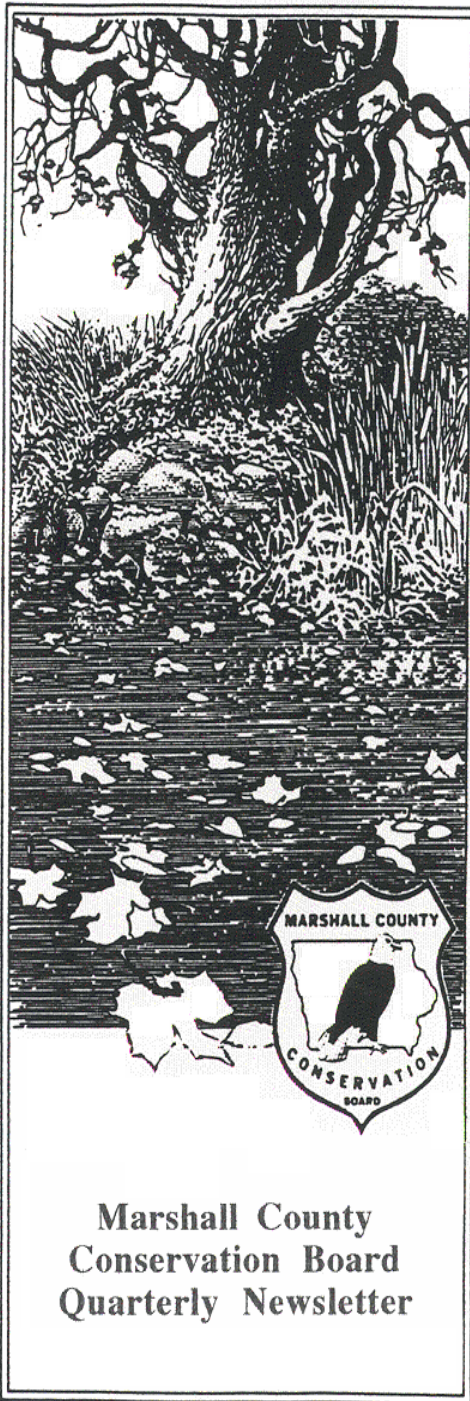


SEASONS



OBSERVATION TOWER COMPLETED AT GRIMESFARM

By Mike Stegmann

In March of 2010, the Marshall County Conservation Board completed construction of an observation tower. This tower overlooks the Linn Creek corridor at the Grimes Farm Conservation Area one mile west of Marshalltown, IA, along 233rd Street. The tower, known as the Mildred Hach Grimes Memorial Observation Tower was funded in part through memorial donations as well as additional private contributions.



The main viewing platform, large enough to hold groups of 12-15, stands 30 feet above ground level and is on the highest elevation point at the Grimes Farm. The view to the east overlooks the Marshalltown skyline and the Linn Creek Corridor as it winds its way to the Iowa River. Westward, the tower immediately over looks pasture ground and further in the distance lays the flat landscape of Iowa that was carved out by glaciers with ice up to a mile thick roughly 14,000 years ago. On a clear day one can view miles into Story County.

The structure was designed and engineered by Wells and Associates and constructed by MCCB employees Marty Malloy and Jeremiah Manken. In-kind service was donated from both Alliant and Consumers Energy who helped set the poles and lift large materials into place during construction.

The three-tiered structure is located along the west boundary of the Grimes Farm Conservation Area. Access to the tower is via a hiking trail only and is part of the MCCB promotion of Iowa's building healthier communities program. So far in its short life, the tower has become a major attraction to the area with many visitors making the not quite ½ mile trek daily.



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Curious travelers passing through Marshall County on Hwy 30 have seen the structure from a distance and have searched out its location and stopped by just to visit it. Other trail users on the Linn Creek Trail have not ended their journey at the Conservation Center as usual, but now venture on to the tower.

The GrimesFarm Area is open from 5:30a.m. - 10:30 p.m. daily. Conservation Center hours are M-F 8:30a.m. - 4:00p.m., Saturdays 9:00a.m. – Noon.

PROTECT YOUR TREES

Guest article by

Joe Herring, Iowa DNR Forester

It seems no matter what TV channel you watch, which newspaper you read, or which radio station you tune your dial to, news of crashing stock markets and failed financial institutions lurks around every corner. For young people, this may not be so worrisome: there is still time for their investments to recover. However, for older folks or those nearing retirement, the notion that your long-term investments might suddenly evaporate is cause for serious concern.

Unfortunately, when it comes to planting and caring for shade trees, many people fail to understand the correlation to their IRAs and other long-term investments. Residential shade trees can represent a significant portion of the value of our home & yard, can provide substantial energy savings and aesthetic values, and like retirement plans, can take many years to mature. The last thing you want is to invest 50-60 years of growth into a shade tree that, upon reaching “maturity,” crashes!



The first and most critical step to protecting your investment is proper planning --- which can only be done before a tree gets planted. Take the time to consult with local botanists, extension agents, master gardeners, and others to make sure you select the right tree for your site. Soil testing can be done cheaply and easily and will insure that your investment choice is properly aligned with your site’s capabilities in terms of drainage and fertility. Sunlight and growing space are also considerations that need to be accounted for when selecting a tree, since the dimensions & shade tolerances of trees will vary.

Secondly, while planning, you should determine your risk tolerance. If you’re young and have lots of time, you’ll likely want to invest in

slower-growing, longer-lived tree such as an oak --- while it may take longer to mature, it will be able to withstand the constant day-to-day fluctuations of ice storms, winds, and droughts --- an important trait to have here in Iowa! Selecting this type of tree will also mean that you can leave a long-lasting legacy for your heirs.

On the other hand, a “live fast, die young” type of tree such as silver maple or cottonwood may actually be the best choice if you’re the type of investor who needs immediate results. Like stocks, these trees have the potential to make big gains in a short amount of time, achieving “maturity” very quickly. But beware! These investments can crash just as quickly, so it’s imperative to make sure there are no sidewalks, buildings, or other potential targets near these trees which could create a hazardous situation for life or property. Proper pruning at a young age can go a long ways in strengthening these trees, but more on that later.

Finally while planning, remember that diversity is key. Just as you wouldn’t place all your financial “eggs in one basket,” nor should communities and homeowners practice the planting of monocultures in the urban forest. Community tree surveys done by DNR, ISU Extension, and private arborists indicate that many Iowa towns have a particular abundance of Ash and Maple trees. Please check with your local extension office or DNR Forester to see if a tree survey has been done in your community so that we may bolster our defenses against tree pests through diversification.

Beyond planning, the other critical component to safe and gainful shade tree investing involves care and maintenance --- this cannot be overstated. Whether you planned for and planted your shade trees yourself, or whether they were inherited from the previous homeowner, you now have the responsibility to maintain and care for that investment. Simple things such as watering, mulching, fertilizing, and minor corrective pruning can often be dealt with easily by homeowners themselves. However, in the case of major pruning, identification of hazardous limbs & trunks, and disease & insect prevention/control, it is highly recommended that you hire professional help.



Professional arborists are akin to personal financial advisors --- they are trained and experienced in all aspects of tree care and work for

you to make sure your investment is safe. Make sure you take the time to choose one who has the requisite training and certifications. Ask for and check references if possible, as well as liability insurance coverage. Many harmful and outdated tree care practices such as topping, flush-cut pruning, and poor or dangerous tree climbing techniques are still used today by less experienced businesses --- it will pay in the long run to hire someone with a long-standing reputation for professional tree care in your community.

These tips offer only a glimpse of how to properly plan and care for your residential shade trees --- more information is available from your county extension office or online at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/>. So while the fate of your financial portfolio during these hard times may keep you up at night, at least you can rest easy knowing that you are as savvy & wise as Warren Buffett to your shade trees.

GET OUT AND ENJOY NATURE!

By Jeremiah Manken

With the beginning of summer fast approaching, it is an exciting time to enjoy the great outdoors. This is the perfect time of year to get out and see some of what nature has to offer.

The end of spring brings all the young animals hatched and born in early spring out of their nests and dens. Young raccoons, squirrels, and owls were all born or hatched while it was still cold out and now is the time they come out for the first time. Young geese and ducks have just hatched, and fawns will soon be born.

Whether you just go for a drive, get out for a hike, or go for a walk, there is a lot of activity going on around you. If you happen to come across a fawn while out be sure to leave it alone; the mother is probably not too far away.



Green Castle Recreation Area also has a new resident. At the end of April, a bison calf was born. She is growing fast and it is fun to watch

her run around the pasture with the other bison. It is amazing to see the instincts the herd has to protect the young. The other day the three youngest bison were running through the pasture. They spotted me walking up the road and instantly the mother ran over to the baby and blocked her from my view. I

would like to see a large herd someday and see how they behave.

If you haven't made it to Green Castle to see the young bison and geese, I encourage you to do so before they are all grown up. Get out and enjoy nature!

DROP IN FOR SAVINGS

By Diane Pixler

Want to save money on your water bill? You've probably applied some water-saving techniques inside your home already such as:

- Shorter showers
- Turning off water while brushing teeth/shaving
- Running clothes or dishwashers with full loads
- Fixing leaky faucets
- Using low flow shower heads and toilets

If you are already doing these things, fantastic! Did you know you can save even more? Now it's time to look outdoors for water-saving techniques.

The average American family uses 120 gallons of water each day for outdoor uses, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.). The majority of that is for watering lawns and gardens. How would you like to get some free water for your lawn and garden? Yes, free! By placing a rain barrel at the bottom of your home's downspout, you can capture rainwater for later use on your garden or lawn.



Rain barrels also reduce the amount of storm-water run-off around your home. The E.P.A. estimates that about 600 gallons of run-off is produced from a 1,000 square-foot roof during a one-inch rain. Rather than flooding storm drains, rainfall should be allowed to soak into the ground to recharge underground reservoirs.

So why should you use a rain barrel?

- Naturally soft rainwater is great for plants (indoors & out) and washing vehicles/windows
- Barrels work well with soaker hoses to water roots instead of foliage
- Reduces storm-water runoff
- Allows you to use a free water source and saves you money

Rain barrels can be purchased ready-made or constructed from a large trash can or 55 gallon plastic food-grade drum. If you'd like to make your own, sign up for our Rain Barrel Workshop on July 10. See the Special Events page for details. Space is limited so sign up today.

SEASONS

Marshall County Conservation Board
2349 – 233rd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

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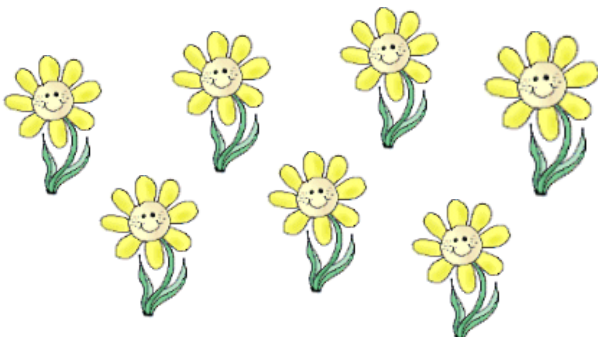
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THANK YOU!

Newsletter collation: Edna Kirse, Ivadeen Proffitt, Dianna Freiboth, Bob Dunham, Kay Russell, Sharon Depew, Paul & Darlene Maytag, Jan Neisess, Dena Graf, Delores York; **Programming:** Toby & Brian Greene, Erica Malloy, Sam Scafferi, Barb & Larry Duffy, Sally Wilson, Carrie Barr, Toby Morrow, Marilyn Willits; **Poster Contest:** Helen Degner, Sigourney Odor, Ed Savage, Nita Harre, Kate Hauptly; **Flower bed maintenance:** Kathy Elliff, Edna Kirse, Glen & Sharon Depew, Dena Graf; **Earth Day:** Colly Dust, Lori Andrews, Sally Wilson, Calvin Halvorsen, Sam Arneson, Madison & Kim Sogge, Jacob, Danielle, & Teri Ramsey-Smith, Mary & Lawrence Stewart, Lynda & Journey Meill, Chase Reeves, Edna Kirse, Janey Swartz, Boy Scout Troop 308, Port's Canoe Livery; **Reception Desk:** Ivadeen Proffitt, Norm Charlton, Janet Johnson, Vivian LeVier, Delores York, Bill Stone, Margaret Kroener. **Bench:** Elmer Kunkel memorial



**MARSHALL COUNTY
CONSERVATION BOARD**
2349 – 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158
Conservation Center Hours
M – F 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 - Noon
(641) 752-5490
mccb@co.marshall.ia.us
www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation

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Jeffrey Mathis
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Mike Stegmann
Ruth Pearson
Diane Pixler
Marty Malloy
Jeremiah Manken

Director
Adm. Asst.
Naturalist
Maintenance Supervisor
Maintenance Tech.

Editor, Diane Pixler



NATURE STORY HOUR

June 2 & 16 10:00 a.m.

July 7 & 21

August 4 & 18

Grimes Farm & Conservation Center
(2359 233rd Street)

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

FREE FISHING DAYS

June 4, 5, 6, 2010

The Iowa DNR is once again offering Iowa residents a chance to go fishing without buying a license. All limits and size restrictions apply.



STAR GAZING

Dean Memorial Observatory
Green Castle Recreation Area

June 12 4:00 p.m. Solar Viewing & Potluck

July 16 8:30 p.m. Moon, Venus, & Mars

Aug. 13 8:30 p.m. Perseid Meteors

The Amateur Astronomers of Central Iowa (AACI) invite the public for a telescopic view of the sky. For information contact Jim Bonser at 641/751-8744.



BROWN BAG BUNCH

Bring a lunch and join the naturalist. **Note special pre-registration dates for these summer sessions.**

Call 752-5490

Monday, June 14 Bird Bath Bonanza
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Two part workshop to create sand-cast bird bath from large hosta or rhubarb leaf. Part 2 held June 22. **Pre-register & pay \$5 by June 9.** Space limited.

Tues. July 20 Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge Tour

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Carpool from Grimes Farm; Explore tall grass prairie, Learning Center exhibits, & bison/elk auto tour. **Pre-register by July 12.**

HUNTER SAFETY COURSE

June 17 (6-9 p.m.) & June 19 (8 a.m.-4 p.m.) or
Aug. 19 (6 – 9 p.m.) & Aug.21 (8a.m.-4 p.m.)
Izaak Walton League grounds

This free 10-hour class is open to anyone 12 years of age or older. **Preregistration is required by calling 752-5490 after June 1 for June class or August 1 for August class or can register on-line at <http://www.iowadnr.gov>.**

CANADA GOOSE BANDING

Week of June 21 morning

Green Castle Recreation Area
(1 mile south of Ferguson)

The DNR and MCCB staff will band Canada geese during the week of June 21. To sign up to help **call 752-5490 by June 14.**

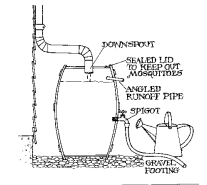
RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Saturday, July 10

9 a.m. – Noon

Green Castle Recreation Area
Gander Lookout Shelter

Interested in conserving water and using a free water source for your garden? Come and construct your own rain barrel to take home. Instruction and materials will be provided for \$25. **Pre-register and pay by July 1 by calling 752-5490.** Space is limited.



GRIMES FARM FUN RUN

Saturday, July 10 8:00 a.m.

Grimes Farm Conservation Area

Something for the whole family! 5k trail run/walk, 1.6 mi. trail run/walk & kids' races. Check in: 7: a.m. For more information contact Carrie Barr at 641-752-9778 or grimesbarr@aol.com. Trails are open year round for anyone to walk or run.



WHO'S YOUR NEIGHBOR?

Wednesday, July 28 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Marietta Sand Prairie
(1¼ mi. N of Hartland Friends Church off E-29)

Join Deb Lewis, Curator of ISU's Ada Hayden Herbarium for a plant's eye-view of the prairie. We'll start with a hands-on intro of prairie plant interactions, take a short walk, and sit in the prairie. Wear long pants & closed shoes & bring a lawn chair.

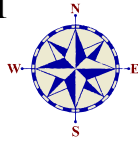
JUNIOR CONSERVATIONIST ADVENTURE CAMP

(Students entering grades 6 – 9)

August 9 - 11

Grimes Farm & other Marshall County Parks

Does your middle-school student enjoy the out-of-doors? Join us for tent camping, kayaking, Geocaching, outdoor cooking, hiking, wildlife watching, star gazing, and more! Cost: \$100. To register, call MCCB at 752-5490 by June 30. Space is limited.



of or are thinking about the possibility of becoming an appointed member, please inquire with either the county conservation board office or BOS.

A SAD FAREWELL!

It is with deep sadness that we say goodbye to one of the Marshall County Conservation Board Members. Elmer Kunkel who served on the board since 2000, passed away on March 27, 2010. During his tenure on the board he was instrumental in the development and acquisition of special projects like the Grimes Farm and Conservation Center, the Iowa River Wildlife Management Area, Green Century Farm, Hollingsworth Timber and Sand Lake. His smile, wit, and business mind are noticeably absent from meetings. Thanks Elmer, for sharing part of your life with us.

HELP WANTED!

I know we just started summer, but we wanted to give you a heads-up on our fall programming. We will be having both Prairie Heritage Day (September 25) and Halloween Hike (October 23) this year. Both events require many volunteers; would you like to help? Give us a call at 752-5490 for details or to sign up to help. Thanks!

WELCOME MONARCHS!



In early May, the Junior Conservationists prepared the Monarch Way Station at Lenihan Intermediate School in Marshalltown for the new generations of monarchs. Students cleaned out old vegetation, planted new annuals in with the established perennials, mulched and watered the 12' x 12' butterfly garden. This certified Monarch Way Station was established in 2008 and provides food sources for both caterpillars and adult monarchs. Individuals and organizations can learn how to establish their own monarch way station at www.monarchwatch.org.

THANK YOU BILL

A big thank you to Bill Martin for his six years of service to the Marshall County Conservation Board. Bill resigned from the Board at the end of January to pursue an opportunity to serve as a County Supervisor.

WELCOME JULIE

Hello. My name is Julie Stahl and I am the newest member of the MCCB. I will be serving out Bill Martin's term. I am married and have a nine year old daughter. I enjoy spending time with my family, fishing, gardening, bird watching, photography, and traveling. I look forward to serving on the board and working with the staff to help our parks.

A CHANCE TO SERVE

The County Conservation Board system is unique to the State of Iowa. Each of the 99 counties in Iowa has a Conservation Board made up of five volunteers from throughout the community and appointed by the county Board of Supervisors. The 5 year term is staggered so annually a member is either reappointed or a new member brought on board. Conservation Board members set policy and provide guidance for the operations of the county conservation department. If you have ever thought

