

The Oak

A Quarterly Newsletter of the
Black Hawk County Conservation Board

2410 West Lone Tree Road
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613
Spring 1991 Vol. 10 No. 3

MAJOR CHALLENGES

by Steve Finegan
Executive Director

The Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors has been making some tough decisions in regard to the 1991-1992 budget. The services provided by the County depend upon property taxes as its source of funding. A major decline in population with a corresponding erosion of the tax base coupled with ever increasing service demands has created a major budget challenge.

The Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB) has seen its property tax support reduced by 30% or \$233,000 for the next year. To comply with a budget cut of this magnitude has required the BHCCB to take several drastic steps. These measures include reduced services, initiation of higher fees, cutting equipment replacements and the elimination of two full-time staff positions and 4 seasonal park workers. A further explanation of these measures is outlined on page two. This is just the start, the full extent of these budget cuts has yet to be decided!

Added to this challenge is the possible loss of state funds from the Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund (REAP). REAP funds were going to play a major role in acquiring and developing the Cedar Valley Lakes Project. For example, REAP funds were used recently to acquire the 180 acre addition to Hartman Reserve Nature Center (HRNC)

and add a part-time naturalist to the HRNC staff. However, if the Iowa General Assembly and the Governor cuts the REAP program, these opportunities will be lost.

Our mission has always been to conserve the natural resources of Black Hawk County for the next generation through wise use and planning today. It is clear our efforts to address these needs on a long-range basis will be seriously affected. Obviously, we must redefine our priorities and closely monitor our funding sources. Thus, our remaining financial resources will be directed to the short-term needs of maintaining our existing facilities.

Securing adequate funds for conservation and resource management has always been an uphill battle which has required individuals and organizations to fight for what they think is right. As a person served by our programs, your input and help is welcomed and encouraged. You will see some dramatic changes in the programs and services offered by the BHCCB in the coming year. We hope you will understand and work with us as the BHCCB addresses these major challenges.



WELCOME, RACHEL FULTON
by Mary Kay Eakin



Annually the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB) looks to the Board of Supervisors for its funding. This year, however, they have received a dividend in the form of a new board member, Rachel Fulton. Rachel, who served on the Board of Supervisors for eight years, replaces Jean Klingaman, whose term on the (BHCCB) has expired.

Rachel's interest in conservation was sharpened and broadened during her years as a Black Hawk County Supervisor. In that position she had an opportunity to study new programs as they were presented for funding and to see, firsthand, how they fit into the overall plans for development and improvement within the county. Also, as an outside, objective viewer, she was able to evaluate the impact of these programs on the county as a whole. It was this perspective that led her to accept the challenge of working for conservation from the production end rather than the funding end.

Her interest in and support of the Sierra Club and her personal pleasure in using the trails within the Black Hawk County Parks system already existed. Now she looks forward to having an active role in the ever-expanding programs of the county conservation system and the generating of ideas for future developments within the county.

Rachel becomes the first member of the Black Hawk County Conservation Board to have also served on the County Board of Supervisors. She regards her years as a Supervisor as a distinct advantage. Her knowledge of how decisions are made by the Supervisors and of the variety of programs competing for funds can be of value in shaping decisions about future Conservation Board programs and policies.

Her other major conservation interests are the further development of trails throughout the county, as well as link-up with other county trail systems, and the continuing development of the Cedar Valley Lakes Project.

Rachel's "new hat" fits her nicely and we wish her much success and satisfaction in the wearing of it.

PROGRAM CUTS

The following are examples of how our budget cuts will effect some of the programs of the BHCCB.

Wildlife Habitat: Our Resources Coordinator's job was to supervise the management of the natural areas in our parks and work with landowners to create wildlife habitat on private lands. The position of Wildlife Conservationist has been eliminated and this service to private landowners will be greatly reduced.

Integrated Roadside Management: This program placed an emphasis on controlling noxious weeds along our roadsides. The program sought to reduce chemical usage by selective spraying of the targeted species, and to establish and maintain healthy communities of native vegetation which eliminate conditions that favor noxious weeds. The side benefits of this program included increased wildlife habitat and a safer environment. The Conservation Board has eliminated funding for this position. However, we hope this program will be picked up by the Black Hawk County Highway Department.

Increased Fees: To maintain our existing services we will be increasing fees. Examples include charging for the programs of Hartman Reserve Nature Center and higher fees for camping and shelter reservations. The full scope and range of these fees has not been finalized but some of the changes include raising the camping fees at Black Hawk, Hickory Hills and McFarlane parks from \$5 to \$6 per day with electrical rates staying at \$2 per day. The camping fees at Siggelkov and Thunder Woman parks will remain at \$4.00 and \$2.00 respectively. Reserving a shelter will be \$15 for the first 3 hours and \$3.00 for each additional hour.



Sproutings -

Nature Center News



by Vern Fish
Nature Center Director

THE HARTMAN CHALLENGE

As outlined on page 1 and 2 the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB) has been asked to make major budget cuts. These cuts will effect the Hartman program in the following ways:

Fees: A Hartman fee structure will be finalized and initiated for our general public programs in June. Fees for school programs will take effect in the fall of 1991.

Hartman Addition: If REAP funds are deleted by the Iowa General Assembly, our plans for trail development and public access for this new addition will be put on hold.

Part-time Naturalist: This position, which was funded by REAP funds, will be cut if the state does not fund the REAP program.

The summer issue of the The Oak will provide more details on these changes.

BIG THANK YOU'S

Thanks to **Mark Kittrell of Team Connecting Point**, who offered us a deal on a new computer and printer we could not refuse. Mark also provided the needed technical advice to use our new hardware on this newsletter. Equally, generous was the gift of \$1,000 from the **Cedar Falls Wal-Mart** through the Wal-Mart corporation of Bentonville, Arkansas.

Finally, the staff of HRNC wish to extend our condolences to the family and friends of **Gus Hanuske**, a long time friend of the nature center. Over the

years, Gus contributed dozens of slides and photos and hours of volunteer time presenting slide programs on spring flowers, fall colors and trips to Alaska. Gus passed away this winter and his family asked that all memorials be contributed to the Friends of Hartman Reserve. Thank you Gus.

EARTH DAY CLEAN UP

Play an active role in this year's Earth Day celebration by rolling up your sleeves and helping clean up the new addition to HRNC. If you or your organization wish to participate in this effort on Saturday, April 20 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, call HRNC at 277-2187 to register.

ACORN GIFT SHOP

Just in time for spring and Earth Day, the shop will have available two new T-shirt designs. We have commissioned a special T-shirt image from local artist **Brian Seger** entitled, **SPRING!** This limited edition captures the spring flowers and animals of the Hartman forest. Earth Day T-shirts are available in both adult and childrens sizes and feature the new 1991 design. Other items include notecards, sweat-shirts, string bags and canvas shopping bags with the HRNC logo.

The shop, which offers a variety of educational items, is staffed by volunteers on Sundays from 1-5 pm. All profits go to the programs of the nature center.



SUNDAYS

FEED THE ANIMALS- Sundays in April and May, 3:00-4:00 pm. Learn about ecological needs of local common animals by helping the naturalists feed our snakes, turtles and fish.

WELCOME HOME- Sun., April 7, 1:00-4:00 pm. Build a home for a bluebird! We'll provide the bluebird house kit, you bring the hammer and screwdriver. Please make reservations; materials are limited. Black Hawk Humane Society will also present the program, "CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE WILD KIND" at 2:00 pm to answer questions about wildlife.

SPINNING- Sun., April 14, 1:00-5:00 pm. Learn about spinning as Becky Stansberry cards and spins a variety of natural fibers.

BEAUTY OF SPRING WILDFLOWERS - PHOTOGRAPHY SEMINAR- Sun., April 21, 2:00-4:00 pm. Bill Witt will guide you in the art of wildlife photography.

CARILLON BRASS- Sun., April 28, 2:00-3:00 pm. Tour the HRNC trails in search of spring wildflowers and enjoy a free concert at the amphitheater.

HAMMER & MOUNTAIN DULCIMER WORKSHOP AND CONCERT- Sun., May 5, 1:00-3:00 pm. Holly Williams will conduct a workshop for beginners at 1:00 pm and perform a free concert at 2:00 pm. 10 dulcimers are available for use at the workshop. Fee \$10. Call 277-2187 to register.

FIDDLE STRING BAND- Sun., May 12, 2:00-3:00 pm. This old time music sets the stage for your spring wildflower walk.

WILDLIFE ART EXHIBIT AND SALE- Sun., May 19, 1:00-5:00. Several local wildlife artists have been invited to display and sell their work with a backdrop of live music and spring flowers. The Black Hawk Humane Society will help answer your questions about wildlife when they present the program "CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE WILD KIND" at 2:00 pm.



SPR SCH

SPECIAL EVENTS

FIRE AND ICE- Tues., March 26, 7:30 pm. The Waterloo Greyhound Park has designated this date as a fundraiser for the Friends of Hartman Reserve. A percentage of your admission will be donated to the Friends. Enjoy the races and support HRNC.

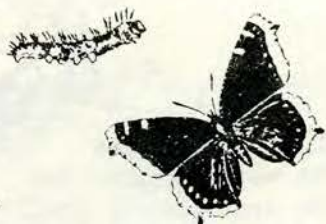
HARTMAN EARTH DAY CLEANUP- Sat., April 20, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm. Explore the new 180 acre addition to HRNC and celebrate Earth Day at the same time by joining our cleanup day. Call 277-2187 for more information and to register.

EARTH FAIR- Sat., April 20, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm, George Wyth State Park. Celebrate the 21st birthday of Earth Day with a bike ride, childrens programs, UNI folk dance performances, live music, guided nature walks, a walk through the earth fair mall, Earth Works-student presentations, food and a NEW GAMES FESTIVAL. For a complete schedule of events contact HRNC.

MARCH OF DIMES- Sat., May 4, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm, George Wyth State Park. HRNC will serve as the halfway checkpoint for this year's march. Call Millisa Tierney at 235-6121 for more inform.

PRAIRIE BURN- Sat., May 11, 9:00 am - noon, Hickory Hills Park. Learn how to use fire as a prairie management tool by helping the staff of the BHCCB burn a small prairie plot. Please meet at the Program Center at Hickory Hills. Call HRNC at 277-2187 for more information and to register.

RING EDULE



Mourningcloak Butterfly

KIDS EVENTS

WE'VE GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN OUR HANDS! Sat. April 20, 1:30-3:30 at the EARTH FAIR at George Wyth Park. HRNC, Hearst Center and Waterloo Arts & Rec. will help you conjure up your own creature, play GEO-games, and become a TRASH TERMINATOR. Call HRNC to register. \$1 fee.

JR. NATURALIST PROGRAM- The following special events are for 4th-6th graders. \$2 fee per program, reservations and advanced payment required.

*** **THE LIVING AND THE DEAD-** Sat., April 27, 10:00 - 12 noon. Take a trip into the past as we explore the cemeteries of Black Hawk County.

*** **WATER WACKINESS-** Sat., May 11, 1:00-3:00 pm. Get your feet wet by building and racing your own rubberband powered boat. We'll also meet "Cold Hand Luke" and his cronies.

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

HARTMAN CURRICULUM- Sat., May 4, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm. This workshop, which offers a \$25 stipend, will provide the teacher with curriculum relevant outdoor teaching materials. Call HRNC at 277-2187 to register.

OLOGIES ALONG THE SHELL ROCK- June 14 & 15, Heery Woods State Park. This environmental workshop will offer unique experiences for teachers, naturalists and families while they explore the scenic Shell Rock River and surrounding woodlands, wetlands and prairie. Call Heery Woods, (319)278-4237 to register.

CEDAR VALLEY NATURE TRAIL

FREE WEEKENDS- This year's free weekends on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail will again be the second weekends in May (11 & 12), August (10 & 11) and October (12 & 13). Normally a trail pass is required for all ages 11 and up. For more information contact the BHCCB at 266-6813.

CONCERTS ON THE TRAIL- The BHCCB will again feature a series of concerts at 5:30 pm on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail at the quarry between LaPorte City and Brandon on the **second Saturdays of June, July, August, and September.** To receive full concert details send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: "Concerts On the Trail," Black Hawk Co. Conservation Bd., 2410 W. Lone Tree Rd., Cedar Falls, IA. 50613.

ON EXHIBIT

THE NATURAL SIDE OF NORTHEAST IOWA- This photo exhibit is the work of Kip Ladage, a resident of Tripoli and a self-taught amateur nature photographer. Kip's work will be on display at the Hartman Interpretive Center this spring through Memorial Day.

SPRING FLOWERS OF HARTMAN- This collection of photographs by a variety of local artists captures the parade of spring ephemerals which grace the Hartman forest. This interpretive display may also be viewed through Memorial Day.

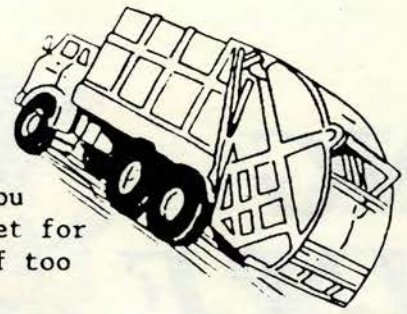


ON THE WATER

CANOE TRIPS- Wed., June 12 & June 26, 1:00-5:00 pm. Canoe from Thunder Woman Park to Black Hawk Park. Reservations required, call 277-2187. Transportation provided from end point to starting point. Canoe rental - \$10/canoe.

POND CANOEING- Tues., June 11, 18, 25. Rent a canoe for \$5/hour and explore the ponds in the new addition. Call HRNC at 277-2187 and make reservations.

ACTIVITY PAGE



When your mother asks you to take out the trash, where do you take it? What would you do if you turned on the water faucet for a cold drink of water and nothing came out? The problems of too much garbage and not enough clean water are real problems.

Below are two activities to help you find out what you throw away and if you are using too much water in your shower. Have mom or dad help!

1. LEFTOVERS

On the list below, put an X next to the items that you threw away this week.

___ paper bag

___ newspaper

___ book

___ magazine

___ paper milk carton

___ other paper

___ napkin

___ aluminum can

___ broken toy



___ apple core

___ old clothes

___ plastic milk carton

___ tin can

___ glass jar

___ gum wrapper

___ orange peel

___ plastic bag

___ grass clippings

Now, circle all the items that you could have reused. Put an R by all the items that you could have recycled.

2. DOWN THE DRAIN

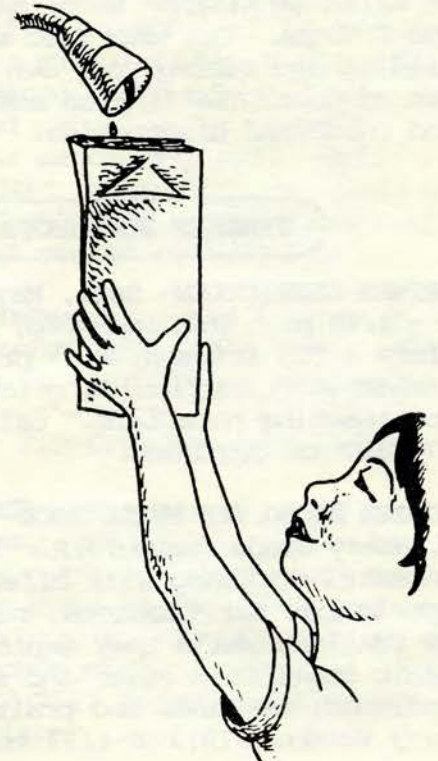
Are you using too much water in your shower?

Here's how to find out:

--You will need: an empty milk carton opened on the top to form a square, a watch with a second hand, and an adult to tell you when to start and when to stop.

--Turn on the shower to a normal shower flow. Then get in and hold the milk carton up to the shower for 10 seconds.

--If the milk carton overflows in less than 10 seconds, your shower head uses too much water.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE WILD KIND
by John Burger, McElroy Graduate Intern

While a student at Iowa State, many times I worked until 5:00 in the morning. On these mornings, while walking back to the dorms, I would suddenly be bombarded by the droppings of 800,000 crows as they left their night resting places outside of Friley Hall. The only thing I could do to avoid being hit was to run as fast as I could to the nearest available doorway. Not only did the crows leave behind a sticky mess, but, all night long they would put up such a racket that the students in the dorms couldn't sleep. To realize how loud they truly were, just remember that these same students weren't bothered in the least by blasting stereos, drag-racing cars, or screaming professors.

Right now, you might be asking yourself, what does this have to do with the Hartman Reserve Nature Center. Nothing actually, but it does serve to illustrate one of the problems that can occur when wildlife moves into our backyards, homes, and cities.

Many people have experienced problems with urban wildlife. Some common examples are the seemingly infinite number of rabbits destroying your garden, the thousands of bats in your attic, or the obnoxious raccoons spreading your trash all over the neighborhood. In the past, many people dealt with these problems by using poisons, guns, or lethal traps. However, many people now want to rid their property of the troublesome wildlife without harm to the animals. Because of this, local humane societies, nature centers, and conservation officers receive countless telephone calls asking for help in solving these wildlife problems.

In the past, there has not been a single source to which we could turn to find non-lethal methods of controlling urban wildlife. To rectify this problem, the Humane Society of the United States recently published a book entitled, "**The Humane Control of Wildlife in Cities & Towns.**" This little book contains information on solving problems with every kind of wildlife from A to Z.

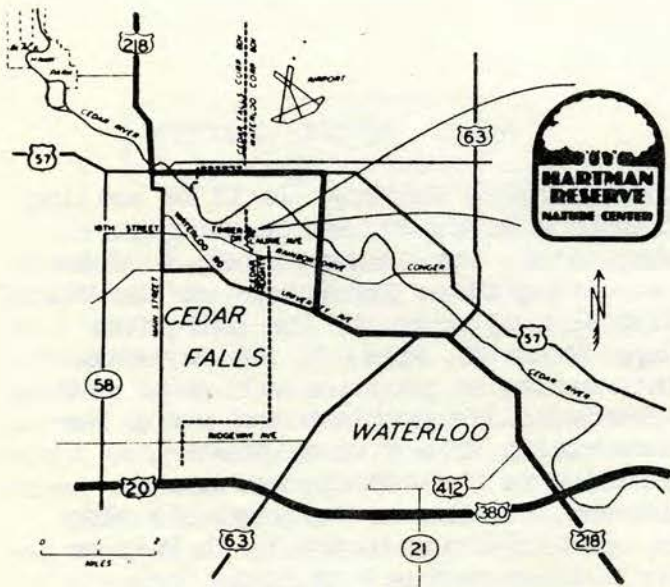
In cooperation with the Black Hawk

County Humane Society, we'll be selling this book at the Nature Center gift shop. Also, the Humane Society will be presenting **Close Encounters of the Wild Kind** at 2:00 pm on the following Sundays: March 31, April 7, and May 19th. This series of programs will deal with urban wildlife problems and might feature visits from live critters. In addition to these programs here at Hartman, the Humane Society will also be participating in the Earth Fair on April 20 at George Wyth State Park.

The presenters of these programs will be **Tom Colvin**, the director of the Black Hawk County Humane Society; **Dawn Johnson** and **Susie Sorg**. Dawn and Susie are both UNI marketing students doing their internships for the Humane Society. I recently spoke to Tom, Dawn and Susie about the book and the programs they'll be presenting. According to Tom, the main purpose of the book and their presentations is to make sure that people know that there are non-lethal alternatives in dealing with urban wildlife problems.

So, if you have raccoons eating your dog food, mice running over your feet as you sleep, or any other problems with wildlife, be sure to stop out for one of these presentations and also pick up a copy of "**The Humane Control of Wildlife in Cities & Towns.**" The price is \$5.00.





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INFORMATION

Hartman Reserve Nature Center is located in Cedar Falls three blocks north of Rainbow Drive. Follow the signs that begin at the intersection of Rainbow Dr. and Laurie Ave.

The Interpretive Center is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, and on weekends for scheduled programs. The Center is closed on major holidays. The trails are open everyday, sunrise to sunset. Please call 277-2187 for more information.

NEWSLETTER FUND

Though the newsletter is available without subscription, your contribution towards its publication does help defray costs. Any donation is appreciated. Please let us know of any change of address.

BOARD MEETINGS

The Black Hawk County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The Board will meet at 7:00 pm on April 4, May 2 and June 6. Please note, these dates are subject to change.

Hartman Reserve Nature Center
 657 Reserve Drive
 Cedar Falls, IA 50613

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