

SPECIAL PROJECTS ARE ON YOUR SHOULDERS

By Mike Stegmann

In 1975 a long range plan written by the MCCB called for a program of specific actions to acquire and improve the quality and variety of conservation areas. Many of those goals have been met with the addition of areas including prairies, river access points, lakes and forests. Amenities to these areas have increased the diversity of outdoor recreation and education experiences for the residents and visitors to Marshall County.

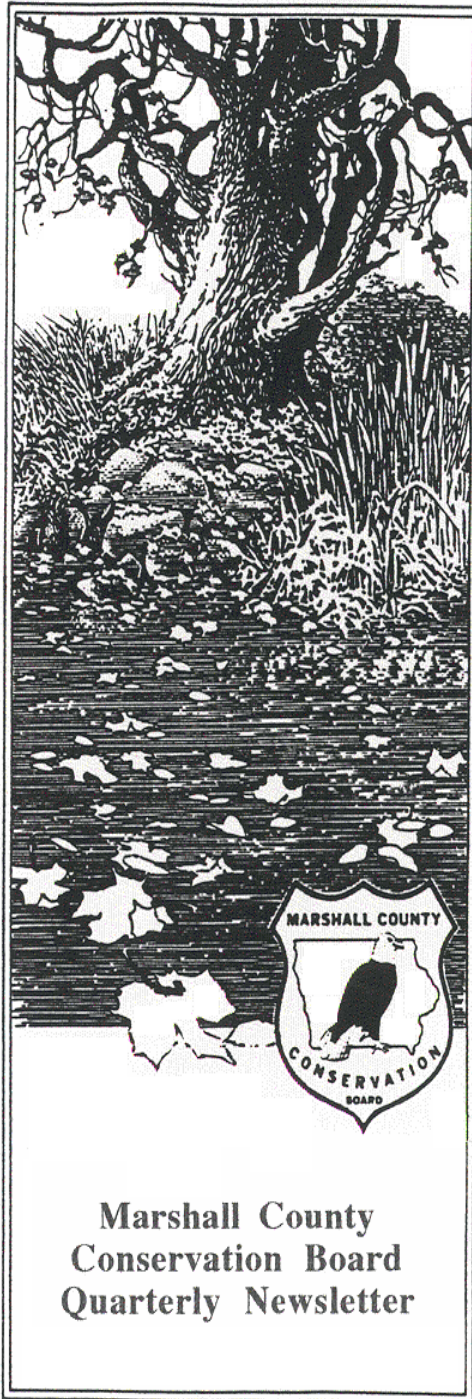
The individuals and businesses that support these projects have foresight to better the community by increasing the quality of life....

Some of these projects have included the Grimes Farm and Conservation Center, picnic shelter houses throughout the county, and trails joining areas together. The latest project at hand is the connection of the Linn Creek Recreational Trail to the Highway 330 trail, part of the American Discoveries Trail. This project, like most of the others the MCCB has completed, has been done so primarily through funding acquired from competitive grants and from donations from local businesses and individuals. The individuals and businesses that support these projects have foresight to better the community by increasing the quality of life now and for generations to come. After all, we are a community who supports healthy and better living.

Engineering is under way for the trail connection. It is slated to run in the public right of way from the Grimes Farm along Highland Acres Road and Iowa Avenue to Marsh Avenue where it will join the 330 trail. This project is now at the stage where top off gifts will see it through to completion. Of the approximately \$1.5 million needed to start construction, less than 8% is still waiting to be donated.

This is where you come into the picture. As I started this article, I said most of the special projects completed by the MCCB come to fruition through donations made by the public. This project is no exception. It is hoped that the remaining funds can be obtained yet this spring so that construction can begin as early as fall of this year. The importance and significance of this section is that it joins the Linn Creek Recreation Trail and the American

SEASONS



SPRING 2010

Volume 25

Issue 1

Discoveries Trail running along Highway 330 to complete a 20 mile contiguous trail.

We now ask you to consider a gift to help support this project. Donations can be made through the Marshall County conservation Board office at the Grimes Farm and Conservation Center.

FROM THE FIELD

By Marty Malloy

Well, not much is new from around the parks. Most of them were closed for the winter due to the massive amounts of snow we had. Seemed like every other day we were pushing snow!

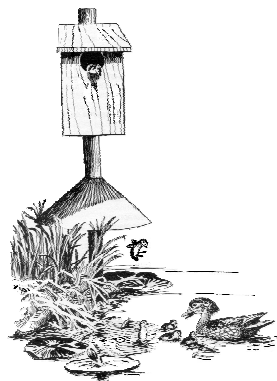
After pushing so much snow, it may sound funny, but we are actually looking forward to the grass growing!

The tower at GrimesFarm will be complete soon; we have the railing and Sea Coast large binocular viewing station ready to be installed as soon as weather allows us to get up the steep hill.

Hopefully spring will be nice to us and wildlife and heavy rains will be rare. After pushing so much snow, it may sound funny, but we are actually looking forward to the grass growing!

Other projects that kept us busy in the snow were the building of fish structure at Sand Lake, building nearly 70 wood duck boxes to be put up around the county areas, and building 16 kestrel boxes that have already been installed on the backs of signs throughout the county. The kestrel boxes, when included with others that we have previously posted, brings the total around the county to over 45 boxes. So when you see a kestrel flying around, watch to see where it goes to land, there just might be a kestrel box in the area. The success from last year's boxes was very good. In a few instances we had wrens and starlings use the kestrel nest boxes.

We still have wood duck boxes available for anyone who wants them. Give the conservation center a call and leave your name and number and we will give you a call. We are still in the process of checking all the existing wood duck boxes in our areas. We have limited



access with all the snow on the ground. Hopefully success was good on those too.

Some of the future spring projects include a new deck on Gander Lookout shelter at Green Castle Recreation Area; prairie plantings at Iowa River Wildlife Management Area and GrimesFarm; and one of our favorites, prairie management burns.

As weather permits, we will burn several of our prairies across the county and along with attempting a small woodland burn as well. We have attended several meetings and seminars in the past year and other agencies are having excellent results from these woodland burns in their areas. There are many factors that determine whether or not to burn woodlands and you must be very careful if you attempt it on your own property.

For more information you can call your local forester or call us here and we can try to give you some advice as well. That's all from the field for now. We look forward to seeing you out in the parks when the weather gets nice again!

LAST CHANCE.....

By Jeremiah Manken

Believe it or not, spring is on its way! Now is the time to take advantage of all the snow on the ground to have some last chance fun such as cross country skiing or snow shoeing. It seems we have had enough snow on the ground to enjoy these activities since early December. Each day we are setting a record for having at least five inches of snow on the ground.

Many years Iowa hasn't had enough snow to enjoy these activities even once during the season.

In February, the boy scouts held a Klondike Derby at Green Castle. This gave the scouts an opportunity to try both snow shoeing and cross country skiing. Both activities went over well and many said they would like to do those activities again.

If you have a set of show shoes or skis lying around I would encourage you to dust them off and enjoy the snow we have before it is gone. If you have an extra pair invite a friend along and introduce them to a new winter activity. Take a camera along. With all the snow wildlife is a little easier to view and you may capture a great image. It



Cont. from page 2

is also a very quiet time of year to be out for a hike. There is not much movement or sounds around you so it can be very peaceful.

Although all the snow can provide great recreational opportunities, it can also be hard on wildlife. The snow depth we have makes it harder for deer, turkey and pheasants to scratch down to the ground. You can go for a drive and see all of these bunched up in small areas in search of food. They all congregate in areas where the snow has blown off and bare ground is exposed making it a little easier to find food. Deer are a resourceful animal. I have observed many eating twigs and branches with other food sources limited.

Lastly, we received a new male swan at Green Castle from the Iowa DNR during the first snow storm in early December. Getting him early in the winter will hopefully provide enough time for the two to form a good bond and have a nest this spring. It will be here before we know it.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Marshall County Conservation Board would like to congratulate the following children on achieving Junior Naturalist certification for 2009! By attending three public programs and completing two independent projects they have received a certificate and an embroidered patch of a catfish.

Brandon Drew	Abbie McDonald
Haley Kilborn	Megan Messina
Seth Kilborn	Silva Schmidt
Trevor Stamp	

Need a 2010 Junior Naturalist log sheet for your 6 – 12 year old? Stop by the GrimesFarm & Conservation Center to pick up your copy.



REGULAR HOURS RETURN AT NATURE CENTER

The GrimesFarm & Conservation Center will be returning to regular hours the first of March. Week day hours will be Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. On Saturday the center will be open from 9:00 a.m. – Noon.

WEBCAM ON THE BIRDS!

Do you enjoy watching the activity around a bird feeder? You can now watch the birds at the feeders at the GrimesFarm & Conservation Center on line. We have installed a webcam in a library window to catch the action at the bird feeders. Go to <http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation/> and click on conservation center webcam. Enjoy!

PHOTO CONTEST

The Conservation Board’s 9th annual photo contest was a big success. The competition was very tough with 41 excellent photos this year. Thank you to everyone who took the time to enter.

Couldn’t make the awards presentation chili supper on February 18th? All the photos will be on display at the nature center during March.



Native Wildlife

1st place: Garry Brandenburg
Honorable Mentions: Rosemary Lyle,
Garry Brandenburg



People Outdoors

1st place: Pam Fuller
Honorable Mentions: Rosemary Lyle



Scenic

1st place: Susan Malloy
Honorable Mentions: Pam Fuller, Carla Young,
Rosemary Lyle

Youth

1st place: Adrienne Elder

Now is the time to start watching for those great Marshall County photographic moments to enter in next year’s contest.

SEASONS

Marshall County Conservation Board
2349 - 233rd St.
Marshalltown, IA 50158

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Marshalltown, IA
Permit No. 159



100% Recycled Paper

THANK YOU!

Newsletter Collation: Edna Kirse, Delores York, Jan Neisess, Kayann Lowry, Kay Russell, Dorothy Christensen, Bob Dunham, Ivadeen Proffitt; Dena Graff, Dianna Freiboth, Sharon Depew; **Programming:** Sally Wilson, Carrie Barr, Ed Seims, Teresa Vokoun, Al Illum, Steve Armstrong, Jeff Ferrin, Ray Pettengil, Adam Daters, Peter Kelly; **Reception Desk:** Janet Johnson, John Hall, Linette Tuttle; **Photo Reception/Chili Supper:** Dennis Johnson, Linette Tuttle, Delores York, Megan Pixler, Sharon Depew, Janet Stegmann, MCCB Board Members; **Donations to Trust:** Joel Beane/Rita Frederick, Gary/Monica Fulton, Rick/Carrie Glessner; **Linn Creek Trail Extension:** Marshalltown Convention/Business Bureau, James/Vicki Davison, Joel/Sharon Greer, Assistance League of Marshalltown, Center Associates, Jerry Gaffney, Lawrence/Mary Stewart, Martin/Lisa Wymore, Bob/Nancy Peterson; If we inadvertently missed someone, our thanks to you also.



MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

M – F 8:00 – 4:30

(641) 752-5490



mccb@co.marshall.ia.us

www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation

CONSERVATION CENTER HOURS:

Mon. – Fri. 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. – Noon

BOARD MEMBER

James Fitz Elmer Kunkel

Jeffrey Mathis Jerry Gaffney

STAFF

Mike Stegmann

Diane Pixler

Marty Malloy

Ruth Pearson

Jeremiah Manken

Director

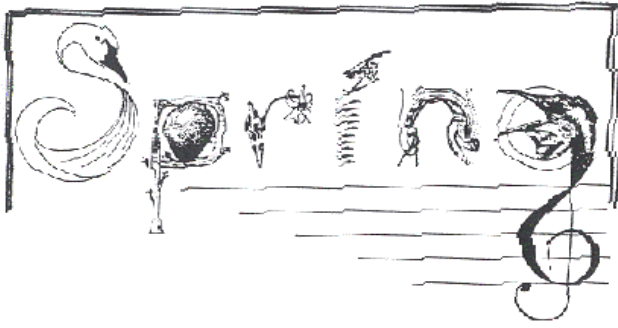
Naturalist

Maint. Supervisor

Adm. Asst.

Maint. Tech.

Editor, Diane Pixler



NATURE STORY HOUR

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center
2359 – 233rd Street

March 3 & 17 10 - 11 a.m.

April 7 & 21

May 5 & 19

Preschoolers and their adult(s) are invited to listen to fun nature stories, take a walk and explore nature's wonders. Join us on the first and third Wednesdays each month.

LAST CHANCE SNOWFEST

Saturday, March 6

10 a.m. – Noon

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

If we still have snow, let's make the most of it! Hit the trails with cross-country skis and snowshoes and warm up inside the nature center with hot chocolate. Bring your own equipment or use ours; supply limited.



UNCLE IKE NATURE PROGRAM

(Grades 1-5, family members welcome)

Cosponsored by the Marshall County Conservation Board and the Izaak Walton League to provide enjoyable environmental learning experiences. Programs are held the second Saturday of the month. This award winning program is FREE. "Nature Through the Looking Glass" is this year's theme.

"Reflecting on Nature"

March 13 9 – 11 a.m.

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Discover how nature uses symmetry and mimicry and join our masquerade party. Bring a pair of sunglasses.



"The Eyes Have It"

April 10 9 – 11 a.m.

Izaak Walton League grounds (2 miles south of Iowa Ave on So. 12th/Smith Ave.)

Look at the world through other creatures eyes. Discover an exciting world of color, energy, texture, and more.

JUNIOR CONSERVATIONISTS (Grades 6 – 8)

Call 752-5490 for permission slip and to register.

"Straighten Up and Fly Right"

Wednesday, March 17 2:45 – 5:00 p.m.

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

We'll get headed in the right direction for our Earth Day display.

"Fine Tuning"

Wednesday, April 14 2:45 – 5:00 p.m.

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

We'll put finishing touches on our Earth Day display.

"Way to Go"

Wednesday, May 5 2:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Lenihan Intermediate School

Time to replant our Monarch Way Station and get it ready for returning monarch butterflies!

TAXIDERM MY 101

Saturday, March 20

9 – 11 a.m.

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Curious of how the art of taxidermy is done? Join MCCB Director and bird taxidermist Mike Stegmann for a taxidermy demonstration. Mike will mount a bird skin to show how the process is done and answer questions you may have about the process or how to get started yourself.

BROWN BAG BUNCH

Bring your lunch or a snack and join the naturalist for an informal program or leisurely walk.

Fri., Mar. 26

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Natural Pest Control

GrimesFarm

Conservation Center

Mon., April 26

11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Wildflower Walk

Grammer Grove

Thurs., May 6

9 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Birding Hike

Heart of Iowa Trail

Rhodes Trailhead

IOWA TAXIDERM MY SHOW

Saturday, March 27

Noon–5 p.m.

Best Western Regency Inn –

Hwy. 14 & 30

Taxidermists from across the Midwest will again be showing and competing with their best pieces of work depicting bird, mammal, reptile, and fish mounts. The public is encouraged to attend a viewing of this unique art work on Saturday, March 27 from Noon to 5:00 pm.



ARTIFACT ROADSHOW

Sat., April 3 9:00 a.m. - Noon

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Do you have Indian artifacts such as arrow heads, axes, pottery or stone tools you'd like to know more about? Bring them to our road show to hear comments and basic information from Toby Morrow, author of Iowa Projectile Points and archaeologist with Wapsi Valley Archaeology, Inc.



SPRING CLEAN-UP

Saturday, April 10 9:00 am

GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Bring your gloves and pruners (or use ours) and help us clean up the flower beds at the nature center. Stay for half an hour or up to two hours, whatever works for you! **Please pre-register by Wednesday, April 7 by calling 752-5490.**

EARTH DAY

Saturday, April 17 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Marshall Town Center

Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day by visiting our display “Get Out and Celebrate!” Discover fun nature activities for yourself or the whole family. On Saturday we will be giving away door prizes and a limited number of free tree/shrub seedlings. Join us for anniversary cake and reading of Where the Wild Things Are at 1:00 p.m. **The display will be in place April 16 - 22 and will be staffed on April 17.**

PRAIRIE BURN

One night during week of April 19 7:30 p.m.

GrimesFarm (2359 – 233rd Street, Marshalltown)

Come watch prairie management in action. The scene will be spectacular as the fire lights up the night sky. The exact date for this program is dependent on weather conditions and will be determined on short notice. Listen to KDAO and KFJB for updates or call our office at 752-5490.



HUNTER SAFETY

Thursday, May 20 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 22 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Izaak Walton League grounds

Must attend both sessions

Completion of a hunter safety course is required for anyone born after Jan. 1, 1972 who wishes to buy a hunting license. Must be 12 or older. Registration opens on May 1. Call 752-5490 to register.

FREE FISHING DAYS

June 4, 5, 6

The Iowa DNR is once again offering a free fishing weekend for Iowa residents on June 4 – 6. No fishing license is required on June 4, 5, or 6 but all size and catch limits apply.



SUMMER KIDS SIGN UP

Call MCCB at 752-5490

Enrollments are limited

NATURE FRIENDS (Age 3 – 6 & adult)

June 10, 15, 17 (Tues & Thurs) 9 – 10 a.m.

Various county parks; Cost: \$8 per child

Parents, grandparents or guardians engage in fun nature activities with their preschooler that can continue at home.

Registration opens May 3

Pre-registration & payment due by May 28

UNCLE IKE DAY CAMP (Grade 1-5)

“Trash to Treasure Adventure”

Put on your hiking shoes and join us for an adventure through the recycling process, go on a scavenger hunt, visit the landfill, and have fun turning trash into all kinds of treasures.

June 30 – July 2 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Izaak Walton League grounds

Cost: \$15 per child

Registration opens May 3

Pre-registration & payment due by May 28

ADVENTURE CAMP (Grade 6 – 8)

August 9 - 11

GrimesFarm Conservation Center and various county parks

Cost: Approximately \$100

Camping out, Geocaching, star gazing, kayaking, wildlife watching, outdoor cooking, wild edibles, and more.

Registration opens May 3

Pre-registration and payment due by June 30

