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FRONT COVER: *Hickory Grove Park, located in Story County, is one of many fine recreational areas operated by the county conservation board system. Photo by Ron Johnson.*

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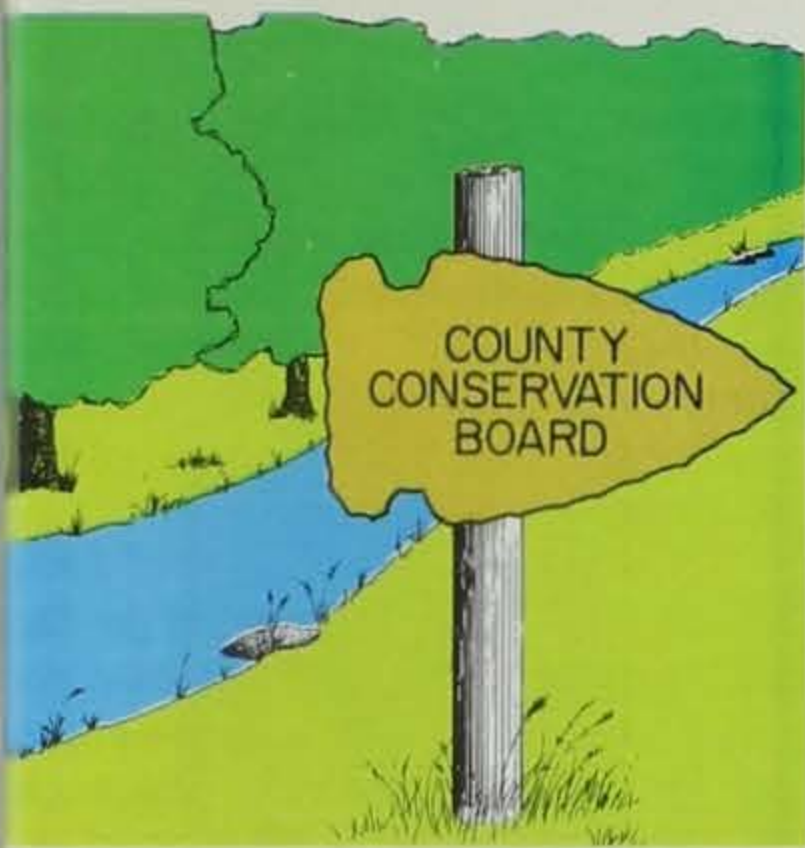
The Most Successful County Conservation Program in the United States

By Robert D. Walker

The state of Iowa is blessed with many natural wonders that we sometimes overlook. The most obvious is our black soil which allows us to be one of the primary row crop states in the country. We also have two primary tributaries which form our eastern and western boundaries that have been the object of many novels and classics which are known by people all over the world — the Mississippi and the Mis-

souri Rivers. Approximately four percent of Iowa's surface is covered by timberland with the heaviest concentrations in the eastern counties of the state and approximately 3,000 acres of native prairie which has never been touched by the plow. Because of our emphasis on crop and livestock production and the large amount of valuable crop land, we must work especially hard to preserve our natural wonders and provide outdoor areas for Iowans to enjoy in their leisure time.





Some people are surprised when they learn that Iowa is also a leader in the conservation movement in the United States. In 1934, a 25-year plan for conservation was prepared by renowned conservationists such as Ding Darling and Aldo Leopold. This plan formed the basis for some very unique programs that originated in Iowa. One of the suggestions of this plan was to find a way to provide additional conservation and outdoor recreation programs at the local level. From this has developed

Iowa's County Conservation Board Program which today is the most successful of its kind in the United States.

The success of Iowa's county program results from an extremely well prepared law that was passed by the Iowa Legislature in 1955. This law allows county residents to vote for the creation of a county conservation board which can acquire, develop, and maintain county museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, wildlife and other natural areas. They can also provide programs and community service projects for local residents. Obviously, the scope of the county conservation board program is extremely broad and allows your county to produce a program that satisfies your local needs.

Decisions for local direction and policies are made by a five member conservation board that is appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Requirements to participate on a board is that you must be a voting resident of your county and have an interest in conservation. Today, 98 of Iowa's 99 counties have county conservation board programs — Allamakee County unfortunately is the only county that does not have the benefit of a locally controlled conservation board. Approximately 20 other states in the United States have county conservation programs. Other than Iowa, Indiana's program is the most successful with approximately 50 percent of their counties having the benefit of county boards. Iowa's county program has also served as a leader to other states. Both the Tennessee and Indiana laws which establish conservation boards were copied from Iowa's law.

You should have a strong interest in the activities of your county conservation board because it is primarily your county taxes that help finance conservation activities. Last year, the total budget of all county conservation boards in Iowa was \$17,275,000. Seventy-one percent or \$12,296,000 came from county tax money. There are many other sources of funds that are available to county boards including the federal government, the State Conservation Commission, and certain special assessments from the County Board of Supervisors. Most counties also charge user fees for activities such as camping, swimming, and shelter rental. The tax monies and fees that finance your coun-

*Canoeing through
Iowa River*

ty conservation program are one of the few expenditures in government through which you can receive an obviously enjoyable, leisure activity available to all residents of the county.

Iowa may rate number 49 of 50 states in the total amount of publicly owned land, but we are one of the leading states in the distribution of small, easily accessible local parks and conservation areas. County conservation boards provide 1,100 separate areas encompassing 81,000 acres of land. Approximately one-fourth of these areas are parks that service local communities and the rural population. These parks range in size from one-half acre to 1,535 acres with the majority ranging from 5 to 50 acres. These small parks fill a void in many areas where there are no larger state parks. Another one-fourth of these county facilities are wildlife areas that provide an outlet for hunters, wildlife photographers, and nature lovers and preserve wildlife habitat which is so important in Iowa's heavily oriented agricultural economy.

One of the most recreationally under-used resources in our state is our inland streams. They provide opportunities for fishing, swimming, hunting, nature study, canoeing, powerboating, and many other leisure activities. Access to our streams can be a limiting factor, but county conservation boards provide 200 river access sites in the state, many of which have gravel or concrete boat ramps for water access and a great deal of shoreline for fishing and picnicking. The Hardin County Conservation Board has received national and international recognition for their Iowa River Green Belt, a conglomerate of 900 acres of public-owned land generally lying in a linear fashion adjacent to both sides of the river from Iowa Falls to Eldora. This Green Belt has served as an example to other states and other county conservation boards in Iowa since they do preserve natural features adjacent to streams and provide public access.

Counties are also providing programs to enhance your ability to enjoy today's outdoor resources and hopefully to preserve some of these benefits for the future. Most are now working with private landowners to provide small parcels of wildlife habitat. Counties are providing tree and shrub seedlings at little or no cost to private landowners with the stipulation that these seedlings will be left to grow to provide badly

needed habitat for the future. These acres for wildlife provide habitat for nongame as well as game species and carry a side benefit that many people overlook — soil erosion control. Last year counties planted over 500,000 seedlings as a part of this program.

One hundred years ago, Iowa was primarily covered by tall grass prairie in the east and short grass prairie in the west. Our exceptional black soil is a result of our prairie heritage. Only a small fraction of native prairie still remains in Iowa and many counties have acquired these small parcels to preserve them for Iowa's future. The values of prairie preservation do not only include historical values, but also wildlife and soil erosion control. Several counties have also planted prairie grass on portions of county-owned land, and many county engineers are using prairie grass species in road ditches.

One of the most effective methods of protecting our resources for the future is through education of our youth. Forty-three county conservation boards provide intensive environmental education programs. County naturalists are pro-

viding programs for the classroom in local schools as well as a variety of experiences for the general public in local natural resource areas. If you are a member of a local service group or a club, you may want to contact your county conservation board for a program on local conservation areas or natural resource education.

Another aspect of the county conservation program in Iowa that has helped to make it so successful is the high level of cooperation between governmental units. In many cases, adjoining counties are working together to provide educational programs and acquisition and maintenance of facilities. Many county conservation boards assist local communities by providing information about available grant programs or by providing technical advice for area development. In no other state is the level of cooperation between county conservation boards and state conservation authorities greater than in Iowa. State Conservation Commission biologists are constantly working with county conservation boards to provide technical assistance on conservation areas. In

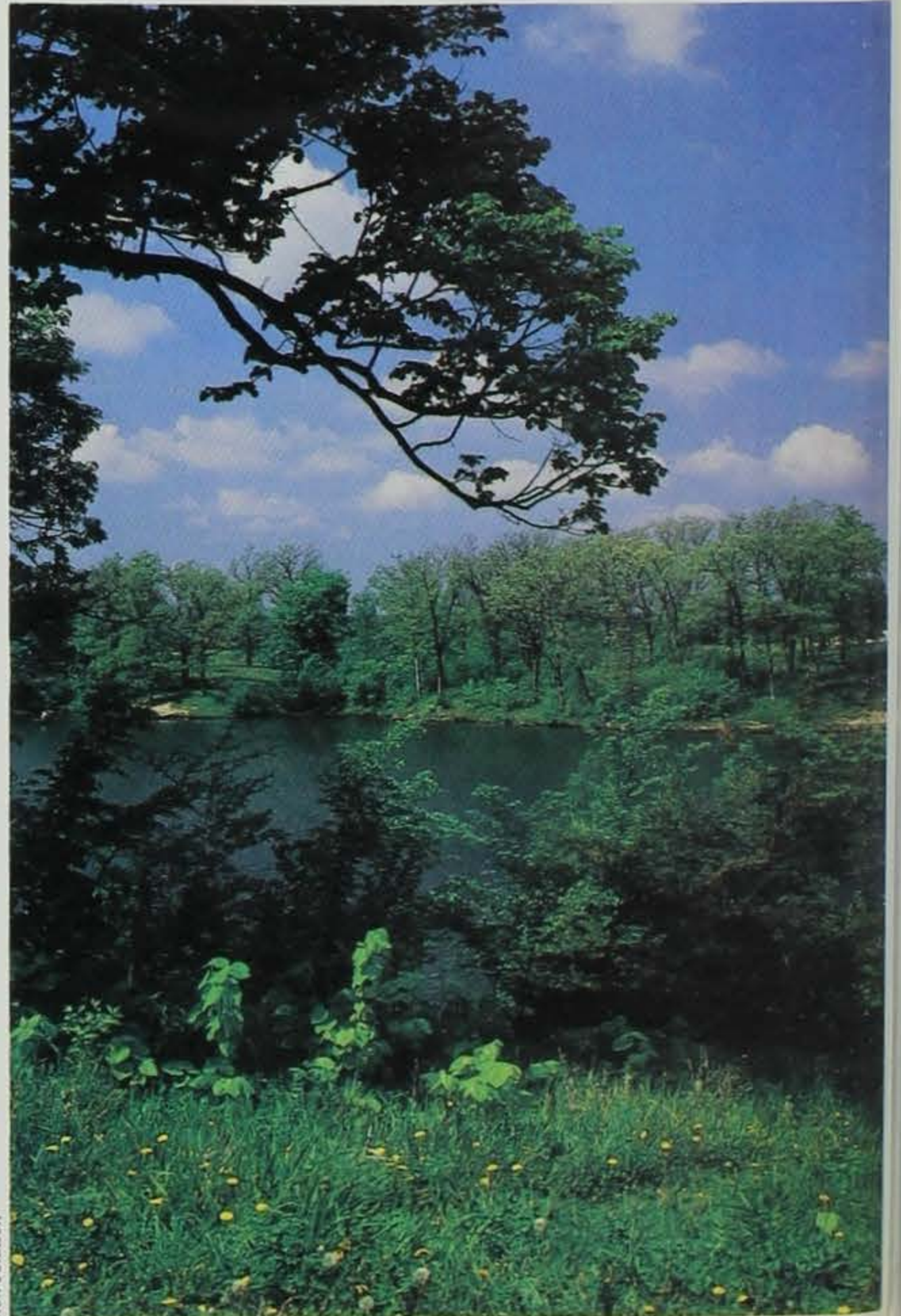
addition, the Commission provides three staff people in the Office of County Conservation Activities to provide coordination and technical advice on all aspects of the county board program. This cooperation results in quality programs for the people of Iowa and efficient use of tax dollars.

The real key to the success of Iowa's county conservation program is local people making sound conservation decisions based on local needs. We encourage you to become a part of this process by attending a monthly meeting of your local county conservation board or by letting your County Board of Supervisors know that you would be interested in becoming a future member of your conservation board. For more information, contact your local conservation board or the Iowa State Conservation Commission.

Robert Walker is administrator for the county conservation program. He holds a B.S. degree in fisheries and wildlife biology from Iowa State University and an M.S. degree in fish science from the University of Idaho.



Wayne Lonning



Ron Johnson

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Greenbelts



With more and more natural areas lost to development, greenbelts are becoming significant multi-use recreation areas, as well as havens for wildlife.

Compiled By Emil Natalle

The importance of natural greenbelts found along rivers and streams for recreation and environmental protection is steadily being realized. In the past, cities, counties and the state typically acquired relatively square tracts of land to provide conventional park settings. These parks varied in size and were not interconnected with other parks. Not until recently have metro areas tried to interconnect existing parks with linear tracts of lands, or greenbelts, primarily for recreation purposes. In Iowa, with the creation of the conservation boards, the importance of greenbelts has truly emerged.

Black Hawk County

The Cedar River Greenbelt system north of Cedar Falls is comprised of 5 major parks. These are Black Hawk Park (1,086 acres), Washington Union Access (48 acres), Railroad Lake (45 acres) and Beaver Creek (270 acres). This forms a 1,449 acre greenbelt along 6 miles of the Cedar River. Falls Access, a state wildlife area of 269 acres is also contiguous to the Cedar River and county areas which brings the total greenbelt acres to 1,718. This greenbelt system receives the highest use of all the county operated greenbelts. Diverse developed recreational areas and diverse recreational opportunities such as

vast hunting areas attract county wide usage.

The West Fork/Shell Rock River Greenbelt is composed of two parks. The parks are in the northwestern corner of the county near Finchford. Thunder Woman Park has 96 acres and West Fork Access has 221 acres. Thunder Woman Park is primarily used for camping and hiking while West Fork Access is used for hunting and fishing.

The Wapsie Greenbelt is located in the northeastern corner of the county along the Wapsipinicon River. Seven parks are found in the greenbelt. These areas are Siggelkov Park (54 acres), Childs Access (95 acres), Bruggeman Park (359 acres), Ridgon Access (173

acres), River Birch Bottoms (80 acres), Wapsie Bluff (20 acres), and Wapsie Bend (40 acres). The greenbelt has a total of 836 acres including unnamed parcels of land. The greenbelt offers camping at Siggelkov Park and the remaining accesses provide public fishing and hunting areas.

Black Hawk Creek Greenbelt is located to the north of Hudson and extends within 1/2 mile of the Waterloo City limits where the Waterloo Greenbelt is primarily a timbered hunting access. The Waterloo Greenbelt consists of 1,000 acres in which numerous trails for recreation are located and hunting is banned.

Historically, settlers in Black Hawk County first settled along the naturally wooded river valleys. These valleys contained the only wooded areas in a predominately prairie region. Indians were also well acquainted with the value of the timbered valleys and in and on the periphery of many of the greenbelts artifacts and other relics of their presence can be found. Pioneer relics can also be found in the greenbelts such as mill raceways, lime kilns and numerous building foundations.

The woodlands of quality in Black Hawk County, which have been on the decline in acreage since the time of settlement, have seen an increase in acres since the 1950s. Changing agricultural practices which placed less pasturing pressures on the woodlands and the acquisition of the remaining woodlands to form public greenbelts helped to change this trend.

Grundy County

The Grundy County Greenbelt refers to land acquired and potential land lying along a 9-mile stretch of Black Hawk Creek in the vicinity of Reinbeck (from Morrison to the Black Hawk County line). The greenbelt preserves soil, water, timber, and wildlife habitat.

Four tracts of land are owned by the County Conservation Board. In addition, the City of Reinbeck owns a 22-acre park (Strohbehn Memorial Park) which adds to the public-owned land in the greenbelt area. Black Hawk Creek Wildlife Area is 53 acres. The East Section area is 67 acres. The West Section area is 27 acres, and the Copley-Strohbehn Preserve is 18 acres.

An environmental education area with interpretive nature trails and two bridges are on the Black Hawk Creek Wildlife Area.

Other features found within the system include a horse show ring and riding arena, shooting ranges, the remains of an old stagecoach road and the remains of an old dam constructed in 1800's for water for the railroad and also used for a place to cut ice.

Hunting for pheasants and cottontail rabbits is allowed on most of county owned land in greenbelt. Trails are used for hiking, horses, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. Other nature related activities include bird watching and photography. Most of area is managed for wildlife habitat, including reforestation, winter wildlife cover, winter food plots, and prairie restoration.

Hardin County

The Iowa River Greenbelt consists of 16 segments, totaling 886 acres, from Iowa Falls to Eldora. The scenic river is a favorite of canoeists and features quick riffles and limestone outcroppings. The area has two campgrounds and two outdoor classrooms. Other activities include hiking along wooded trails, bird watching and picnicking.

Cerro Gordo County

The Shellrock River Greenbelt is a very beautiful area surrounded by agricultural land. It contains beautiful limestone cliffs, small patches of native prairie, 7 1/2 miles of roadway, a 1/2 mile oxbow pond, 2 smaller ponds and rich woodlands.

The Shellrock River running through this area could be called Iowa's Apple River because it is extremely popular as a canoeing and tubing river. At times users stretch from one end of the Greenbelt to the other.

The area is also a very popular horseback riding and snowmobile area.

Other popular uses are hunting, primitive camping, picnicing, hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, photography and just plain driving through the area to see the sights.

The greenbelt contains oak forests, native and reconstructed prairie, grassy uplands and lowlands, red cedar thickets, ponds with pond lilies, a variety of wildflowers, and fern inhabited cliffs.

Wildlife includes species typical to north central Iowa including white-tail deer, gray and red fox, red, gray and fox squirrel, beaver, muskrat, raccoon, various turtles, weasel, pheasant and hawks.

Polk County

The Four-Mile Creek Greenbelt is a 61-acre streambank woodland located one-half mile south of Berwick. Hiking access is available from N.E. 54th Avenue for fishing, mushroom hunting and bird watching.

Woodbury County

The Little Sioux River Greenbelt is located on the east side of the Little Sioux River one-half mile southwest of Correctionville and one-eighth mile north of the 375-acre Little Sioux Park, located on the west side of the river. The greenbelt is subject to periodic flooding, but provides a typical bottomland timber habitat for deer and other upland species. The area contains varying aged species such as soft maple, green ash, walnut and cottonwood. Some of the trees are estimated to be 75 to 100 years old and are nearly three feet in diameter.

Access to this area is restricted to boats from the Little Sioux River or permission from the adjoining landowners. The board manages this area for wildlife.

Emil Natalle is the executive officer for Dallas County. He has held this position since 1981. He is also a former Dallas County Conservation Board Member.

County Conservation Greenbelt



By James Troendle

Cedar Valley A Typical Greenbelt Park

The Cedar Valley Greenbelt (Cedar Valley Park) is a 228-acre public recreation area located 6½ miles southwest of Tipton in Cedar County. The land was obtained in 1969 from the Iowa Land and Building Company, a subsidiary of Iowa Electric Light and Power Company, as an outright gift for the purpose of providing a park for public recreation. It is typical of the type of area managed under the greenbelt concept.

Cedar Valley Park is bordered on the northeast side by the Cedar River and on all remaining sides by agricultural and use activities. The park is a scenic and picturesque area covered to a large extent with an excellent stand of hardwood timber.

Cedar Valley Park is also rich in history. In the 1800's, the Cedar River was used as a navigation alley for many traders and fishermen. These people used one of the bluffs at Cedar Valley as a landmark while navigating the river. The bluff was called "Buzzards Roost" by these early traders because of the many turkey vultures that were commonly seen resting in the trees on top of this bluff, a steep cliff rising 60 feet above the Cedar River.

Folklore has since changed the name of this bluff to "Kissing Rock" because of the interesting legend. In the early 1800's, a wagon train from Ohio on its westward journey was caught by winter

storms at the area which is now Cedar Valley Park, forcing the pioneers to spend the winter there. The Cedar Valley area was inhabited at that time by a group of farming Indians, believed to be Crow. Throughout the winter, the people of the wagon train occasionally met with the Indians in friendly encounters. As a result, one of the young men from the wagon train fell in love with one of the Indian maidens.

When spring arrived, the wagon train prepared to continue its journey westward. On the day they were ready to leave the Cedar Valley area, the young man from Ohio went to bid farewell to his young Indian maiden, but was unable to find her. Eventually he found out that she had been seen heading for "Buzzards Roost." He hurried down the hill, reaching the spot just in time to catch the young Indian maiden before she jumped from the 60-foot high bluff into the swollen spring waters of the Cedar River below. She had decided to sacrifice her own life, rather than live it without the young man she had fallen in love with. He grabbed her and kissed her and vowed to never leave her. He stayed in the Cedar Valley area, became a farmer and married the Indian maiden.

Some of the residents of the Cedar Valley area still believe that they or some of their friends may be descendants of this Indian maiden and her husband. The path that the young man took down the hill is still there today. Although the entire area is timber, no trees, shrubs, grass or other vegetation have ever grown on the path. There have been several marriage ceremonies performed on "Kissing Rock" overlooking the Cedar River.

Cedar Valley Park also contains two abandoned rock quarries that are responsible for much of the history of the area. The quarries, which were owned by E. J. C. Bealer, were established in 1885 and became the largest stone industry in Iowa. The quarry was in operation for 26 years, furnishing stone for many of the buildings and bridges in the midwest and west until the demand for masonry stone rapidly declined due to the development of concrete products.

A side operation of the quarry was burning lime. There were three lime

kilns in operation, one of iron and two of stone. The kilns were fired 24 hours a day with wood, necessitating the employment of numerous wood cutters and teamsters. The lime produced by the kilns was also used for constructing buildings and bridges. When mixed with water, the lime produced a mortar needed for sealing cracks and adhering the stones together.

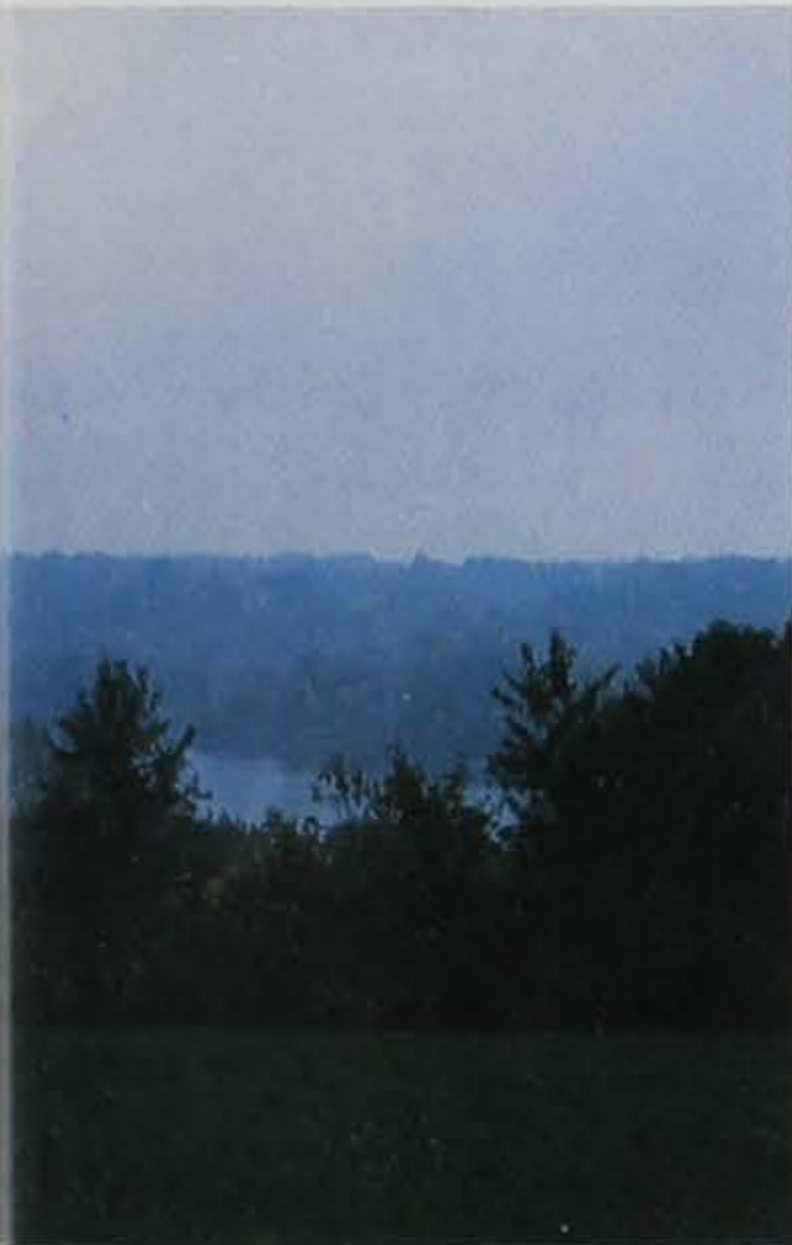
Approximately 65 percent of Cedar Valley Park is timber area and borders approximately three miles of the Cedar River. A portion of this timber area is open to public hunting. The remaining area is comprised of the quarries and a few relatively open areas which are readily accessible to the public. Shelters, rest rooms, picnic tables and playground equipment are provided for day use activities. Camping, picnicking, fishing, hunting, hiking, cross country skiing and access to the Cedar River for boating are some of the various recreational opportunities available there.

Each year approximately 500 boy scouts from Iowa and neighboring states utilize the group camping area while they canoe the river or hike the trails. The 17-mile long Hoover Trail, promoted by the Herbert Hoover National Historical Site begins and ends in Cedar Valley Park. Through the years, over 5,000 boy scouts have camped in the park and hiked on this trail.

The fauna of Cedar Valley Park is greatly varied and fascinating. Deer, rabbits, squirrels, turkeys, chipmunks, groundhogs, badgers, raccoons, turtles, snakes, beaver, mice, voles, waterfowl, bald eagles, various hawks and owls, and numerous species of songbirds are commonly seen during the year. Just as impressive is the flora of the area. The hardwood forests, open areas and flood plain provide numerous different species of trees, shrubs, grasses, mushrooms and wildflowers.

Cedar Valley Greenbelt is a recreational corridor separating agricultural land use practices. Abounding in a great variety of flora and fauna, it provides numerous recreational opportunities for the public to enjoy.

James Troendle is the executive director for Cedar County. He has been there for one year. Prior to his present position he served as youth program director for Hamilton County. He holds a B.S. degree in fish and wildlife biology from Iowa State University.



By James J. Zohrer

WILD LANDS

Through acquisition, innovation and hard work, county conservation boards are maintaining and creating wildlife habitat.

County conservation boards in Iowa manage not only parks, but many other areas that provide natural lands for your use as well as habitat for wildlife species. Virtually all of the nearly 1,100 areas managed by county conservation boards provide some type of wildlife habitat. These encompass well over 80,000 acres of timberlands, grasslands, marsh lands and other natural areas. Many of these are designated as wildlife areas and are managed specifically for wildlife, while others provide habitat incidental to their use as a park or preserve.

Most of the areas managed by county conservation boards are under 100 acres in size, as shown in the bar graph. These many scattered smaller tracts provide badly needed winter cover, nesting cover and escape cover for a variety of wildlife across the state. Over



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Mary Jane Lamphier

one-half of these county lands are open to public hunting. Although managed primarily for game species, they also benefit nonhunted wildlife species as well.

County conservation boards acquire wildlife habitat land through a variety of methods. The direct donation of land to county conservation boards has been increasing in recent years. This has proven to offer great tax advantages to the donor. Lands have also been purchased through bargain sales. These sales allow county conservation boards to pick up land at reduced prices while also offering tax advantage to the land seller. Counties often utilize state and federal cost-sharing programs which help make their land acquisition dollars go much farther.

One of these programs is the Wildlife Habitat Stamp Cost-Share Fund. The money in this fund comes from the sale of special stamps that hunters and trappers must buy when they purchase their hunting or trapping licenses. A portion of these monies is used to cost-share wildlife habitat acquisition and development by county conservation boards. To date, 43 counties have taken advantage of this fund.

The Sawmill Hollow Wildlife Area in Harrison County is one such tract acquired through the use of these state funds along with matching local funds. This 155-acre area is an excellent example of diverse habitat types that benefit a variety of wildlife. Deer, turkey, squirrel and furbearers are abundant, as well as upland game and nongame species. This beautiful area nestled back in the Loess Hills of western Iowa is also open to public hunting.

The acquisition of wildlife lands is only the start. These lands must then be managed to provide optimum wildlife habitat. County conservation boards have done an excellent job in the management of their lands. Tree plantings, grass plantings, and cropland management are carried out to improve the existing habitat quality. In 1983 county conservation boards planted over 300 acres of trees on county land as well as 175 food patch areas. In addition, prairie grasses have been established on many county wildlife areas. Natural succession on county areas is often controlled through an aggressive program of burning, mowing, or timber stand improvement to provide the most beneficial habitat for wildlife.

The Cedar River Natural Resources Area in Black Hawk County is one

example of intensive wildlife management on a county area. This 540-acre area, managed by the Black Hawk County Conservation Board, contains a large amount of agricultural land. This land is still being farmed, but now it is being farmed to benefit wildlife. Large crop fields were broken-down into a number of smaller fields to provide additional wildlife edge. Grassy strips were planted between fields, and trees and shrubs planted to provide winter cover. Approximately 12,000 seedlings are planted annually to add to this diverse habitat. The harvesting of hay was pushed later in the year to allow adequate time for bird nesting before cutting time. Twenty-three acres of native grasses have been planted to increase nesting cover as well.

The Kossuth County Conservation Board is carrying out wildlife management practices on a different type of area. They are involved with wildlife management on gravel pit areas in the county. Presently, three abandoned gravel pits are being managed by the county conservation board with the potential for acquiring 12 additional sites. Their management includes managing the natural succession of plant species as well as tree planting and grass plantings. In addition, bird nest boxes are being constructed which should attract wood ducks, bluebirds and kestrels to their areas.

The Polk County Conservation Board conducts special management for waterfowl at their 1,161-acre Chichaqua Wildlife Area. Natural oxbows of the Skunk River and a 100 acre artificial marsh are managed for waterfowl production and harvest. The artificial marsh is designated as a "controlled" hunting area, where the number of

hunters and the days of hunting pressure are regulated. A large part of the wildlife area is set aside as a refuge to allow a safe resting place for waterfowl during the hunting seasons.

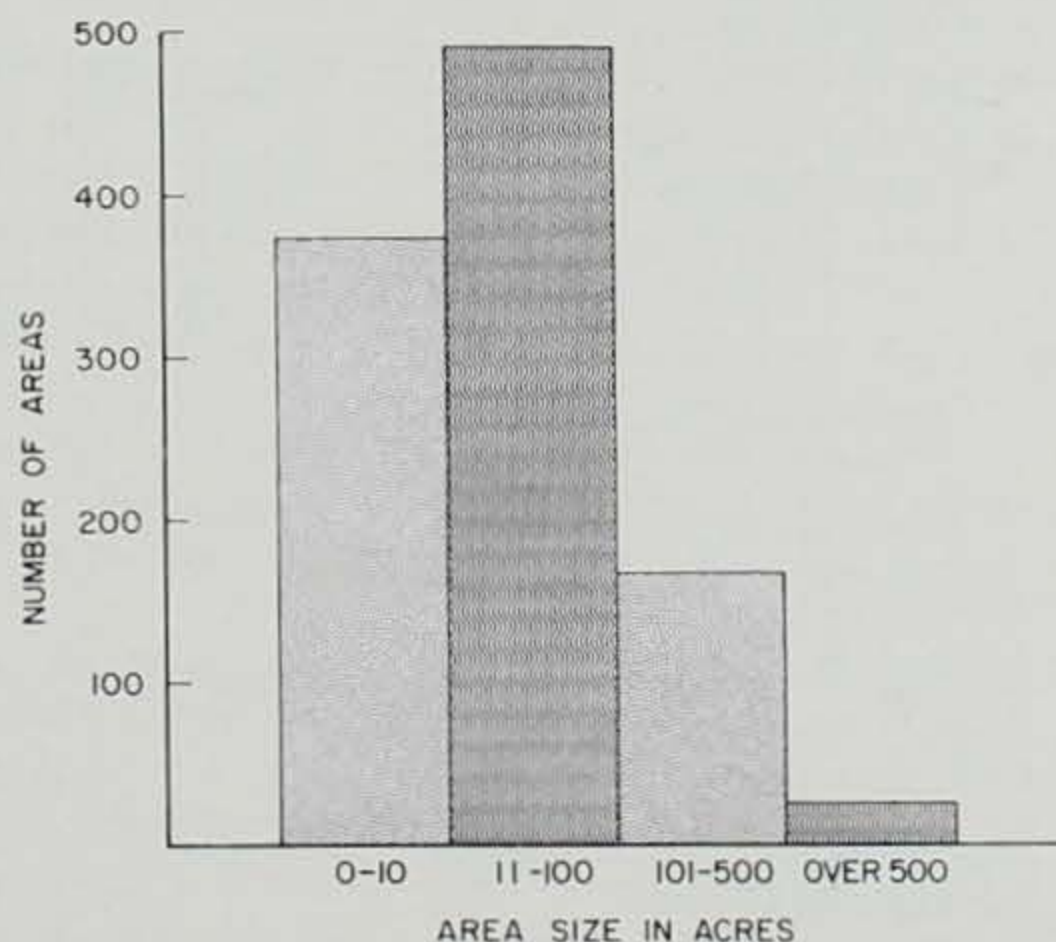
Another special use area is managed by the Clay County Conservation Board. Their Bertram Reservation was acquired in 1981. This 160-acre area overlooks the Little Sioux River in northwest Iowa. The tract is designated as a "primitive weapons only" public hunting area. Bow and arrow or muzzle loading firearms only can be used. This restriction has been well received by both the sportsmen and the adjoining landowners.

Another unusual wildlife area was recently purchased by the Chickasaw County Conservation Board, also using wildlife habitat stamp monies and local funds. Their purchase of 11 miles of abandoned railroad right-of-way will provide badly needed winter cover for wildlife and nesting cover in this northern Iowa county.

The next time that you want to head out for our favorite natural site, think about these county conservation board wildlife areas. There may be one closer to home than any state or federal facility, and they are often less crowded. For more information on these areas contact your local county conservation board office or the Office of County Conservation Activities, Iowa Conservation Commission, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.

James Zohrer is an assistant administrator for county conservation activities. He holds a B.S. degree in zoology from the University of Illinois and an M.S. degree in wildlife ecology from the University of Wisconsin.

COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD AREAS





CALENDAR

June - August

June 17	Nature Hike	Twin Valley Nature Area Plymouth County (712) 947-4270	July 8 & 22	Wagaman Mill Tours	Lynneville Jasper County (515) 792-9780
June 17	Sturgis Falls Volksmarch Six-mile walk	Ice House Museum and Hartman Reserve Nature Center, Cedar Falls Black Hawk County (319) 277-1536	July 14	Warren County Bike Ride	Pickard City Park Warren County (515) 961-6169
June 17	The Turkey Foot Canoe Race	Thunder Woman Park, Finchford Black Hawk County	July 15	Canoeing Workshop (Film and techniques)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7146
June 18	Junior Golf Tournament	Briggs Woods Park Hamilton County (515) 832-1994	July 15	Russell White Nature Trail Hike	Near Lanesboro Carroll County (712) 792-4614
June 18-19	Summer Naturalist Program	New Haven Potholes Mitchell County (515) 732-5204	July 16-20	Girl Scout Day Camp	Central Park, 2 miles W Center Junction Jones County (319) 487-3541
June 18-19	Young Naturalist Program (Canoe trip on Iowa River)	Wright County (515) 532-3185	July 22	Trout Fishing (Film and techniques)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145
June 23	Canoe Race	Lenon Mill Park, Panora Guthrie County (515) 755-3061	July 29	The Beaver (Film and discussion)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145
June 24	"Buffalo" Presentation (Slide show)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145	August 5	Canada Hunting and Fishing Films	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145
June 24-29	Junior Naturalist Program	Boundary Waters Canoe Area Mitchell County (515) 732-5204	August 5 & 19	Wagaman Mill Tours	Lynneville Jasper County (515) 792-9780
July 1	Nature Hike (Prairie preserves)	Osceola County (712) 754-4107	August 12	Insects (Film and demonstration)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145
July 1	"Prairie" Presentation (Slide/film show/hike)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145	August 12	Raccoon River Canoe Float	North Raccoon River Carroll County (712) 792-4614
July 4	Canoe Races	East Lake Park Clarke County (515) 342-3960	August 19	Indians of the Midwest (Films)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 792-9780
July 4	Heritage Day (Culture/Craft)	Hickory Grove Park, 4 miles SW Colo Story County (515) 377-2229	August 24-26	Marion County Music Festival	Marion County Park in Knoxville Marion County (515) 828-2213
July 7	Yellow Smoke Park Dedication	1 mile NE Denison Crawford County (712) 263-2748	August 26	Incredible Edibles (Nature foods)	Otter Creek Conservation Area Warren County (515) 961-6169
July 6-8	Buckskinners	Yellow Smoke Park Crawford County (712) 263-2748	August 26	Mixed Best Shot	Briggs Woods Hamilton County (515) 832-1994
July 7-8	Turkey Foot Longrifles Encampment	Waterloo on Highway 21 Black Hawk County (319) 277-1536	August 26	Nature Hike	Twin Valley Nature Area Plymouth County (712) 947-4270
July 8	National Parks (Film)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145	August 26	Winemaking (Demonstration)	Lake Meyer Nature Center Winneshiek County (319) 534-7145

GIVING WILDLIFE BABIES "A CHANCE"

By Chris Lloyd,
Conservation Officer,
Early, Iowa

They picked up the fawn on their way from the field. A sharp pair of eyes had spotted it in the fence row that morning when they first began planting. It had lain in the same place all morning without moving and by noon they figured it to be cold and hungry.

Thoughtfully wrapping it in a blanket, they placed it on the seat between them and took it home. A doe watched from a windbreak planting 60 yards away. All morning she had nervously watched without revealing herself, waiting for the men to leave so she could lead her fawn to safety.

The lady on the phone was nearly in hysterics. She said now she had known right off they needed some help when she had seen eleven little wood ducks and their crippled mother right there in her driveway. Why, she lived in the middle of town and the nearest water was over a mile away. And my, but it was lucky her neighbor had helped or else they couldn't have herded those babies into her garage. And wasn't it funny how the poor, crippled mother duck was able to fly just well enough to keep them from rescuing her? And now what should she do with the babies? She had put them in her bathtub but two were dead a short time later, and ducks don't drown do they?

Finding four baby raccoons, their eyes not yet open, in a hollow of the old cottonwood he had just cut down, hadn't been in his plans. But he couldn't just leave them. And his boy was begging, pleading with him to keep them. Besides, he had raised one himself as a boy. All they needed was a

heat lamp and a baby bottle with warm milk. The boy carried them all home in his jacket pocket, they were so small. About dusk the sow 'coon returned to the old tree. It would have been nothing for her to move the babies, catlike, to a corn crib ¾ mile away but there was nothing there to move.

When I got to the lady's house we released the seven remaining ducklings in her driveway. (Her cat had nailed two as they escaped from a cardboard box.) Their frantic peeping drew in the mother wood duck who led them on their way to the river. This procession occurs annually across field and stream, lawn and garden and is the natural order of things in the life of the wood duck who often nests far from water.

Of the four baby raccoons, two died quite young from a heat lamp placed too close. Another inhaled milk into its lungs from too large a nipple thrust into its throat and died with a wheezing cough. The other survived and grew into a playful pet. Eventually though, it bit the little boy severely, requiring stitches. It's now being kept illegally in a wire cage where it paces and lunges, snarling at anyone who comes close.

The deer lived. It was bottle-fed until it lost its ability to survive in nature. It was then taken to a wildlife display where it lived for two years in a 60' x 20' enclosure. Being a buck with magnificent antlers, he was a major attraction and was poked and prodded by all until vandals shot him one night.

April, May and June are baby critter months in Iowa. Please leave them as you found them. Whether or not you believe it, Nature is unfolding as she should.

JUNE 1984 IS RIVERS MONTH IN IOWA

Governor Branstad has proclaimed June 1984 as Rivers Month in Iowa. The proclamation signed by the Governor recognizes the many values of Iowa's quality rivers, and urges all Iowans to take advantage of their recreational opportunities. This recognition coincides with American Rivers Month which will be celebrated throughout the nation.

The Office of the Governor and the Iowa Conservation Commission are co-hosting a Governor's Canoe Trip and Nature Hike on the Wapsipinicon River near Anamosa in recognition of Rivers Month. Governor Branstad and Larry Wilson, director of the conservation commission, have invited state legislators, state and local agency directors, and heads of special interest groups to join them in the day's activities.

Numerous groups throughout Iowa are also hosting Rivers Month events in June. Activities include canoe trips and races, fishing tournaments, river clean-ups and photo contests. If you have not already done so, your organization still has time to plan and host a Rivers Month event. Contact Kevin Szcodronski, Iowa Conservation Commission, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, 515/281-8674, if you are planning an activity so he can include it on Iowa's calendar of events for Rivers Month, 1984.

RECORD BASS

A new state record largemouth bass has been recorded. Patricia Zaerr of Davenport landed a 10 pound, 12 ounce largemouth bass on May 6. The fish measured 23½ inches and was taken from Lake Fisher in Davis County.

HOUSE APPROVES EROSION CONTROL

Legislation to stem the tide of soil erosion in the U.S. has passed the House, according to the Wildlife Management Institute. The bill, H.R. 3457, would help fish and wildlife by encouraging farmers to take erodible land out of crop production and plant it to vegetation that keeps soil from washing into streams and provides cover for wildlife.

The House bill, sponsored by Congressman Ed Jones (Tenn.), has three main provisions. It contains "sodbuster" language that would prohibit price supports to landowners for crops grown on recently plowed and highly erodible soils in arid sections of the West. It also provides for a "conservation reserve" that is aimed at erodible land nationwide. This program offers long-term contracts whereby a landowner may take land out of production and install a cover crop. The third provision authorizes a "voluntary set-aside." That program is to protect farmers' base acreage when some of those lands are strip-cropped, or are planted in rotation for conservation purposes. It would prevent USDA from subtracting acres planted to legumes and other protective vegetation from the base acreage that a farmer uses to qualify for subsidy payments in later years.

H.R. 3457 now goes to a House-Senate conference committee where the differences between it and the Senate-passed S. 663 will be resolved. The Senate measure contains a sodbuster provision, but not the conservation reserve and voluntary set-aside sections.

Senate and House Agriculture Committee staffers report that the bills will be considered in conference some time after the Memorial Day recess.



LEADERS IN CONSERVATION

Dr. Albin Nelson

Beginning this month, the IOWA CONSERVATIONIST will carry two features about Iowans and Iowa organizations in the field of conservation. "Leaders in Conservation" will highlight one individual and one statewide conservation organization having made important contributions.

The individuals are persons who have dedicated a part of their lives to further the cause of natural resource conservation. They set examples more of us could follow. The organizations and their officers perform similar positive services. It is my hope that when you read about an organization with a purpose that appeals to you, you will become active in its roles.

As individuals or as members of organizations, there is much we can do for conservation. The following leaders can show us the way.

LARRY J. WILSON,
DIRECTOR,
IOWA CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Dr. Albin Nelson

County conservation board members are special people with a willingness to give freely of their time for improvement of a county's natural resources and the corresponding multiple-use benefits. Most have a deep sense of loyalty and respect for nature's gifts, plus a keen interest in people. Dr. Albin



Nelson is just such a person.

Dr. Nelson of Nashua is a member of the Chickasaw County Conservation Board. He has served on that body for 23½ years and has long been known as an aggressive contributor to local as well as statewide programs. He is also one of nine board members on the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards. He is active in the finance and by-laws committees for the association and his voice is heard and respected when it comes time to set goals and objectives for that group.

Dr. Nelson was chosen to serve on a select committee to review proposed acquisitions under the wildlife habitat stamp program. True to form, he not only participates actively in the meetings, but travels to each area for a first-hand tour and review of its potential. While

this task is normally performed by salaried state and county committee members, he contributes his time and advice in this important effort.

With all his organizational activities, Dr. Nelson still finds time for conservation at home. A retired veterinarian, he owns and operates a cattle farm, and this land reflects his enthusiasm for fish and wildlife. He has created pothole marshes for waterfowl and shorebirds. He has built large ponds surrounded by wildlife plantings. He has also developed extensive windbreak and fencerow habitat on the area.

Dr. Nelson is an avid outdoorsman, an influential leader and a down-to-earth conservationist. Like other unsung Iowans to be featured in this series, he does more than talk about his environment. He improves it.

Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards

The Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards is a private, nonprofit organization composed of member county boards and is governed by a nine-member board. The board members are:

- Ragan Brock, President, Jasper County
- Patricia Meade, Secretary, Johnson County
- Neal Moeller, Treasurer, Crawford County
- Steven Anderson, Story County
- Dr. Carroll Block, Winnebago County
- Harry Drum, Palo Alto County
- Dr. A. J. Nelson, Chickasaw County
- Wayne Parsons, Jefferson County
- Cyril Puffcorn, Harrison County

This year's Annual Conference to be held October 4-6 at the Stouffer's Inn in Cedar Rapids, will mark the association's 25th year. The first annual conference in 1960 was also held in Cedar Rapids, and it is therefore fitting that the association return to commemorate its silver anniversary.

The association assists the counties through various activities such as board member education, information exchange, legislation and public relations. The association also supports youth conservation education through participation in the Hawkeye Science Fair and the Springbrook Youth Leadership Awards. Financial support to

WARDEN'S DIARY

By Jerry Hoilien

I could hardly believe my eyes. (They had asked me to speak at the state-wide County Conservation Board Executives meeting.) Where did all those people come from? And what a variety! Some tall, some short, some young and some old, but lots of them.

That "old" part is beginning to bother me. Ever notice how many "young" officers there are anymore? *Every year* it seems like there are *more and more* of them! And they're getting younger every year, too.

I remember when they first started the county board system, back a few years ago. I was assigned to Lee County in southwest Iowa and they voted it in right away. They had an excellent board and got off to a fast start. There was a small piece of property that set back in the hills with a lake and several small ponds on it. It was the first thing they bought and they got it for a song. I wish I could have bought it. The neighbors helped clean it up and drag the road. A local boy was paid to mow the grass and before you knew it, a beautiful area was developed. I used to take my kids fishing there. You couldn't keep the bluegills off their hooks. Kept me busy taking them off and baiting up. They still remember those trips.

The board operated for many years without an executive officer. The members themselves did all the work, and they got some real bargains for their money. I remember one of them noticed the highway commission had put in a new bridge and was going to tear out the old highway. He made arrangements to pay for the hauling of the old concrete a couple extra miles and they made a boat harbor out of it. They got the old highway graded for an access area and parking lot for the fishermen. It was done for peanuts, so to speak. They always seemed to accomplish something worth-while and save a lot of money doing it. Back in those days it was Robert "Mick" McQuade, John Talbot, Joe Malkin, Walt Fullenkamp, and Joe Ochsner working with staunch supporter Jim Carroll then police chief. They don't come any finer. We're still good friends and I hear from them every once in a while. Good people!

I remember the time I got a call from one of the members about a guy having

killed a deer out of season. Seems he had watched him take a box out of his trunk at the county dump, look around suspiciously and pile some other garbage on top of it. It had the head and feet in it. He had the license number of the vehicle plus the man's description and I was off and running. I arrived in record time and he already had the man's name, address and where he worked. I never had it so good. This was going to be easy. He was excited and had checked the hours the guy worked so we could contact him right away.

I thought I'd better check the evidence and he led me to the edge of the dump where the box was. Opening it I looked down at the feet and head of the most deer-colored *goat* you'd ever seen. It was a short case!

I've enjoyed visiting with the county executives from all over the state. They're a good crew and anxious to learn. The fact there's a lot of them testifies to the good work they've done in all the counties, but one (I'm sorry to say). They work locally with the State Conservation Commission, not so much in law enforcement. They do have their areas with some special regulations and they cooperate with the local state conservation officer on lots of projects, especially education of the kids, and older kids, too.

Some people can't be educated too well. I remember getting a call from the Fort Madison Police Department about 2 a.m. one spring morning. Seems a couple of Illinois commercial fishermen had gotten a little too much at the local bar and having spent all their money, had attempted to sell a redhead duck for enough to get back across the river bridge. When I arrived at the headquarters, Wayne and his brother were crumpled into the chairs in the detention room. One jumped rather unsteadily to his feet and yelled, "There's Jerry! Tell these dumb s---, that's no redhead duck!" I replied as he hitched up his pants and tried to stuff his shirt in, "That's a canvasback and they're protected too, this time of year."

"S---" he mumbled and plopped back in his chair. The judge said "ten days!" Isn't education wonderful?

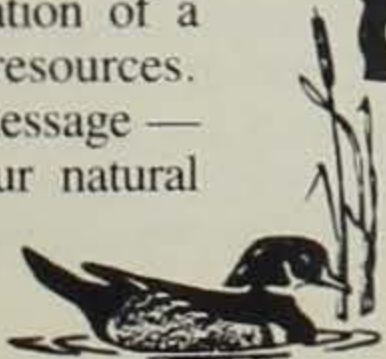
CONSERVATION

Conservation Boards

Carry out the many activities are derived mainly from dues of member counties, Sustaining Members composed of business and organization sponsors, and Friends of Conservation composed of individuals that support the county conservation board program.

The role of the local board member is to establish goals and set policy to insure the purpose of the county's comprehensive resource management plan is fulfilled. They formulate guidelines, establish priorities, explore alternatives, analyze the costs and benefits and direct staff to institute programs to reach their goals. Board members must think independently, must be willing to hear and consider all sides of a question and make their decision based on the facts rather than on prejudice. They must also have the conviction to take unpopular positions and then stick to them.

County conservation board members get all of this responsibility and receive no monetary compensation other than expenses incurred in their official duties. The job is challenging, frustrating, invigorating, time-consuming — but most of all — rewarding. Their compensation is derived from building a quality program that benefits the county. Board members have a sincere and unselfish interest in the conservation of a county's natural resources. They also have a message — the wise use of our natural resources.





Nature Tale For Kids

Jama

By Dean Roosa

It was the nicest day in the history of Iowa and Spring in Iowa is like no other place on Earth. A gently sloping woodland overlooked the small wooded valley and shallow meandering stream. The wildflower photographer had put down his bulky equipment and lay snoozing in the afternoon sun on a tiny

Artwork by Rex Heer

knoll. He had hiked miles, photographed many flowers, and was now busy forgetting the awful winter that had just passed.

A chipmunk perched on top of the camera and sniffed and stared at the new strange object in his woods. A gentle snore sent the chipmunk scurrying to the rock pile where he scolded and ranted. The sudden clatter caught the attention of a bluejay who couldn't comprehend the horizontal form and scolded and ranted, too. A crow decided to take a look, but saw it was a human and, with several staccato calls, flew across the river. All the noise caused the red-tailed hawk, also soaking up sun on the gently sloping woodland, to stir and turn around. He had to be careful because his mate was sitting

on newly-laid eggs in a nearby maple tree, and it was up to him to sound the alarm. But everything looked normal — until the photographer awakened and stood up. The hawks both flew overhead and screamed until the photographer was over the next hill. Then the female returned to the two beautiful pale green eggs, turned them, then settled down to incubate. Peace returned to the woodlands.

It was mid-April, and the hawks were halfway through incubation. They would exchange incubating duties so each parent had a chance to soar, stretch its cramped wings and hunt.

Once, in late January, nearby human residents saw one of the hawks soaring, diving, climbing to great heights only to dive again. Exuberance, they thought,

ut it was actually part of the courtship display. Soon they were seen carrying sticks to a certain tree in the woodland. It had been a hard winter, but that didn't postpone nest building. By late February, the nest was complete. It was a new nest because the old one, in a cottonwood tree by the river, had blown down last December. Now the eggs were laid and there was a lull in the lives of the red-tails.

The male liked to perch on the highest tree in the woodland, a dead elm, from where he could see all the passing hawks, and could proclaim that his territory was occupied. The young birds — last year's hatchlings — were the biggest pests, blundering into the territory again and again, and always getting sharp reminders that they were unwelcome.

In late April, a tiny "peep-peep" came from within one of the eggs and soon a tiny, helpless hawklet lay in the nest beside the other egg. The young hawk could hold up its head for only a few seconds at a time, but just enough time for the mother to gently feed the hatchling. The other egg never hatched even though the parents kept it warm and turned it for many more days. By mid-May, the parents accepted the fact that Jama would be their only young that year. Jama was a female and grew fast, with no competition for food.

In Keg Valley several miles away, another pair of red-tailed hawks nested. They hatched three young in a small tree on a hilltop. The early May wind whipped the tree around, and one young hawk tumbled to the ground. The next day the nature photographer happened to find the wet, hungry young hawk at the base of the hill. He looked for the nest, but couldn't find it. Feeling sorry for the youngster, he took it home, kept it warm, fed it well, and pondered what he would do with a young hawk. He must not keep it because it would become "imprinted" to him and never be able to be set free. He must get it back to its nest, or...just then he remembered the screaming hawks from the woodland where he slept. He easily found the nest, climbed up, and put the orphan in with Jama.

Well! Jama was surprised, but his mother was astounded! She carefully

studied the new addition and immediately accepted it as her own. Jama was happy to have company, and the parents, being the world's best, had no trouble feeding both young.

In late May, the two young hawks would hop to nearby branches and perch or exercise their wings to build up strength. In early June, the orphaned hawk, being older than Jama, left the nest and was soon hunting on his own. Jama, alone again, didn't see much of her parents. They were nearby and brought food, but came to the nest only for the night. Jama could hear her nest-mate calling for food sometimes, so she knew the parents were still watching over him.

Jama was reluctant to leave the nest, but her parents would land in a nearby tree and make her fly to them for food. She gained confidence and strength and was soon in the woodland begging for food. Her constant calling began to wear on her parent's nerves. Jama, after going for two days without eating,

Gradually, she made her way to the deep south where food was plentiful and there were many other hawks just like her. She spent an easy winter feeding on rabbits, mice, snakes, and an occasional crippled duck.

In March, Jama felt the urge to go north. She was in no hurry because she wouldn't nest for another year, but she felt she should return to that gently sloping woodland in central Iowa. By late April, she arrived where she thought the woodland was — but what?! Just a bare hillside with a new house. The maple, her nest-tree, was in a pile by the river, and her parents were nowhere to be seen. She flew around the area trying to get her bearings. Three days later, she flew to Keg Valley, but was driven out by a big mean red-tail. She went on to Sleepy Hollow where she spent the summer.

In October, she acquired a new coat of feathers. She was so proud because her old ones were badly worn from hundreds of hunting episodes. Her new

In March, Jama felt the urge to go north. She was in no hurry because she wouldn't nest for another year, but she felt she should return to that gently sloping woodland in central Iowa.

began to realize if she kept making noise she would never catch her own food. Soon after, she caught her first ground squirrel. How proud! She was too hungry to show her parents, who had become indifferent to her and even chased her away sometimes. Therefore, she left the woodland and started life truly on her own. She was as big as her parents, but had a brown tail and heavily streaked breast. She wouldn't get a brick-red tail for another year.

She began to wander north to a big woodland where she was shot at. A few feathers were broken, and she learned to fear humans. She went east into the hills where she was attacked by a great-horned owl. Again, only her pride was hurt, but it seemed that she was unwelcome wherever she went.

red tail just gleamed; she was an adult!

Sleepy Hollow has been her home for eight years. There is a gently sloping woodland just like the one where she had hatched oh-so-long ago. She has raised seven nests of young hawks, and saw one destroyed by high winds. She is incubating in a huge nest in a maple tree on the slope. Nearby, her mate is soaking up sunshine and guarding the territory. The nature photographer is resting against a tree, unaware that the baby hawk he photographed long ago was Jama. He naps, truly glad the winter has ended.

Dean M. Roosa has worked as state ecologist for the conservation commission and State Preserves Board since 1975. He has a Ph.D. in botany.

County Historical Areas

Capturing Memories and Preserving the Past

By Mark D. Wagner

Usually when people think of conservation organizations they think of preserving the land, its waters, and its wildlife. Some people don't realize that the Iowa Conservation Commission and some county conservation boards also preserve historical features throughout Iowa.

Many of the sites show how man has made use of the state's natural resources in the past. Most of Iowa's pioneer mills used water power from one of the many waterways in the state. Farmers utilized the rich prairie soil, brickmakers used the clay, masons used the stone and lime available in the state, and people were constantly building roads to cross the landscape and bridges to cross the rivers and streams.

The Iowa pioneers, as well as the Indians before them, left their mark in the woodlands and on the prairies. Many county conservation boards are helping to preserve some of these historic sites along with the natural areas in which they exist.

Included in the county conservation historic areas are: five homesteads, nine mill sites, two historic trees, three monuments, seven county museums, seven school buildings, three Indian sites, eight bridges, a church, a cemetery, a brewery and other sites of historic interest.

WAGAMAN MILL

The Wagaman Mill, located in Lynnville, is one of the few remaining mills in Iowa that still operates by water power. It was established along the North Skunk River by John Sparks in

1846. The last owners to use water power at the mill were the Wagamans, who kept the mill in operation through three generations.

Wagaman Mill used two vertical drive hydraulic turbines to harness the water power for work. Since its existence, the mill has been a sawmill, carding mill (for wool), flouring mill, feed mill, and a power generating station. It has also been entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Wagaman Mill is leased and operated by the Jasper County Conservation Board. It is open to the public every other Sunday afternoon in summer, at which time water power is used to run machinery.

LANDMARK EXHIBIT IN JASPER COUNTY

The Jasper County Landmark Exhibit, located in the Jasper County Museum in Newton, is a 30' long bas-relief sculpture depicting man's use of the state's natural resources throughout history. It spans from the Ice Age into projections for the future. The exhibit is being sculptured by artist Herman Deaton and was funded by the Jasper County Conservation Board.

OWENS COVERED BRIDGE

The Polk County Conservation Board maintains the Owens Covered Bridge in its Yeader Creek Area (Easter Lake) located one mile south of Des Moines. The bridge was moved nearly eight miles from its original site on the North River, where it had been built in 1878.



William Oelke

LIME CREEK BREWERY

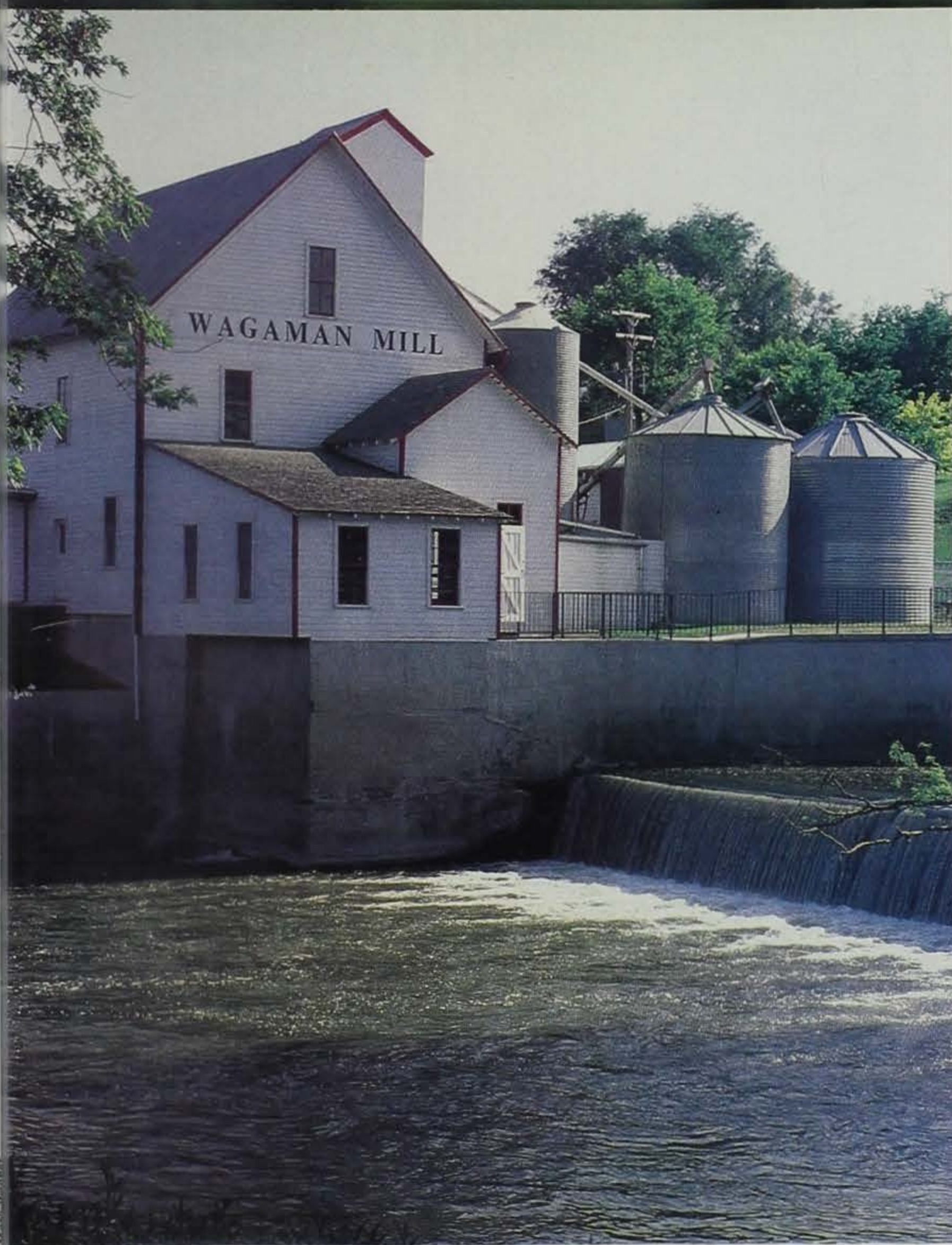
The Lime Creek Brewery ruins is located in Lime Creek Area owned by the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board. The brewery was built in 1873 using native limestone, but no one is sure who the builder was. It has served as a brewery, ice house, home, barn, slaughterhouse, and quarry office. The only remains of the original three-story building is the large arched cellar.

JULIEN DUBUQUE MONUMENT

The Julien Dubuque Monument is managed by the Dubuque County Conservation Board. It is a grave marker for Julien Dubuque, a lead miner and the first person of European ancestry to establish a permanent settlement in Iowa. The monument serves as a focal point for the 1,260-acre "Mines of Spain" area acquired by the Iowa Conservation Commission. A spectacular view of the Mississippi River can be seen from the monument area.

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL VILLAGE

The Harrison County Conservation Board operates a historical village and museum located between Logan and Missouri Valley on U.S. Highway 30. The log cabin in the village was originally built along the Skunk River, near Ames, in 1853 by Presley Craig. It was removed to Harrison County and rebuilt on its present location in 1937. The cabin now serves as a museum displaying pioneer tools, Indian artifacts, and military accoutrements.



Far Left: *Early photo of Fred Wagaman at Wagaman Mill.* Left: *Wagaman Mill, located in Lynnville, today.* Below Left: *1883 log cabin in Harrison County Historical Village.* Below: *Plow-In-Oak located near Exira.*



PLOW-IN-OAK

Located in a two-acre rest area one mile south of Exira on Highway 71, is an old oak tree with a walking plow grown into it. Many local legends surround this Plow-in-Oak tree, but the most popular is that a farmer leaned his plow against a young oak tree when he went off to the Civil War. He never returned and the plow was forgotten until it was too late to move it from the tree. The area is leased by the Audubon County Conservation Board.

HURSTVILLE LIME KILNS

The Jackson County Conservation Board maintains the Hurtsville Lime Kilns. The kilns were built in the 1870's, two miles north of Maquoketa where there was plenty of native limestone and wood to run the kiln operation. Hurtsville literally sprung up because of the lime industry, which employed from 50 to 100 men. A rail line was even built to the kilns, and Hurtsville Kilns supplied much of the lime used for masonry in the Midwest.

Lime was produced by first placing limestone into the stack at the top of the kiln. Fires were built in recesses on each side of the kiln, and the draw of the stack pulled heat and smoke through the limestone. This process utilized enormous amounts of wood. As the stone nearest the fire became lime, it was removed through the bottom of the kiln and allowed to cool before being packed and shipped.

A large community effort and volunteer labor has gone into restoration of the Hurtsville Lime Kilns.



Old Motor Mill in Clayton County built in the late 1860's.



Bob Griffith

DOW HOUSE HISTORIC SITE

The Simeon E. Dow House is a large, red brick, country dwelling located off of Highway 30 on the west side of Dow City. The Dow House depicts the life of a prominent, upper middle class citizen and his family in the early 1870's.

The site was purchased by the Crawford County Conservation Board in 1970. Restoration was a joint effort of the Conservation Board, Crawford County Historical Society, and Dow City. The Dow House Historic Site is on the National Register of Historic Places and is open for public tours from May to September.

WEST MITCHELL

The Community of West Mitchell prospered for many years because of milling activities begun in 1857. The present dam and powerhouse on the Cedar River were built in 1925.

The Mitchell County Conservation Board now owns and manages the site which is entered on the National Register due to its unique dam construction and limestone building. Stone from the four-story Paragon woolen mill, built in 1865, was used in the building.

MOTOR MILL

Probably the most beautiful mill still standing in Iowa is the famed Motor Mill in Clayton County. It was purchased by the Clayton County Conservation Board together with 100 acres of surrounding timberland which include a cooperage, inn, stable, ice house, and adjoining steel bridge across the Turkey River.

The seven story mill, along with the other buildings which made up the town of Motor, was commissioned in the late 1860's by Jack Thompson of Elkader. Stone from a nearby quarry was used in construction of the buildings.

CEDAR BRIDGE

The Madison County Conservation Board manages a site surrounding Cedar Bridge, one of six remaining covered bridges to be found in Madison County. Cedar Bridge, built in 1883, originally spanned Cedar Creek north of Winterset. In the early 1900's Cedar Bridge was moved to its present location, two miles downstream over Cedar Creek. It is on the National Register of Historic Places.



Cedar Bridge Park provides a scenic and historic splendor year-round for all to enjoy and reminisce. One should not miss Madison County's Annual Covered Bridge Festival held in October.

DELTA COVERED BRIDGE

The Delta Covered Bridge, built between 1867 and 1869, spans the North Skunk River 2½ miles southeast of Delta. The bridge is the property of the Keokuk County Conservation Board, and is perhaps the oldest covered bridge west of the Mississippi River. It is also the only known standing example of a "burr truss" bridge in the United States.

GRUNDY COUNTY MUSEUM

The Grundy County Museum is housed in a former school building in Morrison, and is a cooperative effort of the Grundy County Conservation Board and the Historic Collections group of Grundy County.

The building, constructed in 1912, has both a historical section and a natural history section. In the natural history part of the museum is a life size diorama containing plants and animal mounts found in marsh, prairie, and woodland habitats.



Left: *The Delta Covered Bridge in Keokuk County.* Below: *The Dow House, Crawford County, is on the National Register of Historic Places.*



Lance Nelson

The first log cabin in Grundy County was built by William Peck in the fall of 1853. It has been moved to the museum grounds and restored.

OPER'S MILL SITE

Soper's Mill was the site of a water-powered mill built along the Skunk River in Story County. Also at this site, and still intact, is the Soper's Mill bridge, which has been entered on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1867 by the King Iron Bridge and Manufacturing Company. The bridge is made of wrought iron and is said to be the first free span, trussed bridge to have been built west of the Mississippi River. The Soper's Mill area including the bridge is managed by the Story County Conservation Board.

Following is a list of the county conservation boards in Iowa that own, lease, or manage historical areas:

- Adair — Jesse James Historical Site, Mormon Trail
- Audubon — Plow-in-Oak historical tree
- Black Hawk — schoolhouse

- Buchanan — Troy Mills site, Jakway Forest Area (stagecoach stop)
- Calhoun — county historical museum
- Cerro Gordo — old brewery
- Clayton — Motor Mill Area, historic village
- Crawford — Dow House
- Dallas — H. Nelson Homestead (inventor), county historical museum
- Delaware — schoolhouse
- Des Moines — historical monument, Zion School Museum
- Dubuque — Julien Dubuque Monument, Indian mounds, lead mines
- Grundy — county museum, log cabin
- Guthrie — Lennon Mill site, county museum
- Hamilton — Bell's Mill site and Tunnel Mill site
- Harrison — county historical village and museum
- Henry — Oakland Mills Bridge
- Jackson — Hurtsville Lime Kilns, schoolhouse
- Jasper — Wagaman Mill, county museum exhibit
- Keokuk — Delta Covered Bridge, Manhattan Bridge
- Lee — Civil War memorial

- Linn — Abbe Creek School
- Louisa — Toolesboro Indian Mounds, county historical museum
- Madison — Cedar Bridge
- Marshall — Three Bridges Park (mill site)
- Muscatine — Nye Historical Cemetery
- Osceola — historic tree
- Pocahontas — Keystone Bridge, Wiegert Prairie Farmstead
- Polk — Universalist Church, Owens Covered Bridge
- Pottawattamie — Old Town Park (mill site)
- Scott — Buffalo Bill Cody's Homestead
- Story — Soper's Mill (mill site and bridge)
- Warren — Indian mounds

Mark Wagner is the environmental education coordinator for Jasper County. He has been with the county since 1978. He holds a B.S. degree in fish and wildlife biology from Iowa State University. He also served as a game warden for the Peace Corps in West Africa.

Art! in county parks

From earliest times people have turned to the out-of-doors for inspiration for their most creative ventures into the arts. Music, dance, drama, crafts, painting and drawing were activities of the meadows and forests.

Today several county conservation boards are bringing the arts and folk crafts back to the out-of-doors. The Black Hawk County Board sponsors "Art in the Park" at Hartman Reserve Nature Center in Cedar Falls. The Clarke County Board sponsors "Folk Arts in the Forest" at East Lake County Park near Osceola and the "Hopeville Rural Music Reunion" at Hopeville Square Park — seven miles south of Murray.

Why are county conservation boards involved in such programs? Mary Duritsa, a naturalist for Black Hawk County and John Klein, Executive Officer of Clarke County, offer some reasons: "We want people to discover our areas and facilities. Such events attract people who might not otherwise choose to visit our areas or participate in the more conservation-oriented activities. We want to bring art back to the out-of-doors. We also want to promote non-consumptive forms of recreation."

Mary Kay Eakin, a volunteer at Hartman Reserve, offers further insight, "Parks are easy places to enter." Some come to hear the music and discover the beauty of the shadows cast by young

leaves on the trunks of trees; the delicate beauty of a flower; and the enchanting call of a bird in chorus with the music. People who come solely for the arts learn to enjoy and interact with nature.

"Folk Arts in the Forest" is an educational festival where visitors see, feel and try many of the historic crafts that were once common in Iowa. Rope making, quilting, caning and wheat weaving are displayed along with black powder shooting, horse-drawn hayrides and mule jumping.

The "Hopeville Rural Music Reunion" is held in Hopeville, population 30. It is a good, old-fashioned hoedown with banjo, fiddles, guitars and all the rest. Pickin' starts at noon and goes until darkness falls. In 1983 over 3,500 discovered Hopeville Square and enjoyed bluegrass and country and western music. This year the special event will be held on September 9.

"Art in the Park" held this past April featured the voices of Waterloo-Cedar Falls Metropolitan Chorale with a brass quintet. Other performers have included dancers, mime artists, poetry readers, harpists, jazz combos, guitarists, banjo pickers and ten whistle players. Hartman Reserve allows the 110,000 plus metropolitan population to forget they

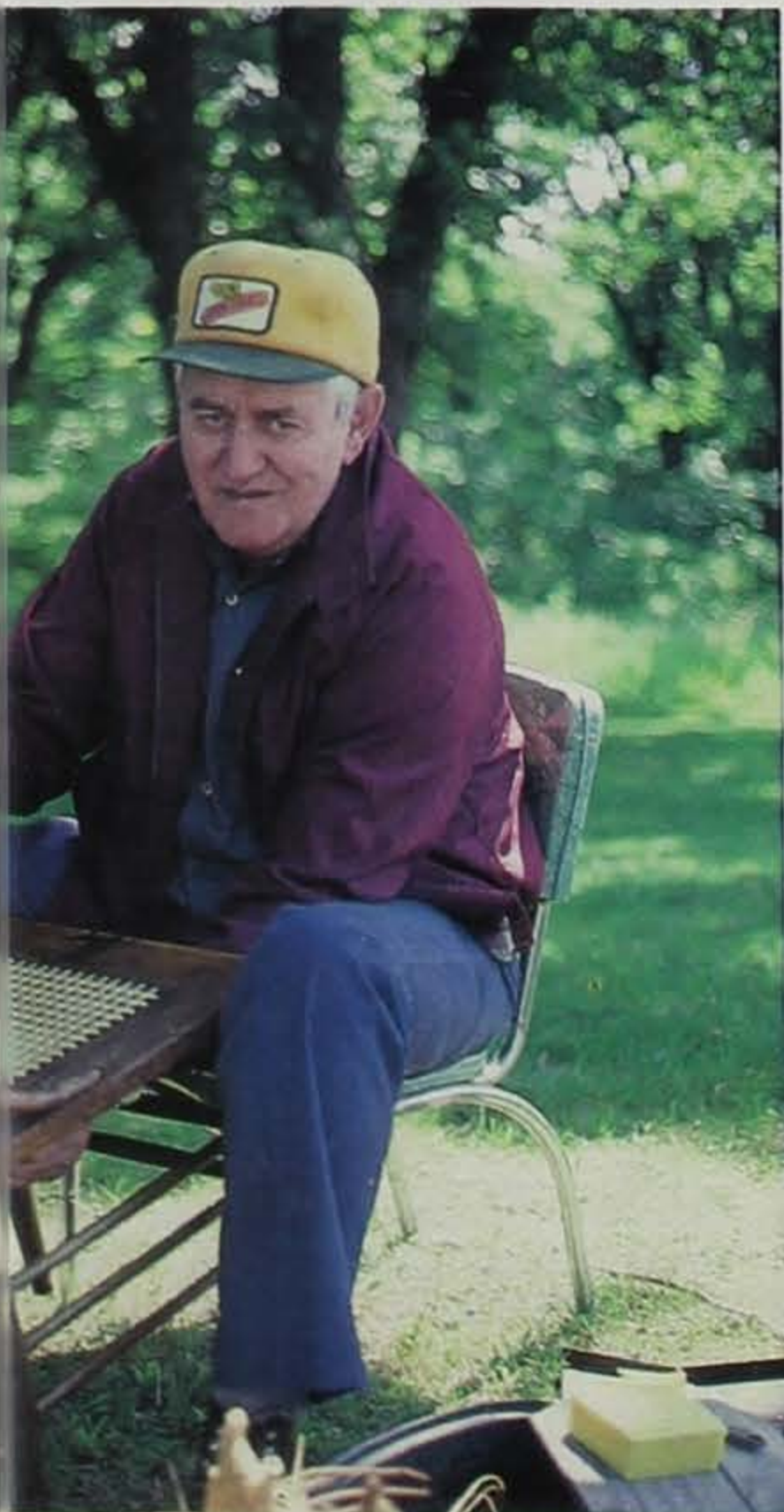
Activities in county parks include harp playing, chair caning, quilting, painting, mule jumping, and many more by local artists.



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are in an urban environment. The notes of the performers are blended with those of nature while the audience becomes a part of the scenery and the performance.

Art...Crafts...Music...in the park? Yes! The feeling of nature, experiencing the environment; enjoying the creations — man-made and natural. This is a part of our heritage. As Mary Kay Eakin stated, "The arts have strong powers of restoration and those powers are greatly enhanced when experienced in a setting of natural beauty — beauty that can be found within our parks."



LIME CREEK

The Making of a Nature Center

By Ben VanGundy

There has been something new and good going on in the heart of north Iowa's rich farmland. Starting in 1979 north Iowans, under the jurisdiction of the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board, have been planning and raising funds to construct a building devoted to increasing public awareness of our natural environment.

Their efforts were rewarded in 1984 with the completion of Iowa's newest conservation education facility — the Lime Creek Nature Center.

This five-thousand-square-foot facility is located on the north edge of Mason City within the 400-acre Lime Creek Conservation Area.

Like other nature centers across the state, the Lime Creek Nature Center will help bring people closer to nature. This building will promote the outdoor uses and conservation ethics in many ways.

The nature center was built with conservation in mind. Perched on a limestone cliff and facing south, the center passively uses solar energy to help conserve heating fuels. It is bermed on the north, east and west sides to retain heat more efficiently. This design and other features allow the center to be a practical example of energy conservation.

Building public awareness of our Iowa natural heritage will be one of the major benefits of the Lime Creek Nature Center. Inside the center programs will be carried out by the conservation board naturalist and knowledgeable volunteers. School groups, civic organizations, youth groups, and the general



Ben VanGundy

public can come to Lime Creek to learn about nature and conservation.

They can take advantage of the many aspects of the center that make learning in the outdoors fun.

Features inside the center include an auditorium area for 80 people complete with kitchenette and projection room for audio/visual presentations.

The middle portion of the building contains two levels of which space will be devoted to nature displays.

Displays will be tailored to various age groups and will provide nature interpretation to all visitors to the center.

A portion of the exhibit area will contain a sunken lounge area with a wood burning stove. This will provide an excellent place for small group presentations or a resting area for cross-country skiers or hikers.

Other attractions to the Lime Creek Nature Center include a classroom/conservation library, an animal room available for viewing native small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and a small laboratory/darkroom.

To accommodate staff and maintenance, offices and a workshop will also be part of the functioning nature center.

The Lime Creek Nature Center came about only because concerned citizens volunteered their time and resources. Key to the completion of the center was the Lime Creek Nature Center Foundation where members raised nearly \$300,000 and advised the Cerro Gordo

County Conservation Board on design and policies.

The North Iowa Area Community College building trades program completed the general construction, and the Kinney-Lindstrom Foundation provided \$100,000 as a challenge grant to get the project underway. Later they gave \$50,000 to purchase furnishings and equipment.

The entire project was an example of citizen involvement and private sector cooperation in a public project.

Iowa needs the strong support of its citizens to make conservation benefit all. The Lime Creek Nature Center will not be able to stop the loss of all of our valuable woodlands, wetlands, native prairies, but it will help the public to become more aware of what's happening to our natural resources.

Facilities like this nature center will help guide us and allow us to appreciate the natural heritage that remains.

The Lime Creek Nature Center will be a permanent symbol that we need to take a long-term management approach to natural resource conservation in Iowa.

Ben Van Gundy is the director of the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Board. He holds a B.S. degree in fish and wildlife biology from Iowa State University. He has served as a director in the county conservation system for the past seven years.

GOODBYE GOOD BUG

By Larry W. Totton



Children ask, "Why should I learn about bugs? Every time I see one in the house my mom says 'Kill it!' My dad never says anything about bugs unless one is walking on his potato plants, then he calls it names." We answer by explaining that insects provide us with a red pigment for cosmetics and food, produce the medicine cantharidin, are food for fish and birds, make honey and wax, eat other insect pests, produce silk, and are pollinators of flowering plants. Say something good about a bug today!

If we want people to appreciate the many values of insects in our world and to be cautious about the use of insecticides, we must be sure they notice a few of the more attractive species and the benefits which insects provide for humans. An interest in insects may also be sparked with examples of odd-shaped species looking like thorns, walking sticks, or miniature rhinoceroses.

Getting "hand-on" experience is promoted at environmental education workshops around Iowa. The Polk County Conservation Board is approved by the University of Toronto, to tag and release monarch butterflies as part of an ongoing migration research project. With help from the naturalist staff, tagging monarchs does get people personally involved with butterflies — they want their tagged monarch to fly safely all the way to Mexico.

A few monarchs are recaptured by naturalists in Mexico where most North American monarchs aim to spend the winter. A new generation of monarchs fly south each year since the life span of a monarch is always less than twelve months. Decendants of the southward migrants spread themselves northward in the spring months, repopulating areas where milkweed plants grow. The tags placed on monarch wings read: SEND TO ZOOLOGY, UNIVERSITY, TORONTO, CANADA. Each monarch

has its own number on the tag also.

In 1978 over 1,500 monarchs were tagged in Polk County. One of them was captured in Mexico that winter. During the fall migration of 1983 a monarch reared from a caterpillar by Ankeny's Southeast Elementary School students, was tagged and released. Teacher Jan Forsyth had encouraged her class to name their monarch then they learned details of each stage in the butterfly's life. Who knows what new chemical, medical benefits or migration secrets

may be discovered by encouraging an interest in the study of this and other insects? "Goodbye Burt," they cheered as Burt flapped his Halloween wings toward a new horizon outside of the classroom.

Larry Totton is a naturalist for the Polk County Conservation Board. He holds a B.S. degree in environmental sciences from Grand Valley State College in Michigan.



Cathy Meddin-Robinson

Migrating Monarchs

M Wildflower of the Month MAYAPPLE

By Dean M. Roosa and

William Pusateri

As is suggested by its name, the mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) blooms in May and has a fruit that somewhat resembles an apple. It is widespread in the eastern half of North America; in Iowa, it is common in the eastern two-thirds, scarce or absent in the western third. It grows in a variety of habitats — from moist woodlands to woodland edges to open grassy pastures. It is often

seen growing in large, circular patches — a result of spreading by underground rhizomes.

A member of the barberry family, Berberidaceae, it grows to a height of 18 inches and is topped by one or two lobed leaves which may reach a diameter of a foot. If the plant does not flower, it is topped by a single leaf. The flower is white, saucer-shaped, located between the two leaves and has six petals and twelve stamens. Pollination is accomplished by bumblebees, and the resulting fruit is a large pulpy berry about two inches long which becomes

yellowish when ripe. Rootstocks, green fruits, and foliage are all poisonous to some degree and some people contract a skin rash when handling the plant.

Ripened fruits lose their toxicity and are edible and were commonly used by pioneers for preserves. This plant has had a wide variety of uses as a medicine — from a treatment for snakebite, syphilis, liver and urinary problems to an insecticide and a purgative.

Mayapple, also called mandrake, is a distinctive and easily-recognized Iowa wildflower. It surely grows in a woodland or a state park near your home.

