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PAGE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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Terry Broyles, Conservation Aide
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CONSERVATION CONNECTION

Quarterly Newsletter of the Page County Conservation Board
(Partially funded using REAP funds)
October-December 2010

CHANGE OF SEASONS

The editor has a writer's block, so your quarterly newsletter is definitely going to be late arriving in your mailbox or email!

The camping season is coming to an end, unless you're adventurous in the cooler weather; which would be my idea – less bugs and snakes. It has cooled off considerably and once it reaches the lower 20's, the water will be shut off to reduce any chances of having broken water lines. Our parks are open during the winter when access is available. Nature is meant to be enjoyed year-round.

If you've had the opportunity to be out and about in the parks, I hope you've checked the nice fall color of the trees, nice yellows and reds. My favorite is the Bald Cypress at Nodaway Valley Park; they have turned a spectacular russet brown. Timber stand improvement will begin in the fall and winter, which is done to improve the health of the forest and trail clearing to allow better access for hikers and equestrian users.

Pioneer Park has seen a flurry of activity with the various scouting groups having day camps and presentations to enrich their experiences this summer. Fishing, of course, was a major activity. The park was busy, if not overflowing, at times with campers.

Pierce Creek Recreation Area saw "softer" use during the summer holidays, but was still busy, including fishing. If you recall a few years back, the lake was killed out to get rid of the Carp problem, so fishing has improved drastically, but still has a ways to go.

If you haven't been to Rapp Park since early summer, now would be a good time to go.

Highway 48 entrance is now open – since Labor Day weekend – and you can access most of Rapp Park by the installation of an interior road. The campground layout has been completed with some camping pads being developed and lots of rock hauled in, but electricity and water isn't available – yet. The Conservation Board is continuing to receive donations for sponsorship of a camping pad. Acknowledgments of those donors will be made with a campsite plaque.

If you ventured out to Ross Park, you may have taken part in the 3-D bow shoots or fished the ponds, definitely a quiet place to relax and ponder all of life's questions.

Last, but not least – if you haven't been to the office – Conservation Center and River Access, please consider this an open invitation and bring the kids/grandkids. We have a larger area than we had at the courthouse and the taxidermy mounts and other natural/nature-related articles are easier to view. I'm hoping to work on some small displays this winter and a seasonal information board on various topics of interest.

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RECOVERING A WOUNDED TURKEY

Guest Columnist – Ron Wyllie, IBA

Even with a lot of practice, the bow hunter or shotgun hunter can experience a less than perfect shot while hunting fall turkeys. When you take a shot at a turkey, one shouldn't assume that you've missed if the bird runs off or flies away.

After the shot, always watch the gobbler for as long as you can see him. This is especially true if the bird takes to the air and flies off. Now what? Go to the spot where the tom was standing when you shot at him and check for blood, bone fragments or feathers. Crippled turkeys will generally fly less than 100 yards. Try to listen for the bird landing, as they will usually make some noise when landing wounded.

Wait for about an hour, then begin your search. Look around fallen trees, thick brushy cover, over grown fence rows and creek banks where a bird may have gone to hide. While searching these areas, move slowly and use your eyes a lot. Hopefully you will find a bird that has expired. But if you spot the bird and he is still alive, get into position and look for the safe and humane follow-up shot.

Should your turkey remain on the ground and run off after the shot, be patient. Give the bird time to settle down and then go try to recover him. Turkeys normally won't run far if they're hit; often only 30 to 50 yards. Look for the bird that remains on the ground in the same hiding spots as mentioned above.

If all else fails, contact someone who owns a good bird dog. They will usually be able to find your lost gobbler. Good Luck!

NEW DISTRICT FORESTER HAS ARRIVED

Lindsey Barney is the new district forester for District 9 which encompasses twelve counties, including Page and Fremont. She is available to assist rural and urban landowners in managing their woodland resources. If you are considering a planting project, she can assist you with tree selection and other land management objectives.

Her office is located at 712 South Highway 6, Oakland, Iowa. She can be reached at 712.482.6245 or lindsey.barney@dnr.iowa.gov.

She filled the position left vacant by the transfer of Jeremy Cochran to District 7.

The Page County Conservation Board meetings are open to the public. Visitors are welcome.

The Board meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Meetings are held at the Conservation Center at 2039 Highway 71, Clarinda, IA

Please note these dates are subject to change:

November 9, 2010

December 14, 2010

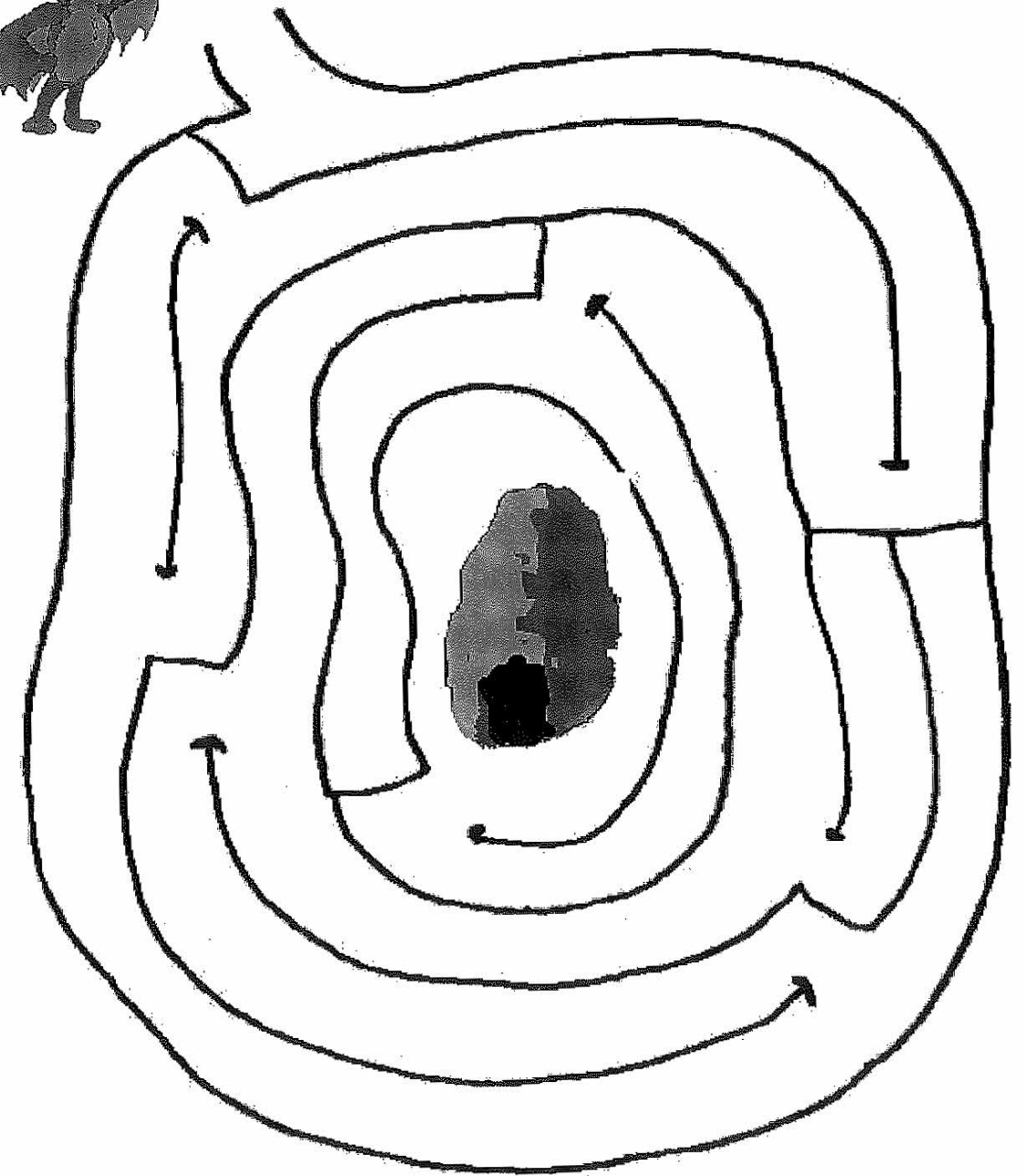
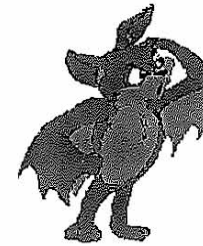
The *Conservation Connection* is the quarterly newsletter of the Page County Conservation Board and is mailed to those persons on our mailing list. Anyone wishing to be on our mailing list need only to send their name and address to our office. There is no charge for the newsletter. Please help us keep our costs down and make sure you get your newsletter on time by keeping us informed of any address change. You may also request the newsletter electronically. Email pagecocons@iowatelecom.net or call (712) 542-3864. The newsletter can also be accessed from the website at www.co.page.ia.us.

The Page County Conservation Board office will be closed Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Happy Holidays from the PCCB!

KIDS' KORNER

As fall befalls us and Halloween hides just around the corner there are many creatures to learn about. Bats are animals that help us by eating our insect pests such as mosquitoes, but bat populations have been declining. Help Bart the bat find his cave where he can spend the winter hibernating.



BATS AND WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME

No, it isn't the name of a new sci-fi movie, but actually a fungus that has the bat population on the decline. The white-nose syndrome is aptly named for the white fungus that appears on a bat's nose, wings and ears. The condition makes bats restless and disturbs their winter hibernating. Some bats have survived that were infected late in the hibernation period, only to have a difficult time flying as the fungi had gotten into the wings. Instead of sleeping, the infected bats burn up their fat reserves by waking up every day or two versus once a week. Some of the now hungry bats fly in search of insects and then starve to death, due to lack of insects during the winter months.



A reported 1 million bats in the United States have died due to the fungus. So far the syndrome is known to infect nine hibernating species, including the widespread little brown bat.

The white-nose syndrome is transmitted from bat to bat contact, but visitors to caves could be spreading the fungus since it may be on our shoes.

The disease was believed to have been brought over from Europe, but it also quickly spread from the northeastern U.S. and then early this spring it was found in Missouri. Earlier this season, the DNR had closed caves used by hibernating bats in Eastern Iowa to slow the spread of the disease. Evidently it hasn't been found in Iowa's bats and is of no danger to humans.

Iowa is home to nine bat species and of those only four roost in caves. Bats are a major predator of insects, a good portion of which are garden and agricultural pests. Plus, their favorite is mosquitoes (little brown bats can eat 600 mosquitoes in an hour). Hibernation season in Iowa is roughly from October to March with an estimated 2,000 bats hibernating in caves every year. Check out www.batcon.org for more information.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT NINE SPECIES WE HAVE IN IOWA?

(Answers to be found at the bottom of this page)

IOWA RECEIVES \$1.5 MILLION GRANT FOR LANDOWNER HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Local pheasant hunters and farmers received good news in early October when it was announced that Iowa was one of 17 states to share more than \$11.75 million in Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program or VPA-HIP grants.

Iowa will receive \$1.5 million over three years to help fund grass and forb seeding, tree and shrub plantings, burning, disking, spraying, interseeding, food plots, habitat edge work, timber stand improvement and wetland restoration on private lands. In return, landowners agree to allow public access to their land for a period of three to ten years. State officials feel the grant should give a boost to Iowa's ground nesting birds struggling after four years of wet springs, record snowfalls, poor nesting success and low winter survival rates.

Along with pheasants and hunters, the program is expected to benefit other wildlife and outdoor recreation. According to the USDA, the new program will provide incentives to owners and operators of privately held farms, ranch and forest land to voluntarily give hunters, fishermen, hikers and bird watchers access to land for their enjoyment.

Iowa was one of 28 states competing for the grants. Iowa's program is expected to be in place by early next year. Check out www.fsa.usda.gov/vpa for more information on VPA-HIP and other FSA programs.

Answers to Iowa's Bats: Little Brown Bat, Indiana Bat, Northern Myotis, Silver-Haired Bat, Eastern Pipistrelle, Big Brown Bat, Red Bat, Hoary Bat and Evening Bat

SCOUTS HELP WITH WABASH TRACE MAINTENANCE

Article and photos submitted by Pam Woodruff, scout leader

Saturday, June 12, 2010 five members of Cub Scout Pack 218 and Boy Scout Troop 218, trimmed over one mile of the Wabash Trail Trace south of Shenandoah. The scouts cut over-hanging branches and hauled them away. Their work improved visibility for hikers and bikers using the trail. Safety was not the only reason the scouts worked on the Trace. The Boy Scouts were also working toward earning their "Paul Bunyan Woodsman Award." This award is for scouts that have earned their Totin' Chip Award, have taught other scouts to earn their Totin' Chip, and worked two hours on a woodsman work project.

With the work done on the Trace, Eagle Scout Dakota Woodruff earned his Paul Bunyan Woodsman Award. Also working on the Trace were Pack 218 Cub Scouts Nate Mock and Nick Phillips and Troop 218 Boy Scouts Noah Mock and Ben Phillips.



THANKSGIVING – BELIEVE OR NOT

We all remember our history books talking about the first Thanksgiving in 1621 with the Pilgrims and Indians. They did have a three day feast, but it wasn't a holiday; it was a celebration of a good harvest.

Did they have a turkey? It isn't certain – the term "turkey" used by the Pilgrims meant any sort of wild fowl – so more than likely they had geese, duck, and probably venison, along with fish, berries, water-cress, and dried fruit.

They probably didn't have pumpkin pie either. Their supply of flour had been diminished, so there was no bread or pastries. However, they did eat boiled pumpkin and produced a type of fried bread from their corn crop. There was no milk, cider, potatoes or butter. There weren't any domestic cattle for dairy products and the newly-discovered potato was still considered by many Europeans to be poisonous.

This feast wasn't repeated the following year. Many years passed before a celebration took place. In June of 1676 they had a feast, but it probably didn't include the Indians. A hundred years later, in October 1777, all 13 colonies joined together in a thanksgiving celebration. But again, that was only one-time.

Fast forward through history and President George Washington issued the first national Thanksgiving proclamation in 1789 and again in 1795.

Congress passed an official proclamation in 1941 and declared that from then onwards Thanksgiving will be observed as a legal holiday on the 4th Thursday of November every year.



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SW IOWA BOWHUNTERS WRAP UP A GOOD 3D SEASON

Southwest Iowa Bowhunters Club was organized in the summer of 2009 with their first 3-D archery shoot held August 1, 2009 at Ross Park in the southern end of Page County.

The 2010 season began with a 40 target 3-D archery course consisting of deer, bears, turkeys and many other game animals, with shooting lanes ranging from 20 to 40 yards. There is also a target range available to sight in your bow and warm-up.

These events were open to five classes of competition: bow hunter, traditional, women, youth (ages 14-17) and cub (ages 13 and under). They've had a great turnout at the events that were scheduled, including a pop-up tournament at the Taylor County Fair and a 2nd annual pop-up 3-D shoot at the local Orscheln Farm & Home in Clarinda.

There is also an opportunity to become a member of the Southwest Iowa Bowhunters Archery Club. An individual member is \$40 and a family membership is \$60. You can visit their website at www.swiowabowhunters.org to learn more about their club.



PAGE COUNTY 4-H INTRODUCING NEW PROGRAM

Page County 4-H will be offering a new program–SESS (Safety in Education and Shooting Sports). The program will begin in January and is open to all 4th-12th grade youths.

SESS is an active program to assist young people in personal development and uses experiential learning and positive interactions with youth and adult role models to help young people develop self-concept, self-assurance and a positive image.

The major disciplines include archery, hunting and wildlife, muzzle loading, rifle, air rifle and shotgun.

There are four trained leaders for the program and they will be ensuring that safety is exercised at every session.

As always, there are funding issues. If you or your organization would like to make a donation to this very worthwhile program, have additional questions, need more information, or would like to train as a volunteer, please contact Debbie at the Page County Extension office by calling 712.542.5171 or toll-free 877.596.7243.