

Keokuk County Conservation Board News

WINTER 2017

Serving through education, recreation, and conservation of our natural resources



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From the Director's desk....

If asked to describe the word camping, many have a completely different definition of the term. Forty years ago the word camping for the most part meant sleeping in a tent and cooking meals over an open fire.

When I was a child, almost everyone we camped with slept in a tent. Or, the parents slept in the tent and the kids slept in the car. If someone did have a camper, it was the small pop-up style camper. You know the type that always leaked through the canvas during a heavy rain. Camping was much simpler back in those days. I still remember waking up in the back seat of the old Rambler car and looking out the windows seeing all the adults sitting around the roaring bonfire eating popcorn while all the kids were supposed to be sleeping. Funny how the children were never told there would be snacks later in the night. For us kids, it didn't matter that we missed out on the late-night snacks; we always had a great time exploring the timbers and stomping around in the creeks to keep us entertained. The things kids did before cell phones, tablets and lap top computers.

To others, the definition of camping might include pulling the camper with all the comforts of home out to the park for a relaxing good time. This

type of camping seems to be the most popular type of camping we see at the park. Getting together with friends and family and enjoying the great outdoors. If it rains or the heat is unbearable, inside the camper can be a great place to pass the time.

And unfortunately there are those who think camping is about how much alcohol you can consume and raucous you can create before getting hauled off to jail. Thankfully, we don't have to deal with those types of campers very often.

Camping is an important source of revenue for the conservation board. The money generated from camping is used for park improvements and land acquisition. Below shows the revenue generated from camping since 1995.

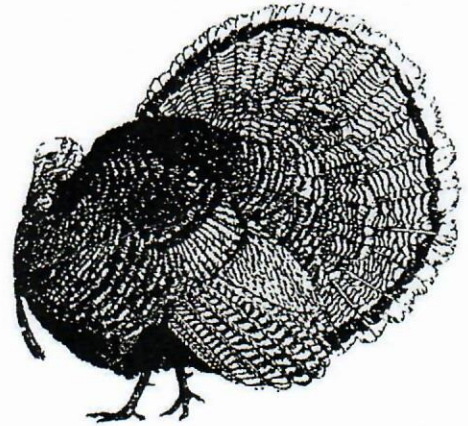
1995-96	\$1,688.00
1996-97	\$2,467.00
1997-98	\$3,106.00
1998-99	\$3,422.00
1999-00	\$2,822.00 (<i>Lower campground closed for lake construction</i>)
2000-01	\$3,293.00
2001-02	\$5,188.00
2002-03	\$9,462.00 (<i>New campground and shower building finished</i>)
2003-04	\$19,002.00
2004-05	\$37,116.00
2005-06	\$53,050.00
2006-07	\$50,419.00
2007-08	\$53,209.00
2008-09	\$54,396.00
2009-10	\$51,353.00
2010-11	\$60,120.00
2011-12	\$65,129.00
2012-13	\$63,609.00
2013-14	\$79,481.90
2014-15	\$73,200.00
2015-16	<u>\$84,862.00</u>
TOTAL	\$776,391.00

EASTERN WILD TURKEY

Meleagris Gallopavo Silvestris

When European settlers first crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa in the 1830s, wild turkeys existed statewide. Within 80 years, uncontrolled hunting and habitat loss had all but eliminated them from the Iowa landscape. Attempts to reintroduce turkeys began as early as the 1920s but success was not realized until the 1960s. Wild turkeys from Missouri were released into the Shimek and Stephens state forests in the southern portion of the state at that time. By 1971 they had increased in numbers enough to allow relocating trapped individuals to other parts of the state. In 1974, a spring gobblers-only season was initiated in south central Iowa and by 1989 the entire state was opened to a spring turkey season. Fall hunting began with two small zones in southern Iowa in 1981.

1988 found over 30,000 Iowans purchasing turkey licenses and in 1989 the state began selling a limited number of nonresident licenses. The success of the turkey's reintroduction has benefited the state greatly with numerous recreation opportunities, a significant economic impact and has allowed for the trading of turkeys for other species such as river otters for reintroduction back into Iowa.



The Eastern Wild Turkey is the biggest and has the widest range of the five subspecies of turkeys that inhabit North America. They are found everywhere east of the Missouri River and in isolated pockets to the west. They are large birds reaching up to 4 feet in height as adults with toms (males) weighing up to 25 lbs. or more and hens (females) about half that. Their bodies are covered with 5,000 to 6,000 feathers. The toms have vibrant iridescent colors of copper, bronze, red, green and gold tinting the dark feathers which cover them. Hens have the same colors but they are dulled and muted giving them a brown appearance. The head of both sexes are featherless and covered with fleshy growths called caruncles. A fleshy flap above the beak is called a snood and is much more pronounced in males. When the tom is excited, the snood expands and hangs over the beak and the tom's head, neck and wattles change to a bright red, blue or white. Toms have a modified cluster of feathers in the center of their chest that form a beard which grows continuously. Some hens grow beards but they are much less pronounced. While both sexes have spurs on their lower legs, the hens remain small and blunt while the toms grow long pointed hooks of up to 2 inches or more in length.

Wild turkeys are best known to most for their spring mating rituals. The toms are quite a sight as they strut and display trying to catch the attention of receptive hens. With body feathers puffed, tail feathers spread in a spectacular fan and wing tips dragging the ground, they march about spitting and drumming in a show of dominance over other potential suitors. Their booming gobbles fill the river bottoms and wooded ridges. They will mate with as many hens as possible but give no assistance with incubating or raising the broods they sire. Most nests consist of 8-12 eggs. However, approximately 70 percent will be lost to predators or harsh weather conditions before fall arrives.

Notes from the Ranger.....

Well it has finally happened and I think you all know what I mean, **CUBS WIN, CUBS WIN, CUBS WIN!** I think everybody should know by now that I am a baseball guy, with all that I have written over the years about my dealings with young people and the game of baseball. My grandfather at 21 years of age last saw them win a World Series in 1908 and I spent many Sunday afternoons' watching them on a black & white with him. Been a Cubs fan my whole life and now I can say I saw them win a series. He died at 97 and I just hope I make that but with more than one Cubs' World Series victories in my lifetime. 2016 has been a great year!

While reading about some of the old history of Keokuk County I found an interesting article on Chief Keokuk and another leading man of Native Americans, Chief Wapello. Wapello in accordance with the provisions of the treaty of 1843 retired with his tribe west of Red Rock (now Red Rock Lake) but during a temporary visit to his old hunting grounds on Rock Creek, west of Ollie, in Keokuk County he breathed his last. Documented history list's March, 1844 Jackson Township, section 21 as the place of Wapello's death and that same day he was moved to Agency City and burial rights were performed later that day with Keokuk and other leading men of surrounding tribes present.

Growing up in Richland I knew of Rock Creek and wanted to know more about it and the place of Wapello's death. In searching for this information I found the proximate place of death being somewhere around the fork of Twin Grove Creek and Rock Creek. Also in my findings I found that there are two different Rock Creek's in the county. One mentioned previously in Jackson Township which flows into the South Skunk River and one in Washington, Van Buren, and Sigourney township's that flow into Cedar Creek (southwest of city-Sigourney) and then into the North Skunk River. One of our most asked questions here at the park is, "What stream or creek is the Belva Deer Lake dam built upon?" The answer to that question is an unnamed tributary of German Creek which crosses state highway 92 east of 245th avenue and continues a southward flow to the North Skunk River in Plank South Township, section 21. So I then became curious of all the streams, creeks, and rivers that flow through Keokuk

County and found that there are 30 flowing bodies of water and many more unnamed tributaries. The ones that I could find named are listed to the right. In trying to locate these I turned to our farm and home plat directory and found about half of them. The others were found in a publication called *Drainage Areas of Iowa Streams* by O.J. Larimer in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Water Resources Division, reprinted March 1974. This publication is very interesting and has a map of Keokuk County with named flowing bodies of water and lists each ones drainage areas in square miles and where they connect to larger streams and rivers. Keokuk County has about 176 bridge structures, a dozen or so low water crossings and thousands of crossroad culverts which make us a not so flat land mass area. Just take a drive on the backroads and you'll see what I mean. Thanks to the Keokuk County Engineer's office and NRCS office for their help with finding this information. Have a safe winter and get out and explore Keokuk County.

Keokuk County, Iowa

Streams, Creeks, & Rivers

Branch Creek, Bridge Creek, Cedar Creek
 Clear Creek, Coal Creek, Competine Creek
 Dutch Creek, German Creek, Gobbler Creek
 Gritter Creek, Honey Creek, Little Creek
 Mattix Branch, North Skunk River, North Walnut Creek
 Olive Branch, Richland Creek, Rock Creek
 Skunk River, Smith Creek, South- English River
 South Skunk River, Spring Branch, Spring Creek
 Steady Run, Sugar Creek, Troublesome Creek,
 Twin Grove Creek, Waugh Branch, West Fork Crooked
 Creek

KIDS PAGE!



LOADED GUN

- | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|
| ACTION | CYLINDER | PRIMER |
| AIM | EJECTOR | RANGE |
| BARREL | FIRE | RECOIL |
| BEAD | GAME | REPORT |
| BELT | GRIP | REVOLVER |
| BLANK | HOLSTER | RIFLE |
| BOLT | LEVER | SAFETY |
| BORE | LUGS | SCOPE |
| BREECH | MAGAZINE | SHELL |
| BULLET | METAL | SIGHT |
| BUTT | MODEL | SKEET |
| CALIBRE | MUZZLE | SLING |
| CASE | PELLET | STOCK |
| CHAMBER | PIECE | TARGET |
| CLIP | PISTOL | TRIGGER |

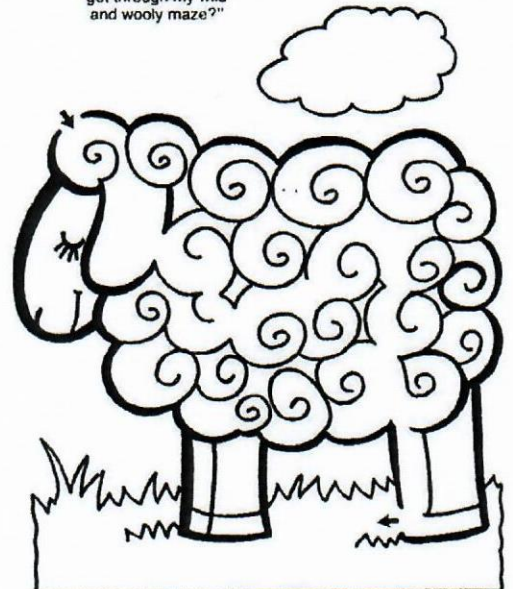
SHAPE FIND
Find the shapes above in the big picture below.



E	N	I	Z	A	G	A	M	D	G	R	E	D	N	I	L	Y	C
J	C	J	M	P	C	S	L	V	L	Y	E	C	E	F	I	L	A
E	O	E	R	T	U	T	R	O	P	E	R	G	X	G	B	E	L
C	H	K	I	N	Q	T	G	W	T	Z	D	D	G	G	N	J	I
T	M	O	P	P	S	Y	V	N	Y	S	C	O	F	I	I	A	B
O	N	D	A	E	B	S	T	L	I	O	I	T	M	R	R	U	R
R	X	B	B	A	E	H	T	E	L	L	E	P	H	K	N	T	E
E	Q	T	R	W	Z	E	D	G	F	K	S	L	K	N	A	L	B
T	J	R	M	E	P	L	S	V	S	A	C	Y	Z	C	A	I	M
S	E	L	O	T	E	L	L	U	B	R	S	O	U	Z	X	B	A
L	E	G	H	K	N	C	M	Q	T	C	W	Z	T	E	U	E	H
O	D	S	R	T	T	G	H	J	O	M	P	S	L	S	M	M	C
H	V	G	T	A	Y	L	T	P	C	S	F	F	I	A	L	O	P
R	U	X	B	T	E	E	L	H	K	I	N	G	Q	T	I	R	
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P	S	O	V	I	Y	C	K	F	I	B	L	O	H	C	R	U	M
X	P	I	R	G	B	E	S	A	C	E	H	K	N	T	Q	T	E
W	R	E	V	E	L	I	O	C	E	R	E	V	L	O	V	E	R

Woolly Maze

Sarah Sheep asks, "Can you get through my wild and woolly maze?"



KCCB Board Members

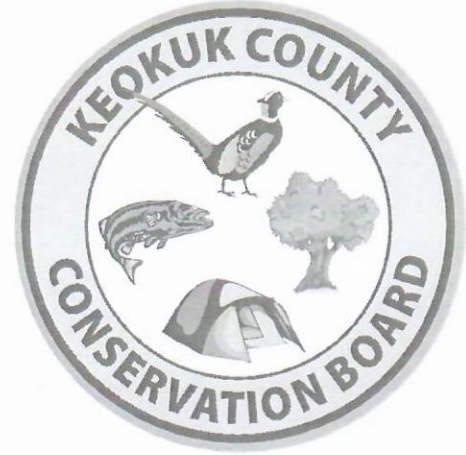
Casey Thompson..... Sigourney
Jay Peiffer South English
Greg Dyer..... Richland
Julie Wohler Sigourney

Staff

David Long.....Director
Pie ReighardRanger/Naturalist
Brian Ulin.....Maintenance/Ranger

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Sigourney, IA 52591



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