

Storm Lake Times Pilot

Kings cherish long family history of Heritage Farm



The first house was built in 1901, with the addition of six rooms in the summer of 1913 for \$8,000. The house had its own heating and water plant. Joseph Jr. and his wife Mathilda.

Land was purchased in 1882 for \$4.50/acre

BY DOLORES CULLEN
Each Heritage and Century Farm Award represents a dedicated Iowa farm family with a story and a history.

Such is the case with the King farm north of Schaller, a Heritage Farm, established in 1873 and 151 years in the King family.

Joseph King Sr., an Englishman from Ohio who settled the land, would never have imagined the four gigantic wind turbines that now churn away on the property, or the tractor ride that memorializes his great-great-grandson Harold King every summer.

Harold, who passed away 2016, was the husband of Marilyn King, the oldest living member of the eight generations to call this property home. At age 89, she now resides in town – Schaller – with her daughter Denise King and

grandson Kirk Langner, 25, (son of Marilyn's other daughter Julie.)

While Denise is employed at the Schaller Presbyterian Church and the Alta Community Library, Kirk is busy at Alta-Aurelia before and after school program and Storm Lake Radio.

Julie Langner, librarian at Storm Lake St. Mary's, lives on the home place, along with her son Daniel Langner, 22, and her brother Jeff King, who works at Holstein Electric.

That leaves son Kevin King, of Truesdale, who works at the Bayer plant at Storm Lake.

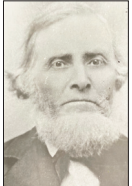
Multiple generations of the Kings living together and helping one another out keeps this family close.

Marilyn is still sharp, bringing up memories and remembering details of family history. The Harlan native attended Buena Vista College, earning a two-year teaching degree in 1955. She met her future husband Harold on a blind date at BVC.

"I learned to drive on the



The Kings in front of the barn, which was built in 1909. It was originally a horse barn, but was remodeled into a farrowing set up for hogs. Right: This aerial shot was taken in 1994. Far right:



Joseph King, Sr.

day we were married," she recalled, "in an oat field with shocks."

She taught second grade for six years, then, as her own children arrived, she stayed home, and as Jeff says, "she became dad's right and left hand man."

Preferring outside work, she drove tractors and trucks hauling grain. She helped with the pigs. "I took care of the hogs with a broken foot," she remembers. Board by board she tore down the hog house to salvage the lumber.

Her four children speak of their mother with warmth and humor. "Mom being a teacher, she had eyes on the back of her head," says Jeff. He's the one who she caught climbing the grain bin when he was still a toddler.

Everyone laughs, including Julie, when the story about her "mud bath" in the hog wallow comes up.

Jeff remembers sitting atop the north grain bin (when he was old enough) and watching fireworks in Storm Lake on the Fourth of July.

Walking beans was supposed to build character, was-

n't it?

The siblings treasure the fact that they grew up on a farm. "You had a big yard to play in," says Denise. "You didn't have to worry about what everyone else was doing," added Julie.

And with land in the family for 150 years, the sense of pride has grown.

LOOKING WAY BACK, AND AHEAD

In 1882 Joseph King Sr. purchased an entire section he would eventually farm from the Iowa Falls and Sioux City Railroad Company for \$4.50 an acre. He gave each of his six children 80 acres outright with the option of paying for 80 acres more.

The family's property would be passed down through generations of Kings, starting with Joseph King Jr., followed by Mathilda King, Alice King and then Harold King.

The farm land is rented out, but the King family wants these acres along with the long-cherished building site to remain in their name.

Marilyn thinks of her four grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and particularly Daniel and Kirk, who live here. "They're interested in keeping the farm," she says with a smile.



This unique butter churn, which came from Ohio with the original King settlers, is one of Marilyn's prized antiques.



The mailbox stand was made out of a hay trolley, a pulley system once situated under the peak of the barn roof to lift hay into the hayloft of the barn.



Here is the family again, as they host the annual Harold King Memorial Tractor Ride. They are standing in front of the late Harold King's Farmall 450 which he bought new in the late 1950s. This is the lead tractor in the annual ride. It also pulls a trolley for people who want to participate in the ride, but don't have a tractor. The event was initiated in 2016 and travels a different 50-60 mile route each year. Coffee and donuts in the morning and lunch at noon, organized by Marilyn and her daughters, make this outing special. Proceeds from the ride fund scholarships for young people going into the field of ag. Front row, from left: Harold's daughter Denise King, wife Marilyn King, and daughter Julie Langner. Back: grandson Daniel Langner; grandson Kirk Langner; president, coordinator and safety director of the ride son Kevin King and son Jeff King.



The King family posed with Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig (far left) and Iowa Farm Bureau President Brent Johnson (far right) at the Iowa State Fair upon receiving their Heritage Farm award. From left: Julie Langner, Daniel Langner, Denise King, Kirk Langner, Marilyn King, Jeff King, Kevin King.

Growing project yields healthy, local produce



Water from a 1,500-gallon tank, seen at upper right, is sent through drip lines to irrigate the field. With 35 feet of drop, the water flows naturally. A water tower would be preferable, says Tate. Ample rain this year has benefited the operation. Right: Carrots will be washed and bagged at the farm place.



ISU Extension Field Specialist Dave Fillius cuts open a watermelon.



Red cabbage is nearly ready to harvest. TIMES PILOT photos by DOLORES CULLEN

Tate Carlson shares tips, innovations on PFI Field Day

BY DOLORES CULLEN

A group of over 30 people – some local, some from elsewhere in Iowa – listened carefully to a presentation by Tate Carlson on his parents' farm south of Storm Lake Aug. 29.

Sponsored by Practical Farmers of Iowa, "Adding Produce to the Mix at Hayes Farm" allowed other growers to learn from Tate's vegetable growing operation.

And this young entrepreneur's success was evident in the form of a bounty of melons, squash, carrots, cabbage and more ripening in the five-acre field.

"If you have the equipment, you have an advantage," Tate explained. Implements used for conventional row crop farming, with little or no modification, can make vegetable farming far more affordable than going out to buy specific equipment.

Lumber attached bench-style to one of the Carlson's planters allows workers to help guide watermelon, squash or carrot seed into the proper seed tubes.

An IH 140 tractor is used for cultivating.

Tate's father Bryan Carlson has come up with innova-



Grandma's proud. Virginia Carlson made an appearance. "He's so talented and hard working," she said of Tate Carlson.

tions that simulate the equipment Tate has used in the 10 years he worked on Midwest produce farms. Like the bed lifter crafted out of an old road grader blade.

Mounted on the back of a tractor, the blade unearths bunches of carrots efficiently and quickly, as demonstrated with Bryan in the driver's seat. "He's my in-house mechanic," says Tate.

Some jobs are best handled with primitive equipment, like the 1940s push planter.

ALL NATURAL

Tate and his wife live in Des Moines and the produce project is a side job. With the able help of Tate's brother Lane, the 5.5 acre vegetable patch can be managed and tended with Tate onsite a cou-

ple times a week.

"I'm not certified organic, but I follow organic practices," says Tate. "We don't use chemicals in fertilizers or spray. It's all natural. That's what I feel good about."

Poultry litter is his chief fertilizer.

A growing technique Tate has become fond of for vining crops, is planting into a six-foot-tall cover crop. Ten days after planting, the rye is mowed and left to become a mulch that retains moisture and suppresses weeds.

"A level of weeds is acceptable," Tate added, pointing out stray weeds beside healthy heads of cabbage.

To build soil health and fertility Tate planted small grains, followed by cover crops that are grazed by cattle, ahead of planting the produce.

"Our goal is to grow as much food as we can with what resources we have," he says.

MARKETING IS TOUGH IN IOWA

Instead of selling at farmers markets, Tate has contracts with Siouxland Foodbank of Iowa, which redistributes produce through-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B



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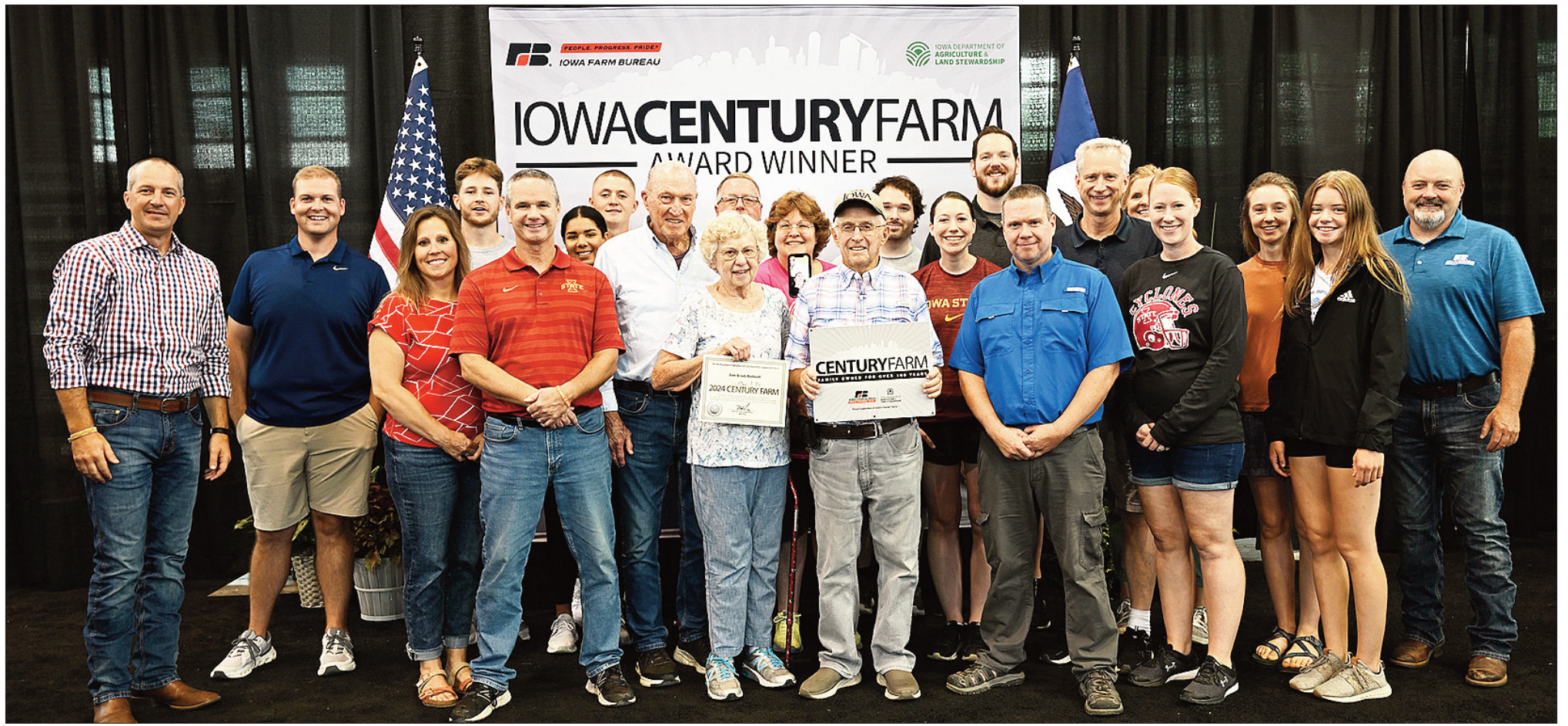
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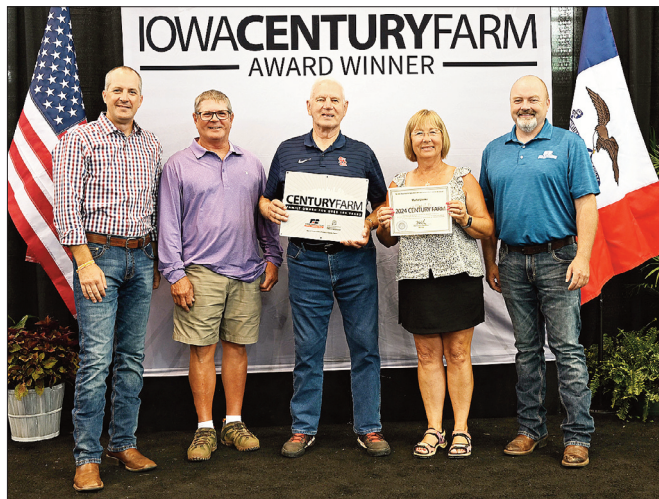
Dale and Judy Bodholdt, Newell, 1909, Century Farm.

Area Century and Heritage farms recognized at Iowa State Fair

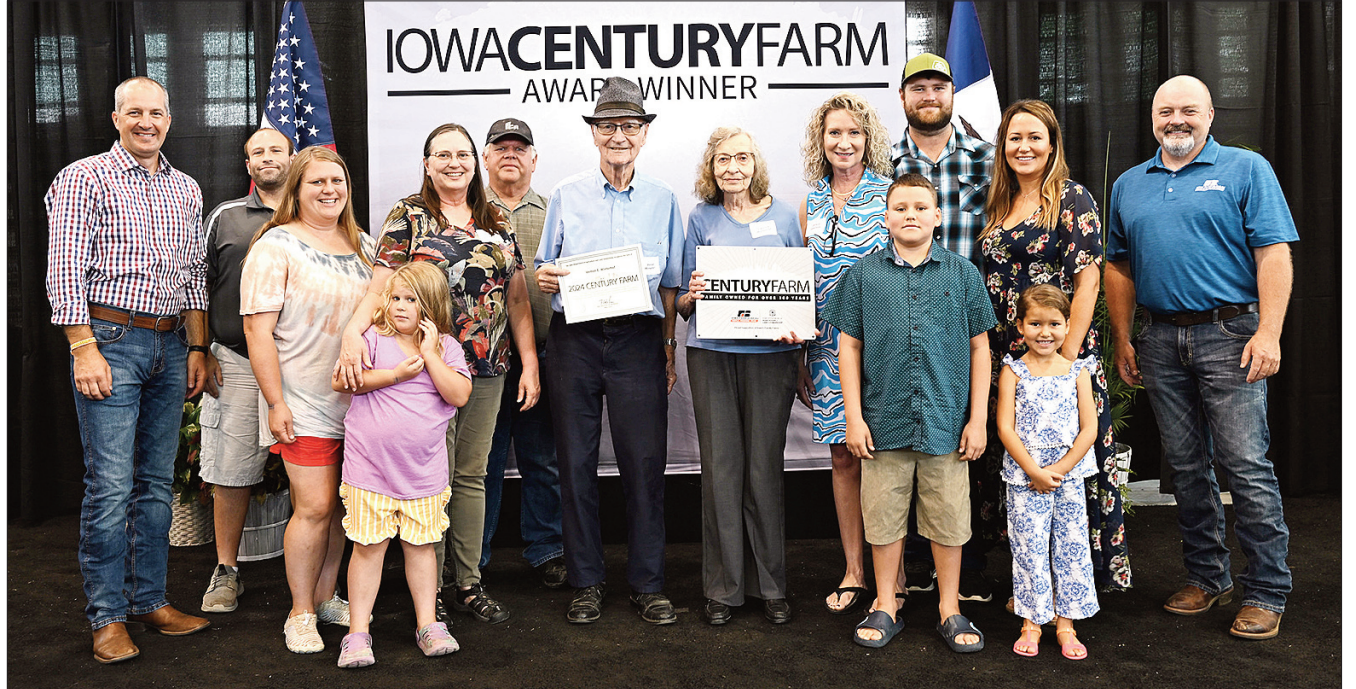
Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig and Iowa Farm Bureau Federation President Brent Johnson honored 439 Iowa farm families with Century or Heritage Farm designations at the 2024 Iowa State Fair. The program celebrates farms that have been owned by the same families for 100 and 150 years, respectively. Congratulations to all, especially our local recipients.



Luke and Maggie Pearson, Aurelia, 1874, Heritage Farm.



Martin Glienke and Shelly, Alta, 1924, Heritage Farm.



Vernon and Suzanne Winterhof, Aurelia, 1924, Century Farm.



Debora Minnich, Peterson, 1858, Heritage Farm.



Dennis and Deborah Engdahl, Aurelia, 1909, Century Farm.



Larry Porath, Linda Kelley, Arnold Porath, Ryan Porath, Matthew Porath, Newell, 1874, Heritage Farm.

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BRENT AND CARA WELLS



NICK AND MARY SENNERT



RUSSELL AND BETH WINTERHOF

Sennerts, Winterhofs, Wells win environmental awards

Three local farm families are among the 44 given Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Awards at the Iowa State Fair.

The award acknowledges farmers who take voluntary actions to serve as community leaders by improving and protecting the state's natural resources, including soil and water.

Recipients include Nick and Mary Sennert of Linn Grove in Buena Vista County, Russell and Beth Winterhof of Aurelia in Cherokee County, and Brent and Cara Wells of Fonda in Pocahontas County.

The winners were chosen by a committee representing conservation and agricultural groups. The winners were recognized by Governor Kim Reynolds, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig, Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg and Department of Natural

Resources Director Kayla Lyon.

RUSSELL AND BETH WINTERHOF

Russell has been a Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District commissioner since 2011. The Winterhofs manage a 125 year old farm operation including corn and soybeans, CRP turkeys, hogs, and 24 beehives for honey production.

They've been utilizing no-till/strip-till for over 20 years. Russell uses a no-till bar for applying hog manure and uses turkey compost as an additional nutrient input. Cover crops have been used since 2016 and organic matter levels have nearly doubled since he took over the farm.

They have planted more than 200 trees and bushes, including 20 varieties selected with pollinators in mind. They

are Choose Iowa members and consumers can find their honey under the Ms. B Haven brand on the Choose Iowa webpage!

BRENT AND CARA WELLS

Brent has converted his farm to 100% no-till and he utilizes cover crops on all the acres. This enables him to lower his herbicide usage.

They have installed filter strips, grassed waterways, and native CRP plantings. They actively participate in field days hosted by several organizations.

Brent's interest was piqued after attending an NRCS soil health meeting that demonstrated differences in soil health between fields with shovel tests. He noticed a difference in his own fields after just a couple years of no-till and cover crops.

NICK AND MARY SENNERT

Nick and Mary actively promote regenerative farming practices to their peers. Farmers Nick has mentored are now utilizing cover crops, extended crop rotation with small grains, and are improv-

ing the soil health on their operations because of Nick's influence.

He utilizes strip till, no till, and cover crops on 100% of his acres. He has installed grassed waterways and pollinator strips. He has seeded prairie pothole areas, and

uses integrative pest management practices to reduce the need for pesticide applications.

His conservation ethic is driven by his desire to be an entrusted steward and caretaker of the land that he manages.



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Vehicles ring the 5.5 acre field.

PFI Field Day...

continued from page 4B

food in Iowa." He wishes eating local was more of a priority here. The Harlan-based food hub is one of the closest models that serves a network of producers, makers, buyers and customers. Tate, now in his third year of vegetable production on the Hayes farm, plans to

continue into the future. "We knew it was profitable if you know how to do it," said Bryan, when asked for comments from the Field Day group.

Now with 15,000 pounds of carrots and tons of other vegetables exiting the farm this year, the hard work is paying off. If Tate has another goal, its to keep his produce even more local: "I want to keep food from the farm as close as possible." If you have marketing ideas for Tate for our immediate area, please call him at 712-299-2800.



Grandsons of participant Ken Wise keep close and pay attention.



Wooden benches are attached to the planter so helpers can ride along and assist in the seeding process.

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