



# Dickinson County Courthouse Newsletter

November 20, 2013

## Employee Spotlight!

Let's get to know our County employees!



The October Newsletter featured the picture of the little boy to the left. Did you guess Lonnie Saunders? Lonnie has worked for Dickinson County since 2002.

The following is a little personal information provided by Lonnie.

**Start date with Dickinson County:**

January 1, 2002

**Where born:**

Spirit Lake, Iowa

**Places Lived:**

Arnolds Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake, Iowa City, and Taipei, Taiwan

**Hobbies, talents, special interests:**

Fishing, Motorcycling, Reading

**Favorite Travel Spots:**

Vero Beach, Florida and Maui, Hawaii

**Favorite Food:**

Taco House

**Least Favorite Food:**

Stewed Tomatoes

**If I were stuck on an island, I would bring (3 things):** My dog (Mr. Bean), seeds for a garden, solar flashlight.

**Something Few Know About Me:** Lived in Taipei Taiwan and helped established an exchange program between Buena Vista University and the National Taiwan University.

**Favorite thing to do in Dickinson County:** Anything on the water

## **Glacial History of the Iowa Great Lakes by Charles Vigdal, Naturalist**

The Iowa Great Lakes Area is a natural formed chain of lakes in Northwest Iowa, situated in Dickinson County. Most people know our county for being a busy tourist resort area in the summer and a quiet nature-lovers paradise in the fall and winter. Many of the people enjoy fishing, boating, hiking, biking and hunting. But what do glaciers have to do with all of these activities? Glaciers are the reason we have all these wonderful landforms that shaped our unique area. Some 14,000 to 12,500 years ago, last of the glaciers (there were many) left Iowa. The last glacier period was called the Wisconsin glacial stage and was during the Pleistocene Epoch, the ice covered most of northern and central Iowa. This "piece" of the glacier in Iowa was called the Des Moines lobe. The Des Moines lobe was part of a larger glacier that covered most of northern United States and most of Canada. During these glacial "advances", the ice would push and pickup boulders, rocks, gravel and sand and transport them as the ice pushed south. Eventually the weather would warm and melt the glaciers and they would retreat, much like the glaciers that are around today. The remaining boulders, rocks, gravel, sand and landforms in our area are the leftovers from these massive blocks of ice. Here are some of the more interesting glacially formed landmarks that we have in Dickinson County.



### **Spirit Lake and Okoboji Lakes**

The beautiful blue lakes that are the icons of our area were actually formed when the glaciers melted. The lakes region was on the western side of the glacier and served as a

drainage area as the ice sheets were melting. West Okoboji Lake is very deep, 135 feet at the deepest, which is unusual in Iowa. Generally most glacially formed lakes are shallow and have flat bottoms, like Big Spirit



**Freda Haffner Kettlehole Preserve:** *(West off Highway 86 on 210<sup>th</sup> St. two-and-three-quarter miles to the parking area for the preserve on the north side of the road.)*

This unique landform is commonly called a “Kettlehole” for its rounded, steep-sided, bowl shape resemblance of a kettle pot. It was likely created when pockets of clean ice broke off and melted slowly after the bigger glacier retreated. These “Kettlehole” have no surface drainage so the water in them will fluctuate with rainfall.

**Silver Lake Fen:** *(Silver Lake Fen is located at 1452 110th Ave. - from the intersection of HWY 9 and M27 near Lake Park. Go 2 miles west on HWY 9, then turn north on 110th Ave and go north ½ mile, turn east into gravel drive and follow it up to parking lot.)*

This is one of the most rare and unusual landforms in Iowa. It is a soggy, spongy area found on a hillside. There is a natural, underground spring that saturates the area with highly mineralized groundwater. This groundwater preserves the plant material and creates a type of soil called peat. This peat accumulates and makes the ground feel like a giant sponge. This is a very unique ecosystem with many rare plants and insects.

**Kettleson Hogsback Wildlife Management Area:** *(West of Big Spirit Lake on 125<sup>th</sup> Street, just south of Marble Lake)*

This area is a collection of wetlands, shallow lakes, hills and ridges. It is named “hogsback” because some of the 40 foot high ridges that resemble the back of a hog. One of the lakes in this system, Sunken Lake, is another Kettlehole with steep sides and having a bowl shape. IT is a great place to take a hike in the woods!

## **Employee Spotlight**



**Let's get to know our County employees!**

Find out more about this Dickinson County employee in the December issue. In the meantime, can you guess who this is?

**Motivational quote for the month:**

**Either you run the day or the day runs you.**