

LAURENS

POPULATION

1792



1977
iowa
community
betterment
program

LAURENS

Laurens was platted Nov. 10-11, 1881, and named in honor of John and Henry Laurens, father and son. They distinguished themselves by their patriotism and loyalty to the Colonial cause during the Revolution.

The site of Laurens was upon a high, rolling prairie, with rich and fertile soil. Throughout the years, we have flourished from a few settlers to our present population of 1,792.

The ambition and aggressiveness of our forefathers never let the city down. Even as blizzards and fires raged throughout the county, a speedy recovery soon set Laurens back on a steady pace.

This type of leadership was carried on from generation to generation. This ingenuity and integrity enables us to be competitive, to continue to grow.

Last year, our community school merged with a neighboring school, becoming Laurens-Marathon Community School. We are proud to claim six churches. Industry has grown immensely in the past 10 years, and individuals are working harder, not towards the maintenance, but towards the advancement of our little city. Our farmers learn new techniques every day to improve their crop output, while maintaining and preserving our precious soil.

We feel "The Busiest Little Town in Iowa" couldn't suit us any better.

LAURENS

BUSIEST LITTLE TOWN IN IOWA

LAURENS
SPORTSMENS
CLUB
GUN SAFETY

Heritage
DOLL
CLUB
3rd wed

LAURENS
COMMUNITY
PRE-SCHOOL

LAURENS COUNTRY CLUB
1ST & 3RD MONDAY - 6:00 PM

Laurens
Jaycees

1 IOWA
C COMMUNITY
B BETTERMENT
1ST participant
IOWA GOVERNMENT SERVICE

K
KANSAS
INTERSTATE

Grade Lodge No. 519 A.F. & A.M.
Second T.W.

THE GREAT SEAL OF THE
UNITED STATES LEGION
OF THE WORLD

V.F.W.
POST
3533

O.E.S.
MEETING
FIRST
TUESDAY
EACH MONTH
8 O'CLOCK
P.M.

Laurens
Jaycees

Laurens Community Betterment

1977

City Park

1977 PARK PROJECT

Total equipment and material cost -----\$8,102.75

530 hours estimated by committee and volunteers

Total people involved including various groups counted
in their entirety ----- 765

Started project with \$442.00.

Paid all bills and had \$865.00 to go towards 1978 project.

LAURENS COMMUNITY BETTERMENT COUNCIL

Arnie Hersom Chairman
Lynette Ziegler. Secretary/Treasurer
Dick Hawes
Gary Smith
Neil Maurer
Tom Hakes
Charmaine Hersom
Joyce Rigby
Kathy Hakes
Jan Johnson

The Community Betterment Council got started in 1975. It began when a few concerned citizens got together and discussed what they could do to improve the atmosphere of Laurens. We wanted to clean up the grounds, add some recreational facilities, and mainly draw the whole community in with their support.

This year the Council met and evaluated the need for improvement of our city park. We allotted ourselves a time period and set a financial goal. After much consideration, we decided this was a project we could handle and one all ages could participate in.

Our project consisted of cleaning up and beautifying the park. We knew from the beginning this would be both a physically and emotionally exhausting project without the participation and cooperation of our entire community. We also wanted to install numerous playground equipment, benches, and trash cans. This was the costly part!

We contacted every organization for their help. Some bought pieces of equipment, some donated money and others went canvassing door to door, and when we added it all up, we had reached our goal. But we could not have completed our project on money alone. We needed labor!

So on June 11 and August 27 (our designated "work days"), we worked. The turnout was fantastic!

As you thumb through our pictures, take notice of the variety of ages. Even the younger ones wanted to help. And then towards the end, when all is completed, we're a pretty happy bunch! And seeing the smiles on faces young and old, the smile of satisfaction, the smile of working together, we knew we were a closer-knit "family" and all our hard work and time had been well worth its while!!

Following is a list of the many organizations and businesses who supported us in our project:

ORGANIZATIONS

1. Lions Club
2. Jaycees and Jaycee Ettes
3. Knights of Columbus
4. Chamber of Commerce
5. Kiwanis
6. Tops
7. Library Board
8. Masons
9. Order of Eastern Star
10. Rainbow
11. VFW and Auxiliary
12. Volunteer Firemen and Fireflys
13. Legion and Auxiliary
14. Woman's Club
15. Sportsmen's Club
16. Stitchers Club
17. Progressive Club
18. Wa Tan Ye
19. Community Betterment Council
20. Mr. Mellow
21. Garden Club
22. Y-Teens

Plus innumerable INDIVIDUALS.

BUSINESSES

1. Laurens Ready Mix
2. M. & J. R. Hakes, Inc.
3. Laurens State Bank
4. Hersom Construction
5. Laurens Municipal
Light Plant
6. The Laurens Sun and
Reminder
7. Farmer's Co-op
8. Reed's Livestock

The Laurens Sun

Laurens, Iowa—Thursday, April 28, 1977—Two Sections

Knights of Columbus start park project with \$2,000 donation

A campaign by the Laurens Community Betterment Committee to raise \$5,000 or more for playground equipment and other improvements in the Laurens City Park got off to a good start this week.

Arnie Hersom, committee chairman, reports a \$2,000 contribution from the Knights of Columbus specifically earmarked for the purchase of a "tornado slide." In addition, there has been a donation of \$85 to the general fund from the Laurens Jaycee Ettes, and C. I. Hersom Construction Co. has agreed to do the necessary cement work.

Members of the committee are contacting various organizations regarding the project, and report promises of financial cooperation from several.

Contributions from either organizations or individuals may be sent to Hersom or to Mrs. Bob Ziegler, secretary of the betterment committee.

More contributions reported for park playground items

More contributions by organizations have been reported by the Laurens Community Betterment Committee, which is seeking more than \$5,000 for playground equipment and improvements in the Laurens City Park.

Arnie Hersom, committee chairman, says the Laurens Kiwanis Club has pledged \$505 earmarked for the purchase of a "junior nature slide," and the VFW and Auxiliary will contribute \$114 to buy a "relax-a-bench."

Members of the committee are contacting local organizations at their regular meetings. There is also an opportunity for individuals to contribute to the fund by contacting either Hersom or Mrs. Bob Ziegler, committee secretary.

\$2,000 more now available for Laurens park improvement

Additional contributions to the Laurens Community Betterment Committee, for improvement of the Laurens City Park, were reported this week by Arnold Hersom, committee chairman.

The Laurens Library Board will spend \$1,000 in the project, part of it for the purchase of four fiberglass benches and the remainder for landscaping around the library. The benches will be used in the rest area next to the library.

Two contributions of \$500 each have been received, one from the Laurens State Bank and one from M. & J. R. Hakes, Inc. In addition, the Laurens Garden Club will furnish flowers and plants for the rest area.

Several organizations are still considering possible contributions.

The Laurens Sun

Laurens, Iowa—Thursday, June 9, 1977—Two Sections

'Work Day' Saturday at City Park

Saturday will be "work day" at the Laurens City Park.

Volunteers are asked to report at the park at 9 a.m. for a variety of duties, including painting, shrubbery trimming, etc. Arnie Hersom, chairman of the Laurens Community Betterment Committee, said there will be plenty of work for everyone.

The Mackie Memorial Swimming Pool will be closed for the day. This will make it possible to paint the building at the pool, apply a non-slip surface in the locker rooms, carpet the children's wading pool and install a gate into the wading pool enclosure.

Painting of the shelter house and the pump building in the park is also scheduled. Trees and shrubbery in the park will be trimmed.

Members of the Laurens Volunteer Fire Department and Jaycees are among those who have already volunteered to work, Hersom said.

Equipment

Also scheduled for Saturday is installation of the new playground equipment purchased by the betterment committee with funds contributed by Laurens organizations and individuals. The new equipment will be picked up tomorrow (Friday) at Grinnell, so it can be erected and installed. In some cases it will be necessary to put in concrete bases.

Some concrete work has already been done at the park by Hersom

Construction Co. Curbing was poured Monday for the flower bed in the rest area near the Laurens Public Library, and for the kiddie play area near the wading pool.

It is expected that bleacher seating for the swimming pool, purchased Monday night by the Laurens City Council, will also be

delivered tomorrow for installation Saturday.

1977 project

Improvement of the city park is the 1977 project of the Laurens Community Betterment Committee, and has received the support of many organizations. Expected to cost more than \$6,000, it is designed

to make the park more desirable for residents of the community of all ages.

The playground equipment is only one portion of the project. Hersom said all but a few pieces of this equipment is now ready for delivery.

As part of the drive for funds, which involved contacts with service groups and other organizations at their regular meetings, a house-to-house canvass of the town was conducted Monday evening by members of the Laurens Lions Club. Anyone not contacted, Hersom said, can mail donations to Mrs. Robert Ziegler, committee secretary.

Community Cooperation.....

'Work day' at park

Saturday was "work day" at the Laurens City Park, sponsored by the Laurens Community Betterment Committee. It was a day for cleanup and installation, with volunteers on hand to complete a variety of tasks. Included were painting of the pool building, shelter house and pump house; installation of new bleachers; trimming of trees and shrubbery; setting up and installation of new

playground equipment; carpeting and installation of a gate at the children's wading pool; moving and resetting of swings, and various other cleanup and improvement projects. Occasionally there was time out for cookies with ice tea or coffee, served by the committee. And when the job was completed the youngsters took over, to enjoy the results of many persons' efforts.



Top picture shows completely what our pool building looked like "before," bottom picture shows new color, as finishing touches are being put on.







"Before" and "after" pictures of pump house.





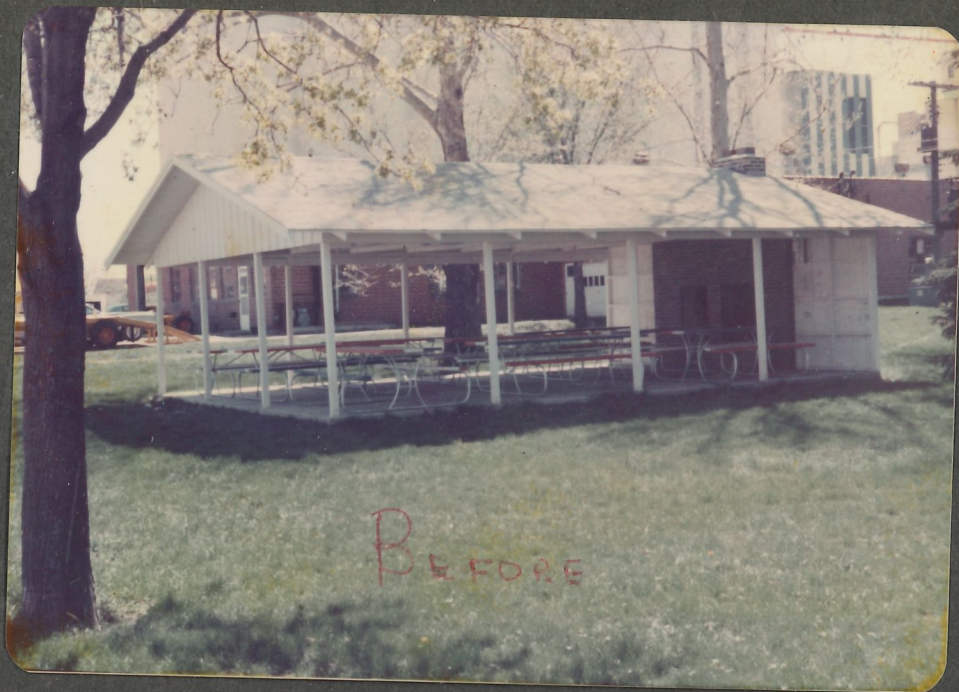
Site of sand pile "before," "during," and "after."





Top picture: Swing sets will be moved and tornado slide will be put in. Middle: Starting to assemble tornado slide. Bottom: Tornado slide just about finished.



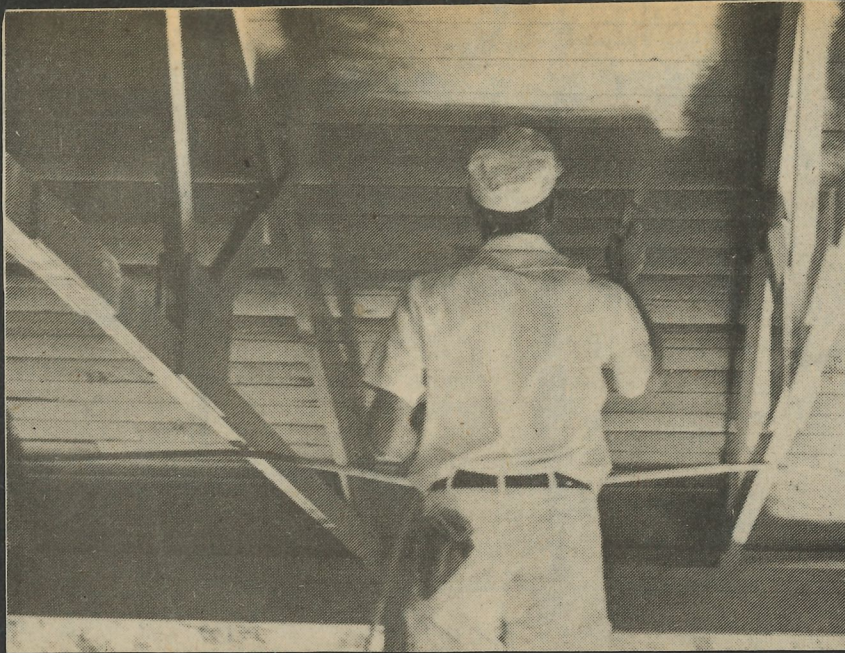


BEFORE

Much writing had been done on the walls, floors and ceilings of our shelter house, which gave it a dirty, "turn-off" look. We cleaned this up by painting over all this writing. We wanted individuals and families to feel welcome to picnic here or just sit and talk.



AFTER



The next two pages show workers trimming, cutting tree limbs and raking the grounds of the park. Small, but very important, job in keeping the park looking neat.



TRIMMING
TREES

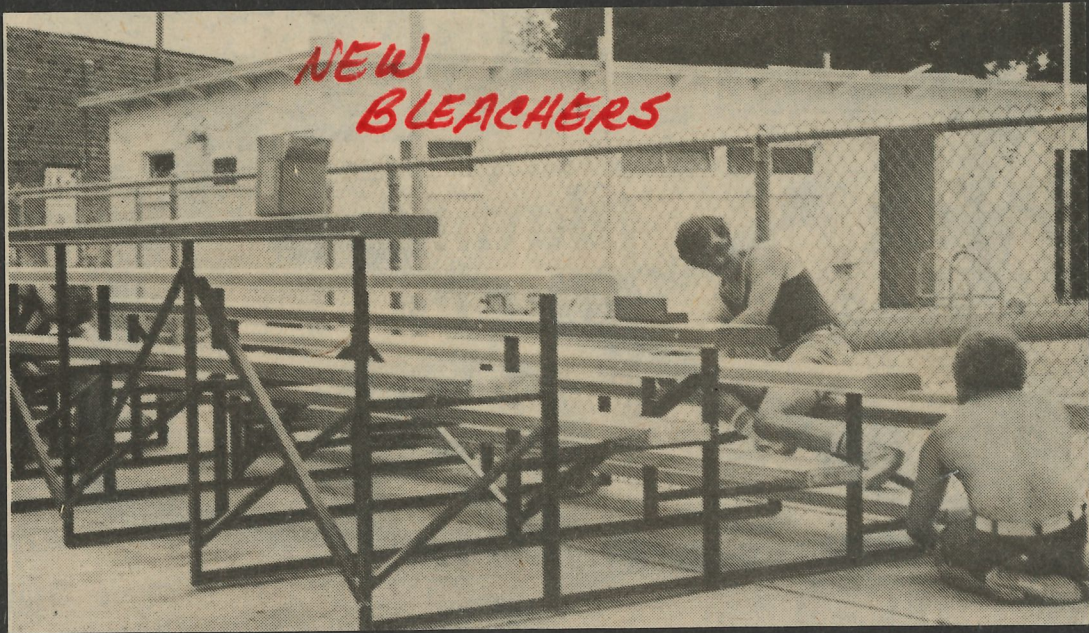


CLEANING UP BEHIND
MUSEUM (IN THE DARK)

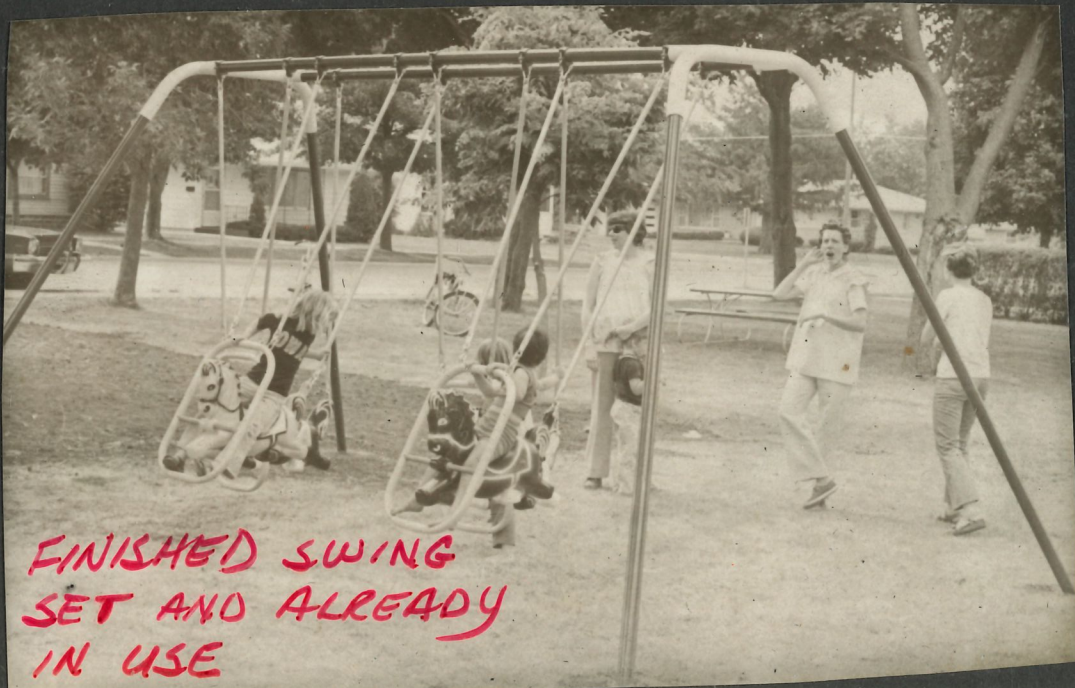


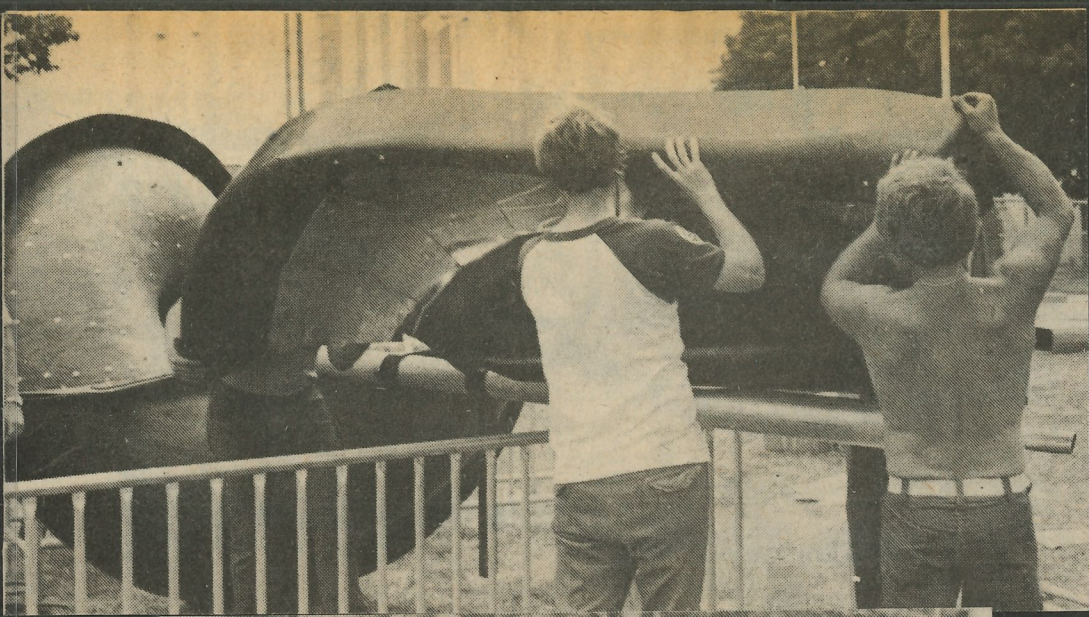
HAULING AWAY
DEAD BRANCHES





Another "before," "during," and "after" picture. This one
of the new location of swing set and installation of new seats.











PAINTING PUMP
HOUSE



NEW COLOR OF
PUMP HOUSE





START OF THE
MERRY-GO-ROUND



BEGIN OF
TORNADO SLIDE



MANY HELPERS
ON SAND BOX

The following pictures are all completed, the swing set, the sand pile and the tornado slide. By the end of the day, everyone was ready to give our new equipment a try, the pool building stood boldly with its new paint job, the trees and shrubbery were trimmed so nice and neat, and our shelter house had been removed of all graffiti. It's a beautiful sight!







COMPLETED
SAND BOX



ENJOYING
TORNADO
SLIDE



Trying things out

Even the dozens of volunteers who worked to put together the play things at the Laurens City Park Saturday and Sunday weren't more anxious to finish the work than were the town's children. They were out in full force, lined up to try the new slide, donated

by the Knights of Columbus, and the merry-go-round as soon as work was finished Sunday afternoon. A full page of pictures on the "Work Day" can be found inside, including shots of workers and the new equipment.—SunShot.

Many thanks goes to our Editor and Publisher, Neil Maurer, (and also a member of the Community Betterment Council), and Managing Editor Tom Carney for the publicity and coverage of our park project. Their time put in, including taking most of the pictures, we couldn't have done without.

On opposite page, you'll find two editorials by Mr. Maurer, before and after.

A community project

The 1977 project of the Laurens Community Betterment Committee, to improve the Laurens City Park, seems to be having a good reception from residents and organizations.

Included in the project would be a rest area and plantings near the Laurens Public Library, and various types of new playground equipment for youngsters of various ages.

With a budget of only a little over \$5,000, there should be no trouble reaching the goal. One organization—the Knights of Columbus—has already contributed \$2,000 toward it, with the money earmarked for a specific type of “tornado slide.” Other contributions

are coming in from both organizations and individuals.

Projects such as this one, with cooperation from a cross-section of persons and associations, are good for any community. They help to bring us all closer together, whether the goal be a large sum or a relatively small amount. Furthermore, completion of this particular project should provide enjoyment for residents of the area of varying ages.

Projects many times the size of this one have been completed successfully in past years, and there will undoubtedly be others coming up. Although this one is modest, it deserves the usual community support.

THE LAURENS SUN

Thursday, June 16, 1977

The Laurens Sun

ESTABLISHED 1885

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Neil L. Maurer Editor and Publisher
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No vandalism, please

A great deal of effort and considerable expense has gone into the improvement and beautification of the Laurens City Park. Much was accomplished in a big community effort Saturday, and more will be showing up during the next few weeks.

It's all being done for the enjoyment of community residents, and for visitors to Laurens.

We trust the park will be utilized to a greater extent than ever before. Its excellent facilities should be used and enjoyed, not only by the youngsters taking advantage of the new playground equipment, but by adults as well. It's a pleasant place to stop and rest under the trees, and the shelter house is just right for a family picnic.

There are enough picnic tables and benches for a rather large crowd.

Unfortunately, there has been some vandalism in the park in the past, and we hope this will stop now that improvements have been made. The obscenities written on the walls of the shelter house have been covered with paint, and there is certainly no need for them to be repeated. And park equipment costs money; it is there to be enjoyed, not to be broken.

Parents can help to insure that this will not happen again. If it continues, we suggest following the example of a police chief in a neighboring city who has now authorized release to the news media of names of any juveniles arrested for vandalism.



REST AREA



CLIMBER

We regret the fact that we do not have a complete "after" picture of our park. This is due to the fact that our wooden rope climber, our brightly colored trash cans and the seats and chains for previously-existing swing sets have not arrived yet.

Last Saturday, we installed a new nature platform slide and a new wooden horizontal climber. We again had a fantastic turnout! And hopefully within the next couple weeks, our other equipment will be here and our park will be truly completed.

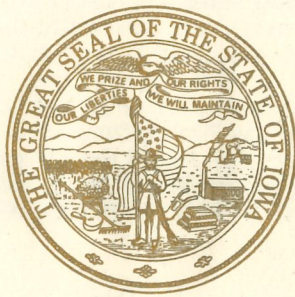
Everyone enjoyed themselves and our park is more beautiful because of it!!



1977

Iowa

Community Betterment
Recognition Day
Program



October 18, 1977

Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Des Moines, Iowa

