

Faculty Familiar Face

By Dave Kubach

Fred J. Schmeeckle of Central State college and conservation have come to have synonymous meanings to the ears of people acquainted with them throughout the state and even the nation. In his 33 years at CSC, Mr. Schmeeckle has made a name for himself in conservation that has become known far beyond the campus boundaries. He has been a pioneer in this relatively new and extremely vital field.

The general course in conservation that CSC offers as a major is Mr. Schmeeckle's brainchild. Conservation is wise use, or management, of our resources and as Mr. Schmeeckle has said, "Education is necessary for management."

Realizing these things, Mr. Schmeeckle saw that there was a place at CSC for conservation. Through his ideas and efforts and President William C. Hansen's support, a four year major in general conservation was the first course of its kind offered in the United States.

The success of the conservation course is evident. CSC now has graduates with conservation majors situated in top jobs in education and in conservation administration and field work from coast to coast. Al-



Mr. Schmeeckle

most one-fifth of the present enrollment of CSC is majoring or minor-ing in conservation.

Mr. Schmeeckle has spent his entire life in close contact with natural resources and the outdoors. The first 21 years of his life were spent on a farm near Eustis, Nebraska. There on the farm he first came to realize that there was a need for conservation. He saw the great, sweeping winds of the prairie states, which later became the dust bowl, already beginning to transform the fertile top soil of the land into immense black clouds. Even then, Mr. Schmeeckle knew that something could and should be done. A life-long dedication was beginning to mold.

Kearney State Teachers college at Kearney, Nebraska, was where Mr. Schmeeckle obtained his bachelor's degree with a major in agriculture, biology, and German. While at college, he was active in football, basketball, baseball, track, and tennis. Following his graduation, he taught vocational agriculture for four years at a high school in Marquette, Nebraska. During the summer he served as an assistant in the biology department of his alma mater, Kearney State Teachers college.

World War I terminated his career temporarily in the years from 1918-1919. During this time he saw active duty in France during the closing stages of the war.

Mr. Schmeeckle came to Stevens Point, and CSC in 1923 after receiving his master's degree in vocational education at the University of Minnesota. Evidently he liked it here, because 33 years is a long

time to stay in one place.

Mr. Schmeeckle's accomplishments at CSC have not been limited to conservation and the teaching field, however. A man of many talents, he built the college athletic field almost single handedly. He sacrificed an entire summer to perform this service for the school. It is appropriately called Schmeeckle field. Through Mr. Schmeeckle's efforts CSC has acquired a bus and the gift of two station wagons which are invaluable to many out-of-class projects.

In his 33 years here, he has served on the school's athletic committee 31 years. He also found time to coach CSC's tennis teams for five years and to advise Phi Sigma Epsilon national fraternity until they became a national organization.

Mr. Schmeeckle has spoken before numerous audiences at various conventions on the subject of conservation. He is very much in demand by many clubs and organizations to spread his knowledge of conservation to the interested public. It could be said that he is the voice of conservation at CSC.

In the past, Mr. Schmeeckle has, also, done professional landscape work around the community. The P.J. Jacobs High school and the Nigbor home at 901 Main Street are examples of his landscaping talent.

Mr. Schmeeckle's leisure time is spent in the pursuit of his hobbies which are fishing, hunting, and woodworking. He is an ardent trout fisherman who specializes in the art of dry fly fishing. His take of these colorful gamefish over the years has been tremendous.

He has hunted almost every type of game that can be found in Wisconsin. Of the many deer seasons that have passed since he first arrived in Wisconsin, he has missed only two. Mr. Schmeeckle claims he would die happy if he went while sitting on a deer that he had just bagged. His hunting and fishing experiences alone would fill a good sized book.

Since 1938, Mr. Schmeeckle and his wife have lived in Plover. They now live in a new house only three years old. Mr. Schmeeckle made good use of his woodworking ability by doing 75 per cent of the work on the house himself. The house is all of wood panel, having seven different types of wood used in its structure.

Mr. and Mrs. Schmeeckle have both a son and a daughter. Their son, Don, is an electrical engineer at the Whiting-Plover paper mill. Wilma, the daughter, is married and living at Luxemburg, Wisconsin. There are four grandchildren.

The conservation club, Alpha Kappa Lambda, paid tribute to Mr. Schmeeckle for his years of service to conservation and the college at the AKL venison dinner last semester. He was presented with an Argus C-4 camera. Of his 33 years at CSC, Mr. Schmeeckle called his past 10 years in conservation the most enjoyable.

Recently Mr. Schmeeckle received a letter from Dr. William L. Bristow, director of the Bureau of Curriculum Research for the Board of Education of New York City. Mr. Bristow stated, "It must be a great satisfaction to you to know that you are one of the key spots in conservation in the United States of America. You are not doing a pretty good job. You are doing one of the most effective jobs being done anywhere by anybody."

This has been a story of a man of many parts; a man with the courage of his convictions and the initiative to carry them out. He has given, and will continue to give, much to CSC and conservation.

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