest. These average 45 acres in size. In addition to farm woods there are many woods owned by city dwellers who own tracts of forest land which they use for various purposes.

Thus, a forest owner of a few acres has a forest owner of small acreages. This pattern of interest to sportsmen is where the forest areas are small there is much border land which harbors game birds and animals. From the standpoint of the conservationist, our small forest areas afford

an ideal situation.

At present Iowa's forests are in a rather sad state of dilapidation and are not producing nearly as much wood as they should. This condition has been building up over a long period of years. By continued cutting of the best trees and leaving the poorer ones to repopulate the area, a forest made up of unwanted species and poor individuals gradually develops. However, even this can be corrected with just a little care on the part of the owner. The district foresters of the State Conservation Commission or the extension forester at Iowa State University are all available to consult with forest owners who want to get their lands to produce the maximum amount of wood which the land will support.

The survey mentioned before, found that we are running short of the demand in almost all classes of forest products. The only source of raw materials for these products is our present forest lands. If the United States is to have adequate supplies of wood for the future the forests of Iowa and all other states must produce wood to capacity. This should be of concern to us all.

POLE-LESS FISHERWOMAN

Mrs. Dorothy Follette of Fort Dodge wants to know if anybody has found her cane fishing pole anywhere in Black Hawk Lake?

Mrs. Follette was fishing with a party of eight recently at Black Hawk for crappies. She laid her "expensive" cane pole down because the action was in a slump. While she sat there watching it, the pole slowly started to move off the stone pier at the city park and, gaining momentum, it shot into the lake.—*Fort Dodge Messenger*.

OPEN SEASON ON HUNTER-FARMER RELATIONS

There is no "closed season" on maintaining friendly relations with landowners and farmers even though the hunting seasons are still in the future.

Many farmers find it a little strange that the "friendship" offered so freely by hunters during the open seasons in the fall and winter suddenly disappears with the last day of the rabbit season. The hunter literally "vanishes" for twelve months.

Such "fair weather" friendships are easily identified and the farmer often as not becomes a little disgusted with the selfishness of hunters who want everything from the farmer and never think of giving something in return. A farm cannot be operated like a pay-as-you-go shooting preserve.

The spring and summer months are the period of the year when the farmer can really use some help around the old homestead. There's painting to be done, fences to be repaired, and numerous other chores or improvements which require a little sweat and muscle work.

Spend a few minutes or hours talking with or helping the farmer. He might reciprocate by leaving that choice weed patch stand for winter cover or set aside an acre or two for a wildlife area. All the farmer asks is that the hunter realize the importance of his agricultural operations. They come first. If the hunter wants more game improvements, he'll have to help create them.—*Davenport Times*.

THE BASS FISHERMAN

BASS FISHERMEN frequently wear galluses and sometimes forget to shave. They are the despair of rich relatives, but are real nice neighbors. They believe that the pot-bellied bigmouth bass and the slender smallmouth are two of the finest fish that swim.

The trout boys have special waters stocked for them, with rainbows and browns, but the bass boys go their way alone. They take their bass where they find them—in streams, strip pits, lakes, farm ponds, from under water lilies, out of brush piles, even from weeds along drainage ditches.

Bass fishermen complain so little, and are so appreciative when anything special comes their way, that it's a joy to watch them beam. Like the common people, the Good Lord must have loved bass fishermen because He made so many of them.

NOW DON'T get the impression that bass fishermen are perfect. They can be real exasperating at times. Such as when they splurge a bit and go to Canada or Florida for a fling at other waters. Their guide will put them on fabulous



Joseph J. Stanton.

JOSEPH J. STANTON 1900-1961

Joe Stanton was known nationally for his efforts in behalf of the cause of conservation. An earnest campaigner against water pollution, his aim was not merely to protect fish. "When pollution becomes serious enough to kill fish, it has reached an extreme stage that is beyond standards of health", he once said. He also stressed the danger of sprays to wildlife in all his talks and writings, and was a strong supporter of soil conservation practices on farms to increase fish and game populations in Iowa. A quiet, friendly, but very earnest man, Joe Stanton left a host of friends all over the middlewest.

Born in April of 1900 at Collins, Iowa, he served for a short time in World War I, was active in scouting and received a B.S. degree in dairy husbandry at Iowa State College at Ames, in 1926. He worked for a while at the Meredith Publishing Company, then went into insurance operating his own agency from an office in his home. He was a past-president of the Des Moines chapter of the Izaak Walton League.

Appointed by Governor William S. Beardsley in 1951, he served on the Conservation Commission until 1957.

fishing for three days running but the fourth day the bass fisherman's eyes will get that far-off look and he will casually inquire if there are any bass around close. We have seen both Canadian and Florida guides tear their hair at the question.

The bass fisherman is humble throughout all this. He smiles weakly when he asks the question. He won't argue that northerns, walleyes, lakereels, snook, tarpon, barracuda and bone fish are not great fish. In fact, he won't argue at all. He will just ask, half apologetically, "Any bass around here?" —*Ray Heady, Kansas City Star*.

THE BANTAM DRUMMER

Eugene D. Klonglan
Game Biologist

Ask the average Iowa hunter to name the upland game birds of his state, and he will probably come up with two or maybe three—pheasant, quail and partridge. Yet, another, the ruffed grouse, is regarded as the king of upland game birds in many parts of northern United States and is a native Iowa resident. Once found over most of the state he is now restricted to the northeast corner.

Perhaps neglected in the past, the ruffed grouse in recent months has been receiving concentrated attention from Iowa's game biologists. The Conservation Commission personnel have begun a study to determine the size and distribution of the grouse population.

To many he is known as "timber pheasant" or "wood partridge"—or sometimes just plain "pheasant" or "partridge." Such names are confusing, since the ruffed grouse is neither pheasant nor partridge. It is the only member of its genus on the North American continent. The scientific name, *Bonasa umbellus*, is derived from the Latin words for "bison," referring to the similarity between the bellowing of the buffalo and the drumming of the grouse, and "umbrella," referring to the appearance of the erect ruff feathers on the neck—from which the bird gets its name.

This bantam-sized bird of the timber lives in areas in Iowa that presently do not support noticeable numbers of other upland game birds. Rare is the pheasant or quail hunter who has sighted a ruffed grouse. However, hunters who pursue their deer in northeast Iowa may be lucky enough to experience the thundering explosion of a grouse from underfoot. People out to sneak a glimpse of the wild turkeys recently released in the Yellow River State Forest may also see or hear ruffed grouse, since this area contains good grouse habitat.

A report of a single hunter killing 20 grouse in one day in Linn County in 1903 shows their former abundance in Iowa forests. Yet, by the early 1900's clearing of timber and heavy pasturing of woodlands had already begun to shrink the grouse's range. They were still reported near Keosauqua in southeast Iowa until late 1920's. A 1915 report placed them around Davenport along the Mississippi River, and no doubt remnant populations persisted up and down the wooded river bluffs for several years thereafter.

To date, there are no good year-to-year records of the size and changes of Iowa ruffed grouse populations although some counts were made in 1956 and 1960. A census method adaptable to the amount and type of area to be covered with the limited time and per-



Ruffed Grouse make themselves known during the spring courting season by standing on logs and drumming. They sound like a tractor.

sonnel available for such work was needed. A technique developed in Minnesota in the late 1940's, and since used in several states, has now been put to use to measure the relative abundance of Iowa ruffed grouse. This is the spring roadside drumming count—a method similar in idea to the pheasant crowing count used to measure the spring pheasant population.

Tractor Sound

In April and May, a male ruffed grouse chooses a vantage point, often a log, as a drumming site. Here he stands, ruffles his neck feathers, and beats his wings—first slowly, then in rapidly increasing tempo too fast for the eye to follow—almost like a human drummer starting in slow rhythm and ending in a fiery crescendo. "Put-putt-puttt-shirrrrr"—some say it sounds like an old John Deere tractor starting.

Several routes 10 to 15 miles long were laid out along roads through typical grouse habitat in 1961 with listening points about a mile apart. Half an hour before sunrise the "census-taker" began listening for four minutes at each stop. He recorded the number of drums heard.

Fifteen routes in six counties were run by biologists, conservation officers, and the district game manager. A total of 179 grouse were heard on 201 stops, an average of nearly one per stop. The highest single count occurred in northeast Winneshiek County, where 36 grouse were heard on a 14-stop route—an average of nearly three per stop. However, Allamakee County had the most grouse, since here they occur throughout the entire county. Their distribution is more spotted in the other counties, since less timber is

present.

Eight Allamakee routes averaged 1.3 drums per stop, compared to 1.1 on three Winneshiek routes, and 0.3 on two Clayton routes. No grouse were heard in Fayette, Dubuque or Delaware Counties. In the last four counties mentioned, the best grouse habitat often could not easily be reached by road, particularly along the river bluffs, and grouse are known to be present even though not heard. Unverified reports of grouse being seen in some bordering counties have also been received.

An average of more than one drum per stop in some areas indicated that parts of northeast Iowa have a grouse population comparable to that found in nearby sections of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

But grouse, like other birds, suffer considerable annual mortality, and many birds lost through natural causes might better be utilized for sport at some future date. A good example of this principle is the Hungarian partridge in northwest Iowa, where hunting is enjoyed on a limited population without jeopardizing the population.

More information on Iowa grouse is needed. So next spring Mr. Grouse on his log can again expect to have an audience of census-takers listening to his early morning performance—though he will no doubt be more interested in obtaining an audience of the more tender sex!

GREGARIOUS HEN

Less nervous than most, a hen pheasant has become a "city dweller" at Sumner. Sitting on her nest full of eggs she paid no mind to the rush of traffic on a highway just a few feet away.

STORM LAKE—

(Continued from page 153)

cycle, perhaps even when the water table is at its lowest. This, in turn, reduces the pressure on other nearby areas, which anyone who enjoys open space can appreciate. Space, along with water are commodities which we in this region are fortunate in having compared to the states on either coast. Looking to the future, we must take measures now to provide these recreation essentials while we are still able. This is one of the reasons for dredging Storm Lake.

An Island—Maybe

If not too difficult or expensive the construction of an island is planned. Besides helping the lake area to watershed area ratio, an obstruction in the middle of the lake would reduce the effect of storms. When the wind is in the northwest big waves are produced that render unsafe any boating activity. During April and May rough weather caused five foot waves that broke the pumping line several times and also ripped one of the large overhead doors of the dredge.

Storm Lake befits all of the glowing terms applied to beautiful bodies of water, but is most appropriately named, especially when a nor'wester brews up on the western plains. Diminishing the size of the lake with an island would assuredly cause hard feeling among the few concerned with bragging about acreage even though the waters were calmer. Whether feasible or not, the plan has merit.

In any case, the three man crew continues the long job, day after day. Those who called Storm Lake "the lake that died" will have to wait a good many years to attend the funeral.