

IOWATER Volunteer Awards 2003



Vicki Wilson, Director Vonk, Lynette Seigley

IOWATER Volunteer of the Year – Vicki Wilson

The IOWATER Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Jesup resident Vicki Wilson. Vicki's most notable accomplishment was the completion of the Middle Wapsipinicon River snapshot sampling event, during which more than 100 volunteers sampled 138 sites scattered across a five-county area on May 10, 2003. Wilson coordinated a planning committee of five members, identified sites to be monitored, personally visited all the sites to ensure accessibility by volunteers, publicized the event, generated maps and directions to sites, organized a pre-event training session, and participated in the event by sampling four sites herself. Upon the completion of the May snapshot, Vicki followed up with another astoundingly successful event last month that included 170 sites scattered throughout the Wapsipinicon River watershed from the Minnesota border to the city of Independence. In addition to being a volunteer water monitor, Vicki is also a Master Conservationist and participates in monarch tagging, crane watching, prairie burns and the Nature Mapping Program. Wilson grew up on the Wapsipinicon River – she fished it, skated on it and swam in it. She has seen the river change over time; she's seen it at its best, and she's seen it at its worst, which is why she is so dedicated to preserving it for future generations, in order that they may have the opportunity to know the river the way she does.



Director Vonk, Ed Askew, Matt McAndrew

IOWATER Professional of the Year - Ed Askew

The IOWATER Professional of the Year award was presented to Ed Askew, Pretreatment Coordinator and Laboratory Supervisor for the City of Davenport's Water Pollution Control Plant. Askew has helped organize four snapshot water sampling events in Scott County, and has helped Clinton and Muscatine counties get started on regular events of their own. Askew has worked diligently to facilitate IOWATER classes in the Quad City area and has recruited trainees from both sides of the Mississippi River for the program. During his free time, Askew "relaxes" on weekends in his little stream by canoeing or monitoring. The IOWATER program has prospered because of Askew's drive to make it happen and his willingness to help individuals and communities become involved in the program. As one of Askew's nominators said, "He (Ed) could be an IOWATER poster boy."



Director Vonk, Sharon Bender's class, Mary Skopec

IOWATER Classroom of the Year – Sharon Bender and her Environmental Science and Biology class

The IOWATER Classroom of the Year award was presented to Sharon Bender and her Environmental Science and Biology class at Prairie High School, who have been collecting, analyzing, and documenting stream water quality of Prairie Creek in Cedar Rapids for the past four years. They have been conducting monthly physical and chemical assessments, as well as biological and stream habitat assessments in the fall and spring. They have chosen rural, industrial, and urban sites to collect water samples, and have been comparing the results as they enter them into the IOWATER database. The students then present their findings on an annual basis to an audience of interested citizens, administrators, business partners, and state and federal agencies.



Director Vonk and the Maquoketa River Water Quality

IOWATER Watershed Group of the Year – Maquoketa River Water Quality Team

The IOWATER Watershed Group of the Year award was presented to the Maquoketa River Water Quality Team (MRWQT), a group dedicated to improving the water quality of Lake Delhi, a 400-acre impoundment of the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. The group is currently involved in a \$600,000, DNR-grant funded, Lake Delhi Restoration Project that focuses on soil erosion and water quality in the Lake Delhi watershed. An estimated 819 tons of soil are saved each year due to the many conservation practices this project has successfully implemented. MRWQT members are all participants in the IOWATER program, and the group has been regularly monitoring eight sites on the Maquoketa River over the past three years. MRWQT volunteers have not only authored [A Guide for Living on Lake Delhi](#), a publication that focuses on how watershed residents can make environmental-friendly decisions to improve water quality of the lake, but they have also hand-delivered it to over 900 area residents. The group has successfully established and self-funded conservation and septic system grants for lake homeowners, as well as hosted local events that highlight and raise awareness of the lake's water quality issues. Lake Delhi is fortunate to have such a dedicated and active group of volunteers residing within its watershed.



Director Vonk, Terry Jenssen, Scott Osborn

IOWATER Event of the Year – O’Brien County Snapshot

The IOWATER Event of the Year award was presented to the **O’Brien County Extension**, the **O’Brien County NRCS**, the **O’Brien County Farm Bureau**, and more than 50 volunteers from throughout the county for their involvement in a county-wide snapshot sampling event. On April 5, 2003, volunteers used IOWATER field test kits to obtain data for chemical parameters, and collected water samples from over 85 sites to be analyzed in a lab for bacteria, nutrients and pesticides. The results from this snapshot provided a baseline of water quality for streams throughout O’Brien County. Of the 21 snapshot samplings that have been conducted across Iowa, the O’Brien County snapshot represents the first and only snapshot in northwest Iowa.