

**President**  
Dana York  
Green Earth Connection  
P.O. Box 324  
Jonesborough, TN 37659  
(410) 708-6794  
[dyork818@yahoo.com](mailto:dyork818@yahoo.com)

**President-Elect**  
Cheryl K. Simmons  
9779 Eagle Mountain Dam  
Road  
Fort Worth, TX 76135  
817-542-2725  
[cksoil@aol.com](mailto:cksoil@aol.com)

**Immediate Past President**  
Cecil Currin  
137 Mt. Warner  
Hadley, MA 01035-9668  
(413) 549-5677  
[luandcecil@currin.org](mailto:luandcecil@currin.org)

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Ronald L. Marlow  
ARCSE  
P. O. Box 7454  
Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454  
(703) 503-9219  
[arcse@cox.net](mailto:arcse@cox.net)

**Regional Vice-Presidents**  
**EAST**  
William J. Bowers  
19 Natures Crossing  
Enola, PA 17025-1043  
(717) 877-4593  
[wbowers@comcast.net](mailto:wbowers@comcast.net)

**WEST**  
Bill Ward  
3029 Nikol Street  
Sacramento, CA 95826  
916-769-0280  
[bluegrassbillward@gmail.com](mailto:bluegrassbillward@gmail.com)

**SOUTH**  
Arnold D. King  
1900 Canaveral Ct.  
Granbury, TX 76048-4370  
(817) 578-8177  
[arnolddking@hotmail.com](mailto:arnolddking@hotmail.com)

**MIDWEST**  
Norman R. Kempf  
2312 North 80<sup>th</sup>  
Lincoln, NE 68507-3339  
(402) 464-6390  
[nkempf@neb.rr.com](mailto:nkempf@neb.rr.com)

**Historian**  
Douglas Helms  
398 N. Edison St.  
Arlington, VA 22203  
(703) 525-1468  
[douglashelms@verizon.net](mailto:douglashelms@verizon.net)

**Editor**  
Jerry Bernard  
15 Apple Blossom Ct.,  
Stafford, VA 22554  
(540) 720-5644  
[jbernard.nrcsret@gmail.com](mailto:jbernard.nrcsret@gmail.com)

**Webmaster**  
VACANT

**Notes From the Potomac**  
VACANT

**Senior Conservationist Chronicler**  
Marc Safley  
11975 William and Mary Circle,  
Woodbridge, VA 22192  
(703) 494-8074  
[jsafley1@verizon.net](mailto:jsafley1@verizon.net)



# NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired SCS and NRCS Employees

Vol. 45, No. 1 January/February 2018

The **ARCSE Newsletter** is published bi-monthly by the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees, P.O. Box 7454, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454

Website: [www.arcse.org](http://www.arcse.org)

## NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

*Editor's Note: Doug Lawrence authored these "Notes."*

*Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukah from Capitol Hill on a cold Christmas day. And here's to a healthy, prosperous, and fulfilling 2018.*

**Continuing Resolution**—On December 21<sup>st</sup>, Congress passed the Continuing Resolution to fund the government through January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and waived statutory PAYGO rules with respect to the tax legislation ([link](#)). The **Continuing Resolution** was passed by the House on 12/21 (231-188) and was passed by the Senate on 12/21 (66-32). **President Trump** signed the measure into law on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Congress is expected to continue appropriations work in January. Lawmakers will have to come to an agreement on a spending package by January 19<sup>th</sup>, or enact another continuing resolution to avoid a shutdown. Appropriations work may not be completed until Democrats and Republicans agree on a budget deal that sets spending levels for defense and nondefense spending. The House had been working off of a total funding level that would significantly increase defense spending and slightly reduce non-defense spending compared to last year, while the Senate had adopted unofficial guidance that has an overall spending level that is the same as FY 2017, but with different allocations within that total.

**Tax Bill**—On December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the House approved sweeping tax legislation, voting along party lines to enact deep and permanent tax cuts for corporations and temporary cuts for individuals. A procedural glitch slowed down plans to get the bill to the President as several provisions of the bill ran afoul of Senate rules. That meant the Senate had to remove those provisions, approve the bill and send it back to the House for another vote. The Senate approved the measure early Wednesday morning, sending the final measure back to the House for final action before going to the President. While there was potential for a delay in signing the final bill, another technical issue was resolved through the continuing resolution, and the President signed the tax legislation on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The final bill is projected to add about \$1.5 trillion to the deficit, which is expected to trigger discretionary spending program reductions in the coming year. The house has already indicated interest in addressing social safety net program reductions. The near-term impacts of the tax cut decisions are likely to become more evident as Congress begins to develop the 2018 spending bills in January, 2018. Keep your eye on the Appropriations Committees over the next few months to see how the tax cut affects NRCS discretionary programs like Conservation Operations (Conservation Technical Assistance, Soil Survey, Snow Survey, and Plant Materials), as well how much the Appropriators reduce the funding of mandatory programs like EQIP and CSP.

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, **Secretary Sonny Perdue** issued a statement regarding the tax cut legislation: "This is a once-in-a-generation reform of the federal tax code and it comes just in time to be an eagerly awaited Christmas present for taxpayers. Having traveled through our nation's heartland for most of this year, I know that the hard-working, tax-paying people of American agriculture need relief. Most family farms are run as small businesses, and they should be able to keep more of what they earn to reinvest in their operations and take care of their families. Simplifying the tax code and easing the burden on citizens will free them up to make choices for themselves, create jobs, and boost the overall American economy. I thank President Trump for his leadership, and commend Congress for being responsive to the people."

That said, the Tax Bill will create winners and losers, and the success of the Tax Bill depends on how the economy reacts to the fiscal stimulus, given that we are at full employment and have enjoyed steady GDP growth of about 2% per year since 2011 ([link](#)).

**Farm Bill**—On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the House Agriculture Committee launched a Farm Bill Landing Page designed to provide updates and information related to the 2018 Farm Bill. The site can be accessed through the committee's current website, <https://agriculture.house.gov/farmbill>.

**Chairman Conaway** reiterated his commitment to completing a farm bill on time. "We've spent the past three years preparing—holding 113 hearings and six listening sessions around the country. We recognize what's at stake. We're working on getting the policy right and will use this site as a resource as we advance the next farm bill." I talked with Committee staff last week and both the House and the Senate said we would have a Farm Bill in early 2018. However, don't expect a great deal of change in policy.

**Secretary Perdue** remarked recently "I look forward to being a resource to the committee as they ponder the 2018 Farm Bill. We are talking about having a safety net that's not so high that there's no risk, but not so low that it's so dangerous people can't farm again. So that's the challenge of the ag committees and Congress to write that Farm Bill." Perdue went on to note that the Department has been listening to issues from producers through the upper Midwest, the Northeast, out here in Texas, Florida, Georgia and stands ready to share those insights with the committees.

**People**—We are still waiting for **Bill Northe** to be confirmed by the Senate because **Senator Ted Cruz** has placed a hold on Northe's confirmation. Senator Cruz represents oil interests in Texas, and he has concerns about the ethanol production and the Renewable Fuel Standard.

**Leonard Jordan** is still acting NRCS Chief; this might be a record for an acting Chief.

**Sam Clovis**, former talk show host, co-chair of the Trump presidential campaign, and Trump's USDA transition lead, was not confirmed as the USDA Chief Scientist and is now working as a political appointee.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dana York**

**Winter Musing:** As we have just passed the holiday season and are looking toward the New Year, I personally will "begin farming" on my family farm this next year. Three years of teaching Beginning Farmer classes and my daughter and son-in-law moving back to the farm made me realize I might have one more "career" in me. On Grand Oak Farm we will produce organic vegetables and cut flowers in the spring! This includes new visits to my NRCS office to find out about high tunnels and irrigation, and planting 4,000 cloves of garlic and 1,000 flower bulbs in November. I admit that it took me a little longer than expected, and I sure was sore, but can't wait to see them pop out of the ground. Spending long evenings in front of the fire looking at seed catalogs and attending classes on Organic and GAP certification as an "adult learner," and building a budget that is affordable are all challenging but exciting!

Keeping up with fellow SCS/NRCS employees is the main goal of this newsletter. Take a moment to send in "what's up with you"—your new adventures and activities that make you glad you're retired! We enjoy hearing from you and hope you or your state organizations will send information about the retirees in your state.

Now back to the seed catalogs..... Dana York



**NRCS Acting Chief Leonard Jordan becomes ARCSE Member.**  
L-R: Dana York, ARCSE President; Leonard Jordan; Cecil Currin, Immediate Past President of the ARCSE

**Editor's Note:** ARCSE is looking for a new webmaster to help maintain the Association's Website! The amount of time is fairly minimal, but if you are interested please contact Dana York at [dyork818@yahoo.com](mailto:dyork818@yahoo.com) or call her at 410-708-6794! Your service would be greatly appreciated!

**ARCSE President's Award for Outstanding Community Service.** Any ARCSE member may nominate a member for this award using the criteria and procedures below. We know from articles in the newsletter that we have many members who are deserving of this recognition and encourage ARCSE representatives to actively pursue nominations.

**Purpose**—To publicly recognize ARCSE Members who have distinguished themselves in sustained and outstanding contributions in local, state, and regional community service.

### Qualifications—

- Is an ARCSE Member.
- Demonstrates strong character and high ethical and professional standards.
- Selection will not be based upon his/her achievements while employed by SCS/NRCS.

**Criteria for Nomination**—Nominees will be those individuals who have distinguished themselves by providing sustained high quality service, possibly using their SCS/NRCS area of expertise, to local, state, or regional entities. Recipients of their service

may include volunteer work for hospitals, churches, schools, youth organizations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, SWCDs, NRCS Earth Teams, environmental groups, other units of government, or service organizations.

**Procedure**—Each ARCSE Representative may nominate one individual per year. Nominations for the Award and documentation (no more than two pages) of qualifications and contributions will be made to the ARCSE Representative. The nominee's name and documentation will be sent to the Regional Vice President.

The Regional Vice President will select up to three nominations and send them to the President of ARCSE by May 15<sup>th</sup>. The President (with the help of the Governing Board, if he/or she so chooses), will select the best nomination(s) to receive the Award.

## A BIT OF HISTORY

**Douglas Helms, Historian**

Email: [douglas\\_helms@verizon.net](mailto:douglas_helms@verizon.net)

### Curveball or Optical Illusion

An episode on NPR provided the idea, in a roundabout way, for this month's history item. A piece by **Shankar Vedantam** cast a wide pall of skepticism over the value of the Myers-Briggs personality test for hiring employees. His comment took me back to the time that we in the Soil Conservation Service headquarters had to take the Myers-Briggs test. As I recall, either **Barbara Osgood** or **Ida Cuthbertson** came by my office and told me of the connection of the test to SCS history. **Isabel Briggs Myers** and **Katharine Cook Briggs** were daughter and wife, respectively, of **Lyman Briggs**, the first physicist employed in the Bureau of Soils. He earned a Ph.D. degree from Johns Hopkins University while working in the bureau.

Later I heard a presentation by **Ed Landa** about Briggs at one of our history sessions at a Soil Science Society of America meeting. His presentation stirred memories of my childhood in the 1950s in rural North Carolina when the highlight of the week was the Saturday Game of the Week on TV. That's baseball, of course.

During one game, announcer **Buddy Blattner** brought up a recent news item that some scientist claimed that the curveball was an "optical illusion." Well, "Ole Diz," his broadcast partner **Dizzy Dean**, fairly hooted at this notion. Sometime later they reported that a respected scientist, with the assistance of the Washington Senators, had demonstrated that the curveball did in fact curve. After his Bureau of Soils career, Briggs joined the National Bureau of Standards (NBS), eventually becoming its Director. Now in retirement, the baseball fan and former outfielder for the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan (now Michigan State University) did some wind tunnel studies of deflection caused by the rotating ball and its slightly upraised stitches. Furthermore, he attached a flat ribbon to a baseball and had Senators pitchers **Pedro Ramos** and **Camilo Pascual** throw curveballs to home plate. Then the twists in the ribbon were counted.

The newspapers and Ole Diz loved the story. The curveball indeed curved. The question remains: does it drop? For the ongoing story see the following:

[http://www.nbcnews.com/id/39658106/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-science/t/breaking-curveball-illusion-scientists-say/#.WjkMUiOZPu4](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/39658106/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/breaking-curveball-illusion-scientists-say/#.WjkMUiOZPu4).

Also of interest is the history minute video at:

<https://phys.org/news/2016-07-history-minute-baseballs.html>



**Lyman Briggs and Ossie Bluege, comptroller of the Washington Senators and, formerly, the club's third baseman and manager, at Griffith Stadium in 1959. Briggs demonstrated how to measure the spin of a pitched ball with the aid of a flat measuring tape affixed to the ball.**

## ARCSE MEMBERSHIP DUES

Member	\$18 per year
Affiliate	\$18 per year
Life (One-time payment)	
Age 64 or younger	\$250
Age 65 thru 74	\$200
Age 75 or older	\$125

**NOTE:** Dues payment includes receipt of the bimonthly electronic newsletter only. All members (both life members and those who pay annual dues) who desire a hard copy of the newsletter must pay an additional fee of \$12.00 per year

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

**Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer**

### New Members

#### New ARCSE Members

First Name	Last Name	State
Ann	Christie	SC
Rufus	Croom	NC
Christopher	Jones	ME
Walter	Latshaw	PA
Gerald	Stevens	IA

### DUES AND ADDITIONAL FEES FOR PRINTED NEWSLETTER IN 2018

**Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer**

**2018 dues are past due on January 1, 2018.** Currently, **over 200 members** who pay annual dues have not done so for 2018. In addition, **85 members** have not paid the additional fee for the printed copy of the newsletter.

**2018 Dues Notice to Members receiving the newsletter by printed copy:** A dues notice was included with the October/November hard copy newsletter (green page insert). Please follow the instructions on the notice concerning the address label information on this newsletter to determine if your dues are due.

**2018 Additional Fee for Printed Copy:** All members (life members, honorary members and those who pay annual dues) who desire a printed copy of the newsletter must pay an additional fee of \$12.00 per year. Since many of you have already paid, please follow the instructions on the dues notice concerning the address label information on this newsletter to determine if you must pay the additional fee. This \$12.00 will help offset ARCSE annual costs of nearly \$20.00 per member to print and mail the printed newsletter.

**2018 Dues Notice to Members receiving the electronic newsletter:** A dues notice is not included with the electronic newsletter. Members receiving the electronic newsletter whose dues are past due will receive a separate email from ARCSE with a second dues notice attached (WATCH FOR IT) after January 1, 2018.

## ARIZONA

**Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative**

**Email:** [ckcookson@aol.com](mailto:ckcookson@aol.com)

**Bill Fobair Report:** The photo below was taken on Thanksgiving Day at **Ralph's**, our youngest son's home. Ralph and his wife love to cook, so we just sat back and enjoyed the superb food. We were thankful to be together with friends and family on this day.

Shortly after **Joyce** arrived in the US, my mother invited Joyce to Thanksgiving dinner and placed her next to me. We married sometime later. Joyce is a good cook, but often takes her caregiver, Ralph and Carol, and guests out for dinner. I am now 93 and Joyce is 89.

Joyce is from New Zealand and came to the United States in 1964. She sold bricks for the National Cathedral in Washington, DC while I was on assignment in Davison, MI. Later Joyce learned that a lady in Detroit was selling bricks with the donor's name impressed in each. These bricks were to be placed just outside the entry to the Cathedral. Joyce is a Pellew. A Pellew from lower England came to Washington, DC to manage construction of the National Cathedral. He hired artists from Italy to do the paintings in the ceiling and the lead glass window at the front of the church behind the pulpit. As you approach the pulpit, sanctuaries were available on the right for non-denominational use by the public. The National Cathedral was completed in 1907 and continues to serve the public today with ample parking within walking distance.



**Bill and Joyce Fobair**

## ARKANSAS

**Editor's note: I hadn't heard from Whitey Spears, former Arkansas' Representative, so I called him. His caregiver answered and said that Whitey has dementia and is "sundowning."**

The following was sent in by **Ralph Mashburn**, [ralphmashburn@gmail.com](mailto:ralphmashburn@gmail.com).

About 30 retirees and guest attended the annual Arkansas SCS/NRCS Retirees Meeting. It was the best turnout we have had in a number of years. Our new officers; president, **Bob Price**, and secretary, **Marilyn Marshall**, have done a wonderful job contacting retirees, arranging the meeting at a new convenient location, bringing in delicious food from Whole Hog BBQ, and having local engineers present a very interesting slide show on the design and construction of the beautiful new Broadway Street Bridge in downtown Little Rock.



**L to R: Front Row:** Bill Garner, John Henry, George Dahlke (seated), Dru Cantrell, Marilyn Marshall, Dick Babeu, Bill O'Neal, Jan Ziegler, Ken Ziegler. **Middle Row:** Marion Mathis, Larry Ward, Rose Webb, Robert Cantrell, Helen Garr, Kathy Linder, Deborah Carmen, Dennis Carmen, Bill Townsend. **Back Row:** Tony Richardson, Randy Busby, Bob Price, Charles Fultz, Ray Linder, Ralph Mashburn, Sid Lowrance, and Bob Young (Tom Fortner, not in picture).



Dennis Carman presented a program on the 2017 Replacement of the 1923 Little Rock Broadway Bridge.

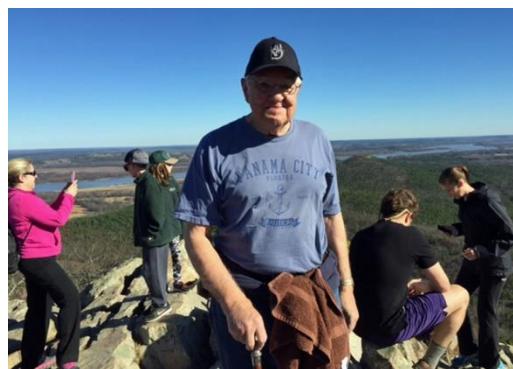
**Dennis Carmen**, retired NRCS Arkansas State Conservation Engineer, introduced the program and the engineers who worked on the design and construction. The cost was about \$135 mil. Pulaski County paid the extra \$20 mil. to have an attractive double arch instead of a plain girder bridge. The arches and spans were constructed off-site and floated by barge to be installed on the bridge support columns. The bridge has been considered for design honors.



Marilyn Marshall, and Reginald Jackson (NRCS State Public Affairs Specialist) listen to Dick Babeu explain how to catch fish at nearby Lake Maumelle.



Bob Price lays out our delicious lunch from Whole Hog BBQ.



Ralph Mashburn climbed Pinnacle MT near Little Rock just to see if he could.

**Ralph and Nancy Mashburn** report they have had a very busy and interesting year. Ralph says, "Our health is good right now." Nancy has fully recovered from several surgeries, including a lumpectomy followed by radiation. Ralph has only one health complaint (this is really Nancy's complaint): his hearing is almost gone without hearing aids; and they don't fully compensate, especially in noisy surroundings. We are still living on our farm and rent our cropland to a farmer who raises soybeans, corn, and cotton; and we rent our levied pond land to a fish farmer who raises minnows, grass carp, and bass.

Our family (pictured) came to be with us in Arkansas from as far away as Seattle and Dublin, Ireland. In September, Nancy and Ralph flew to see them in Seattle, then in June and then again in August to a grandson's wedding and to play with their two great grandsons and one brand new great granddaughter from Dublin, Ireland. During the June trip they drove down to Portland to see friends, and Ralph enjoyed a coffee shop visit with **Danny Moore**, whom he had worked with in the West National Technical Center.



*Our three children and spouses and most of our grandchildren were at our house to welcome in the New Year 2017.*

On a sad note, **Gene Sullivan**, past State Conservationist in Nebraska, Mississippi, and Arkansas, died on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017.



*Ralph Mashburn and Gene Sullivan, 1956*



*Ralph Mashburn and Gene Sullivan, 2016*

**Gene and Ralph** were together in high school and at the University of Arkansas, and both retired from SCS in 1990. He was Best Man and his wife, **Carrie**, sang at Ralph and Nancy's wedding in 1956. Ralph was privileged to present a eulogy at Gene's funeral, which contained some funny stories about Gene and Ralph's experiences together. We shared a rather peculiar sense of humor, often at someone else's expense.

Here is one of those stories: "We were on the same flight to Little Rock with side-by-side seats after an SCS meeting. I got on first, sitting in my window seat, and Gene was late getting on the plane. He stopped in the aisle and looked at me with a frown and said, 'I'm sorry but you are going to have to move, you're in my seat.' I said, 'no, you must be mixed up, I'm in the correct seat.' He looked at his ticket and said, 'My ticket says 19, and this sign up here says 19, so that's my seat.' I said, 'My ticket

says 19, so they must have given you that one by mistake. Now go on away from here, you're bothering everybody.' Gene said, 'What does "aisley" mean? My ticket says A-I-S-L-E?' I said, 'I don't know what 'aisley' means. I don't understand airplane talk.' The fellow in front of us could stand it no longer. He turned around and said, 'No, no, you're both right. You're both in ROW 19' and pointing at me said, 'and you're in the window seat,' and pointed at Gene said, "and you are in the aisle seat." We both looked at him with blank expressions, and he turned around with a self-satisfied look on his face. Then Gene said, 'What was that fellow talking about?' I said, 'I don't know, I didn't understand him either.' Then we busted out laughing. I hope the helpful guy forgave us."

These past few years we have thoroughly enjoyed serving the Lord together as members of The Gideons International. We were each invited about once a month to give a Gideon talk at churches of many different denominations.



**Weekly Gideon Prayer Breakfast**

**Dick Babeu** reports that he and **Lori** had an exciting two-week vacation to Grand Cayman Island last month. Each day brought new surprises, especially on their daily snorkel trips. In addition to the beautiful ocean fish, one day they came across a 6.5-foot Green Moray Eel. While on another day they saw a couple of 5-foot sharks plus numerous spotted eagle rays. Driving on the left side of the road and navigating the roundabouts was also a daily adventure, but they felt comfortable driving after their first day. Their favorite animals on the island are both the endangered Blue Iguana and the not-so-welcome invasive Green Iguanas. They were very fortunate that the only effects from Hurricane Irma were higher-than-normal winds and surf.



**Dick and Lori Babeu on Grand Cayman Island**

## CALIFORNIA

**Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative**

**Email:** [bluegrassbillward@gmail.com](mailto:bluegrassbillward@gmail.com)

Greetings from California and Happy New Year to all our fellow retirees across the Nation! As most of you know from watching the National news, California has been experiencing another devastating group of fires, this time in southern California.

Following is a link to the current status as of December 18<sup>th</sup> of the largest and most devastating of these fires, the Thomas Fire in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. The fire is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest fire in California History, having burned over 270,000 acres and destroying over 1,000 homes and structures. As of December 18<sup>th</sup> it was only 45% contained, with over 8,000 fire personnel working on the fire!

[http://www.fire.ca.gov/current\\_incidents/incidentdetails/Index/1922](http://www.fire.ca.gov/current_incidents/incidentdetails/Index/1922)

This fire in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties is an area where California NRCS has worked extensively with county watershed and flood control staffs on both long-term flood control and emergency work after both floods and fires. I personally have worked with many of the local county staff dealing with these fires. This fire is of a magnitude that even some of them were at risk and had to be evacuated. The area could sure use some rain. However, no rain is in the short-term forecast.

California retirees continue to have a monthly luncheon and breakfast for all who can make it. We had eight retirees attend the December luncheon.



**California Retirees.** From lower left clockwise: Harold Honeyfield, Yours truly (Bill Ward), Peggy Holebrook, Walt Sykes, Arturo Carvajal, Helen Flach, Ed Schmidt and Ron Schultz.

**Update, Oroville Dam Spillway Repair:** The Oroville Dam Spillway repair work is where the California Department of Water Resources wants it to be at this time of year. The reservoir water level is very low as we now go into this winter, and the spillway is ready to handle a significant flood release of up to 100,000 cfs this year, in the unlikely event it may be required.

“Hair-line” cracks that have appeared in the surface of the spillway have gotten a lot of attention, raising unnecessary concern and alarm among the general public. It seems there is at least one so-called Oroville Dam “expert” who continues to feed information to the newspapers with the message that the “sky is falling.” The following YouTube video from the same source I have used in previous reports shares what is going on regarding this latest issue.

<https://youtu.be/1zFkgb1cmgg>

Neither The California Department of Water Resources nor the California Division of Safety of Dams have any concerns about these hair-line cracks as a threat to the spillway, and the general public should not be in fear either.

**Restoration work, Feather River Fall Run Salmon 2017:** The very large flood releases that came down the Oroville Dam spillway and excessive erosion that occurred did significant damage to downstream salmon spawning areas. Some critical spawning areas were completely filled in with gravel and debris, making them not available as spawning area for the fall Salmon run.

The California Department of Water Resources just recently completed much-needed restoration work to remove the gravels, recreate the channels, and restore the critical spawning areas. The following recent video recording describes the work and demonstrates the success that is going on right now with fall run salmon using the restored spawning areas.

<https://youtu.be/bSMHpRv17HM>

**Helen Flach** recently returned from three weeks of visiting friends in Korea and Japan, where she learned how to make sushi, navigate the Tokyo metro, and order beer in two more languages.

New CA retiree joins our ranks: **Dan Toan**, Design Engineer. Dan is retiring, effective at the end of this year, after a very productive 32+ year career with SCS/NRCS.



**Dan Toan with wife Sandra at Lake Tahoe.**

In my former position as State Design Engineer and later the Regional Design Staff Leader for a multistate area, including Hawaii and Saipan, I was blessed to have Dan on my staff and be his supervisor for over 20 years.

Dan shared a lot with us about his experiences and wonderful memories working with SCS/NRCS. He is very grateful for the career he had and the many wonderful people he met and worked with along the way. Here are a couple group Design/Engineering staff photos Dan shared with us.

I was able to attend a very nice retirement luncheon honoring Dan on December 12<sup>th</sup> and took part in congratulating and thanking him for his very fine work and many accomplishments over his career. I shared with those in attendance that Dan was the kind of staff member and person every supervisor loves to have working for him or her. Dan was intelligent, dedicated, hardworking and dependable. Dan was a great "team person," easy to work with, cheerful with a sense of humor, and more than willing to take on any task needed to get the job done.



*The California Design staff, early 1990s.*



*The California Engineering and Design Staff, 2009.*



**Dan Toan's retirement event with some current and retired NRCS staff from Design and Engineering who worked with Dan. L-R: Jim Chapman, Harold Honeyfield, Dan Toan, Bill Ward, Teresa Velasquez, Carlos Velasquez, Walt Sykes and Dan Johnson.**

Of Dan's many contributions to the agency I will note one in particular here. During his tenure with the agency, he became a pioneer and "go-to person" for our state's adoption of both computer-aided drafting (CAD) and engineering surveying technologies at the field level, assuring that we were working as close to the state-of-the-art as possible in those areas.

As part of a "California Tradition," we wish Dan well as he "rides off into the sunset" as a new retiree. Thank you Dan. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement!

That's all for this time around folks. Wishing you all the best and a Happy New Year from California!

—Bill Ward, Former Design Staff Leader, Davis, CA

**REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS UP-TO-DATE BY CONTACTING THE  
SECRETARY/TREASURER**

## IDAHO

**Jim Cornwell, ARCSE Representative**

**Email: [idahoarcse@gmail.com](mailto:idahoarcse@gmail.com)**

Winter has arrived in Boise, but is late and not showing a strong presence. We received 4-6 inches of snow in the last two days, so we do have a White Christmas this morning, enough to cause bad backs after clearing the driveway and sidewalks.

Those who attended either the November or December meetings were **Paul Malone, Stan and Kathy Hobson, Amos Garrison, Keri Gibbs, Glen Logan, Shelby Brownfield, Darrell Gallup and his son Darrell, Rob Fredericksen, Sharon Norris, John Kendrick, Wayne Faude, Dennis Froeming, Paul and Harriet Calverley, Gene and Bev Crisman, Mike and Judi Somerville, Rich Simms, Frank Fink and Jim Cornwell.**

**Keri Gibbs** briefed us at the December meeting about the issues NARFE is addressing on behalf of retirees and current federal employees. As the federal budget develops, there are more and more concerns about maintaining our earned benefits. **Gene Crisman** relayed to us how much he has received in annuity payments in comparison to his contributions during his career. He has now been retired for as long as he worked, 32+ years. His testimony shows truly how important our earned benefits are in retirement.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year from Idaho.

## INDIANA

**Harold Thompson, ARCSE Representative**

**Email: [harold.thompson58@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harold.thompson58@sbcglobal.net)**

Indiana State Conservationist **Jane Hardisty** has announced her retirement January 3<sup>rd</sup>. A celebration will be held in late February. Contact **Harold Thompson** for details.





**NRCS continues to promote healthy soil. We dig it and so does Bob Eddleman!**

## IOWA

**Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative**

**Email: [amjens1@gmail.com](mailto:amjens1@gmail.com)**

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, Iowa's retirees held their annual Christmas Party at the Machine Shed Restaurant in Urbandale. We had 43 persons attend. The names of those who attended are shown in the captions under the pictures. We enjoyed a good meal of roasted pork loin and old fashioned pot roast with all the fixings. It was a lot of fun to re-connect and swap stories with other retirees. Thanks to **Ann Jensen** and **Donita Link** for making party favors. **Maralee Sarasio** was the winner of the drawing for a Machine Shed gift card.



**Christmas Party Attendees: Dave Breitbach, Kay Breitbach, Eldon Weber, Jeannie Weber, Ron Hersom, Jo Hersom, Lee White, Alice White, Jody Christiansen, Sue Cross, Chris Knudsen, Duane Miller, and Barbara Stewart**



**Christmas Party Attendees: Kathy Peterson, Brian Peterson, Charles Shirley, Jim Ayen, Don Peterson, Kay Peterson, Roger Link, Donita Link, Charlotte Asell, and Lyle Asell**



**Christmas Party Attendees:** Mark Jensen, Ann Jensen, Helen Kopitzke, Gerald Stevens, Marian Stevens, Don Redman, Russ Knutson, Denny Peterson, Donna Knutson, Rod Martin, Connie Brent, Lew Brent, Don Borts, Chuck Fisher, and Herb Wilson



**Christmas Party Attendees:** Chuck Williams, Don Borts, Jack Sarasio, Maralee Sarasio, and Don Ummel

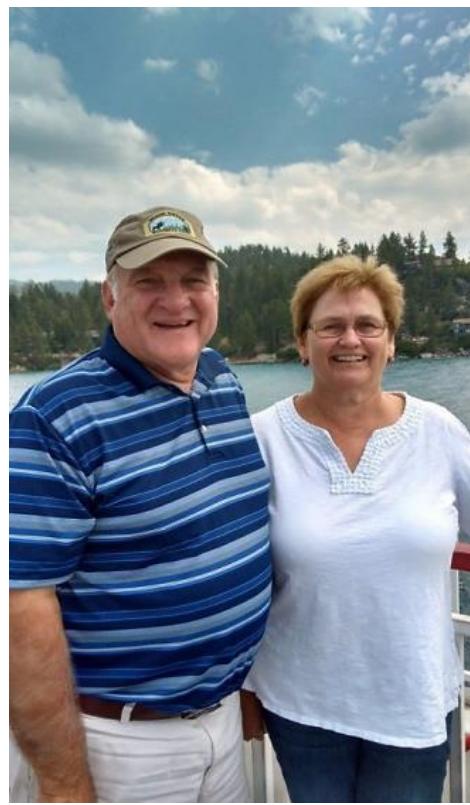
I received a nice email from **Ernie Aust**. Ernie was honored by the East Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District when they asked him to write a forward to their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary program. After being discharged from the Army, Ernie reported to the Oakland Office. He wrote about several of the excellent staff members and conservation farmers in the District. Some of the highlights that he addressed in the forward included the organization and implementation of the Macedonia Watershed, working on the Bee-Jay PL-566 Watershed Project, laying out contour lines, and building terraces, grassed waterways, erosion control dams, and drainage systems. One of his special memories was when the Work Unit staff helped design, layout, and construct 10,000 feet of terraces in 10 days in the Macedonia Watershed.

**Ernie and Pat Aust** recently returned from Columbus, GA, where they spent a week visiting their oldest son and his wife. Three of their 26 grand kids have graduated from college and are working. Five more are in college: three in engineering, one in animal ecology, and one in nursing. The youngest of the 26 is three years old, so they will be going to school events for many years yet! They keep busy trying to keep up with family in Georgia, Wisconsin, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri. Back here at home, Ernie helped the American Legion Color Guard participate in two events over Veterans Day.

**Jim Ayen**'s BIG news is that he met a wonderful lady from Elyria, OH, named **Doris Reynolds**. They will be getting married in Elyria on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Several days later, they will be coming back to Des Moines to begin their new adventure together. Congratulations, Jim and Doris!

In late October, **Dennis Miller** returned to Iowa from his farm in North Dakota. He finished harvesting his soybeans and wheat. He reports that due to the lack of rain, the beans were poor but the wheat did fairly well. I always like to hear of folks from "up north" coming south to Iowa for the winter! **Dennis and Linda** took a November vacation to Boston and up the coast of Maine. They crossed the Canadian border into New Brunswick, and it was chilly weather. The highlight of the trip was seeing the Bay of Fundy. In the evening there was a half mile long sandy beach to view out the hotel window. When they got up in the morning the water was lapping right up to the hotel. They arrived home just in time to spend Thanksgiving in Iowa City with their youngest daughter and her family. It was so warm they went hiking around Lake McBride.

**Lee and Alice White** had a busy summer travelling. In June, Lee went to northern Ontario for his annual fishing trip to Canada. Lots of fish were caught and eaten by the 15-member group. Canadian weather prevailed with about half the week being rainy and overcast. In August, Lee and Alice traveled to visit their son at the Grand Teton National Park. The park was breath-taking as ever but was experiencing some haze from the fires in the northwest. They did some hiking behind the Tetons at the Grand Targhee ski area. The first week of September, they visited Lake Tahoe, NV. It is another beautiful area which was also partially shrouded in haze from distant forest fires. They enjoyed some hiking, touring the Knight summer home on Emerald Bay and the Thunderbird Lodge, as well as the lake excursions. On their departure from the Tahoe area they headed west to visit Lee's sister in Pine Grove, CA. In that hour and a half drive they encountered a snow storm at the pass which had dumped about six inches of snow in the area. It had stranded about 50-60 motorcyclists on the road. Upon reaching Pine Grove, they were greeted with 90 degree temperatures.



**Lee and Alice White at Lake Tahoe**

**Dennis and Cheryl Pate** enjoyed a two week tour in Italy. Dennis said they saw some great old sites, even older than him! After returning from Italy, they got to spend Thanksgiving week in Huatulco, Mexico, with their daughter **Sara**, husband **Eric**, and granddaughters **Meara** and **Keelin**. They were able to spend a lot of time by the ocean doing some snorkeling and sail boating. Sometime in their travels, they visited Minneapolis where they toured the new Vikings stadium.



**Dennis and Cheryl Pate on a Gondola Ride**



**Dennis and Cheryl Pate at St. Peters Basilica**



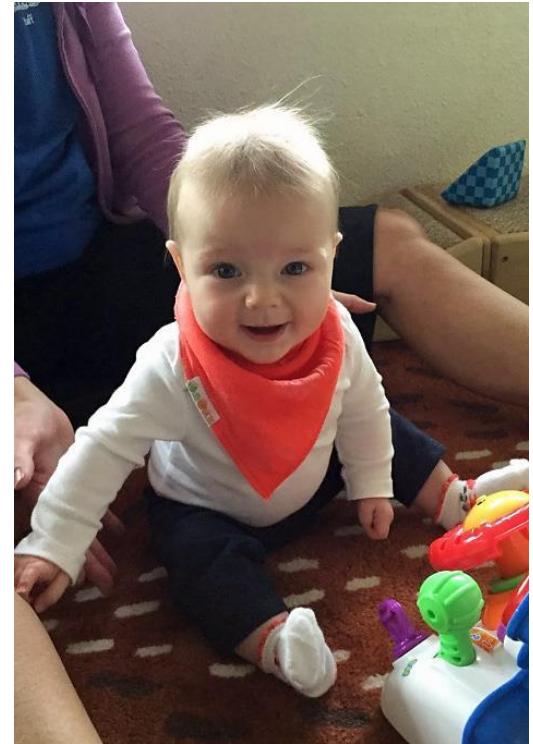
*Dennis and Cheryl Pate at the new Vikings Stadium*

Over Thanksgiving, **Don and Kay Peterson** visited their son **Corey**, his wife **Lisa**, and grandkids **Abby**, 8, and **Ben**, 6, for a week in southern California. In addition to enjoying the time with their family, they got to see the new Apple Headquarters. Along the way, they stopped by a couple of Swedish shops to look for some souvenirs.

Thanks to **Sue Long** for providing the following: "We did it! We jumped in with both feet, we took the plunge, we jumped off the deep end. We moved to Colorado! Our son lives in Denver, our daughter near Aspen, and we have moved 40 minutes from our daughter to the town of New Castle. Our backyard looks onto the 12<sup>th</sup> tee box of the golf course, and there are plenty of hiking opportunities very close to us. We love it here and would welcome any visitors traveling west who need a place to stop and rest. The main reason for the move? A granddaughter! She is a joy to be around, and we've had plenty of opportunities to babysit." Congratulations to Sue and Jerry on their new home!



*Sue Long's Family: Daughter Abbe, Jerry, Sue, Son-in-law Cameron holding Evan Kate, and son Aaron*



*Evan Kate*

I received a nice email from **Eldon Weber** about the newsletter and Christmas party. Thanks Eldon! He also included the following: "The Weber family will hold their Christmas in Dallas, TX, this year for the first time as my mother-in-law, at 97,

passed away in September of this year. We have normally celebrated our Christmas in Ames to be with her and her caretaker, our son **Brent**, who is now dealing with chemotherapy, fighting cancer."

We were saddened by the passing of several of our retirees during the month of November: **Russ Kurth, Henry Staubus, Ernie Hintz, Ken Meyer, and John Mall**. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

## KANSAS

**Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [rlull2@cox.net](mailto:rlull2@cox.net)

There is a chill in the air and it is beginning to feel like Christmas; however, from the weather forecasts, it appears we can only dream of a white Christmas.

It has been an uneventful fall, thus there is very little news to report from Kansas. There were two retirements at the end of October. Retiring on October 28, 2017 were **Leon J. Scheck** and **Randy J. Bennett**. **Leon** retired as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Dighton Field Office. **Randy** retired as a District Conservationist in the Girard Field Office.

**Robert K. Harkrader** retired in September, 2017 and has returned to work as a PF Private Land Conservationist in the Burlington Field Office.

Two retirees have passed away: **M. Darlene Ross and Alvin "Al" G. Surmeier**. See the In Memoriam section for details.

**Hazel L. Herron** died on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017. **Hazel** was the spouse of **Cecil** who retired as a Soil Conservation Technician for the Dodge City Field Office. He preceded her in death in 2014. See the In Memoriam section.

## KENTUCKY

**Vacant, ARCSE Representative**

*Note: Billye Haslett is no longer the Representative for Kentucky, and a replacement is needed. But she has graciously submitted the following:*

**New Retirements:** **Bob Blanton**, Supervisory Natural Resources Manager; **Mitch Esham**, Soil Conservation Technician; **Chuck Gibson**, Technical Resource Conservationist, Area 3; **Steve Jacobs**, Resource Soil Scientist; **Dan Porter**, Supervisory Natural Resources Manager, 1/2/18; **Bill Sharp**, State Archeologist; **Ruthi Steff Pike**, Acting SNRM, Elizabethtown, KY, 1/2/18

We've heard from **Ray Barker**, retired SCT that he has undergone surgery for cancer in his hip. The doctors told him he would never walk again, but he is walking and driving short distances from home. If you'd like to send Ray a note of encouragement his address follows: Ray Barker, 819 KY 504, Box 578, Olive Hill, KY 41164.

Our condolences go out to **Joey Dykes'** family. See the In Memoriam section.

## LOUISIANA

**Joe Branco, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [jandmbranc@aol.com](mailto:jandmbranc@aol.com)

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Louisiana SCS-NRCS retiree's luncheon was held on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Piccadilly Cafeteria in Alexandria, LA. The retirees arrived around 10am to drink coffee and enjoy visiting with old friends. There were 34 retirees and guests in attendance, including Horace and Flora Austin, Joe and Marge Branco, Thomas Campbell, Valine Collard, Jerry and Janie Daigle, Marty Floyd, Joan Futrell, Don and Jo Gohmert, Charles and Ruby Guillory, Dozier and Winnie Harrell, Juanita Hoffpauir, Max Johnston and Sybil Ray, Betty Jones, Ron Marcontel, Wayne Melancon, Paul Miletello, Kent and Sonie Milton, Marilyn Rabalais, Dale and Sylvia Rockett, Phala Simmons, Ronnie Venson, Paul Wallace, Jimmy Winston, and Patti Woods.

Joe welcomed everyone and asked **Dozier Harrell** to say the blessing, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag. After lunch Joe welcomed all again. He introduced **Randolf Joseph**, Assistant STC for field office operations. Randolph was representing **Kevin Norton**, Louisiana STC, who could not be with us.

Several calls and notes were received from retiree's who could not attend. They included **Pat Cecil, Carl Thompson, Gene Simmons and Robbie Loe**. **Max Johnston** reported the death of **Catherine Sloan** since our last meeting. See the In Memoriam section for details.

**Randolf Joseph** provided a brief update of NRCS activities at the National and State level. He reported we still do not have an Agency Chief. He discussed the agency's re-organization efforts. There has been a hiring freeze since last January. There are several vacancies that need to be filled. Money is not the problem at this time, but the hiring freeze is.

Joe reminded the group that the open season for changing their FEHP is here, November 13<sup>th</sup> to December 11<sup>th</sup>. All plan rates are going up. If you are happy with your current rate plan, no action is needed.

The planning committee, made up of **Dale Rockett, Paul Miletello, Marilyn Rabalais, Max Johnston and Joe Branco**, were recognized for their efforts in planning these meetings over the past many years. Joe reported that at the last planning meeting, the committee members voted to retire and pass the job on to others. All were pleased when **Paul Wallace** agreed to take on the job. Thanks, Paul.

**DEADLINE FOR  
MARCH/APRIL 2018 NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS  
FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

## MAINE

**John Simon, ARCSE Representative**

**Email: [balnengr@tds.net](mailto:balnengr@tds.net)**

Hello Everyone!

**September:** Last Tuesday's breakfast (the 12<sup>th</sup>) was attended by **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon, Jody and Charlie Boothby, Roger Ashe, Ray Voyer, and John Simon**. We all enjoyed the beautiful weather we have been having the last couple of weeks.

Art is recovering nicely from his knee surgery. He said his physical therapist is the granddaughter of **George Holden**, a long-time technician of South Paris, ME—one of those coincidences. Everyone appeared to be in good spirits and looking forward to a long fall season. It has been a dry summer, and lots of trees, especially the maples, are already dropping some of their leaves. This summer reminds me a lot of the summers I experienced in the Harrisburg area of Pennsylvania in the 1970s.

My new mini-split for heating the downstairs is up and running along with its associated kWh meter. I'll let you know how it works out later this winter.

I have not heard anything from our Florida retirees about damage from the recent hurricane. My sister and her daughter have places in Boynton Beach, FL and had minimal damage. My niece lost several shingles from her roof and both had some debris around their places. They both plan to return to Florida in late October from Bar Harbor, Maine.

We pray that you are all safe and sound down in Florida. Also for the folks in southern Texas who were so hard hit, our prayers are with you all.

**October:** There was a small crowd for Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup>. Attending were **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon** and friend **Karen Potvin**, and **John Simon**. Art and I got to chat with Karen and get to know her. She has been a family friend for 35 years. It is good to have women at our breakfasts, as they tend to steer the conversation towards family matters.

**November:** There were a surprising 11 retirees and friends at our November breakfast to wish all a pleasant and happy Thanksgiving. We do have so much to be thankful for in our lives. With 11 people at two tables I missed out on most of the up-to-date news, but they were sure enjoying themselves.

In attendance were **Art Taylor, Ray Voyer, Mary Thompson, Bruce Champeon and Karen Potvin, Charlie and Judy Boothby, Norm and Audrey Kalloch, Bob Lagassey, and John Simon**.

All of us had horror stories, some much more colorful from the mini tornado/hurricane we had in Maine on Monday morning, October 30<sup>th</sup>. The time each of us was out of power varied, as did the damage to roof shingles and property. We can laugh at it now, but it was a very heavy storm and quite unnerving. More customers lost power (over 500,000) from this storm than the famous ice storm of 1998! We are all pretty much back to normal now, but a lot of generators were sold!

I heard from **Tom Smith** who will try to come up here some NICE winter day. I also heard from **Bill Moulton**. He said his wife **Pat** is scheduled for several surgeries. We pray that both are successful and trouble free.

**Norm and Audrey Kalloch** were up, as Norm schedules his annual eye exam with **Dr. Moulton** on a second Tuesday. It was good seeing them both. Norm indicated they will be leaving the West Carry Pond cabin soon and not spend the winter there. Audrey is an ardent Celtics fan and talked of their 12-game winning streak. Wow.

Someone at breakfast indicated that **Dave Popp** sold his farm for development and was quite satisfied with the arrangement. It was sad to lose a good farm like that. I hope he gets settled in some place to his liking. **Art and Linda Taylor** moved into their new home on October 24<sup>th</sup>, and are just getting settled in. It has been a long haul.

The new mini-split heat pump heats the downstairs in my home, and it is doing a great job heating the whole 2,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, much better than I had expected. The oil heat zones for the upstairs bedrooms and living room come on for a short time in the early morning when the outside temperature drops into the 20s or below, but that is good. They need a little exercise.

**December:** Last Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, was a cold and snowy day but we still had a few brave retirees in attendance. Sharing breakfast were **Art Taylor, Roger Ashe, Judy and Charlie Boothby, and John Simon**. Roger explained how much he enjoys a remote starter on his vehicle. Roger explained how he distributes salt on his walkway and driveway to counter the ice. He uses one of those small hand-held fertilizer spreaders. Most of us have one of these. Great idea.

We have had, and are continuing to have, a cold snap. Most mornings have been in the single digits, with highs in the 20s.

**Art and Linda** have been in their new home for a month now and are getting used to the new layout. The ranch home is much different in floor plan than their previous raised ranch. In spite of his solar power production, he still gets a minimum charge of about \$7 for his use of the grid wires! Art says his heat pumps are working just fine. With R 50 in his walls and ceiling I will be surprised if he uses much power from the grid.

**Charlie and Judy** are both feeling well and look great. Charlie explained that the steep road to their church is only one way because the city is installing a new high segmental block retaining wall adjacent to the road.

I heard from **Bill Moulton** who says "Hi" to everyone. He and his son **Peter** are in the firewood-cutting mode this fall and keeping busy. Bill also said that his ice fishing shack is still on shore, as the ice is really too thin. Charlie thinks that Bill may have upgraded the shack by putting in wood benches so they would not have to sit on 5-gallon cans while waiting for bites!

**Noreen and I** had a pleasant surprise this past Thanksgiving. We usually have to take the bus from Bangor to Boston and Amtrak to Newark, NJ to visit our son and family in Montclair, NJ. But this year United Airlines has started a nonstop flight from Bangor airport, five miles away, to Newark, NJ, about ten miles away from my son in Montclair. Instead of an all-day affair of about 12 hours, it took us one hour and 15 minutes coming back and one hour and 25 minutes going down. What a nice trip! We did enjoy the bus/train trip, but it was terribly tiring and hectic at the stations. The cost was within a few bucks difference!

I re-read the revolutionary book, Growing a revolution—Bringing Our Soil Back to Life, by **David R. Montgomery**, and I am completely in awe by the message and completeness of this book. This book belongs way up there with Silent Spring by **Rachel Carson** and Lets Get Well by **Adelle Davis**! If you are involved in any way with the soil-agriculture-climate change movement, you owe it to yourself to have a copy for reference to know how the destruction of our soil leads to a host of severe ecosystem disruptions. **Von Razar**, ex-DC at Bangor, would have loved this book. This book has the answers that have been around for thousands of years, but ignored by western cultures. A great present for an appropriate friend. The only comment I have is that it lacks maps and photos. Next time I read the book I will have my world atlas in my lap or be using Google Earth.

I understand that David Montgomery is available as a guest speaker at large gatherings! How about at the ARCSE and NACD annual meeting?

Have any of you noticed that Wal-Mart now handles hemp hearts in one-pound packages for \$9.88? This stuff is great tasting on your cereal or yogurt! It is similar to flax seed, but I like the hemp taste better. It is still loaded with Omega 3 oils like flax and other good stuff.

I will close by wishing you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy holidays and a great New Year!

## MINNESOTA

**Marlene Mechelke, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [mechgram@aol.com](mailto:mechgram@aol.com)

I am relinquishing my esteemed position of MN ARCSE Representative. It has been a long run and it is now time for someone else to take over.

## MISSOURI

**Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [daverastorfer@aol.com](mailto:daverastorfer@aol.com), [moarscse@aol.com](mailto:moarscse@aol.com)

**Dennis Shirk:** Hello folks, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. It has been a wonderful fall for riding. I have spent much time in the saddle. **Lois** was beginning to think that she might be a widow. I will make it up to her. Our family Christmas dinner and party will be next year. With four people working, it's almost impossible to get their schedules to work. I'm thankful for good jobs and careers for the kids. See ya down the trail.

**Jack Schneider:** We are in the travel mode, as usual. The whole family is meeting at our son **Keith**'s house in Newark, DE for Christmas. Then in late January we have a tour of New Zealand planned. Trips to Portland, OR are also in the mix. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

**Paula Price:** Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all! It's been another roller coaster year for us. For the most part it was uneventful, and then in November Alan entered KU Medical with what turned out to be a recurrence of CLL (chronic lymphoma). He's on a new drug that's been in the market place only five years used specifically for CLL, so we're hoping it'll do the trick for him. He's been battling this now since 2008. There have been some good times through this crazy journey. I'm either sane or completely crazy in that I am still working, just six hours a day, four days a week though, at the Andrew County Museum just real close to our home. I've only been there since August, so the verdict is still out on how good it's going. We're anxious for **Andrew** and **Cindy** to arrive with **Jordin, Holly** and **Rylee**. Christmas is so fun with a 9-year-old and 3-year-old twins. We hope your holidays are filled with joy. Eat chocolate!

**John Turner** sends the following: **Terry Hill** will join the ranks of the unemployed the first week of January after 50 years with SCS/NRCS. We want to welcome **Terry** to our ranks (finally).

**Mike Blaine:** We have enjoyed the fall weather that has been several degrees warmer than normal for this time of year. Wonder what winter holds for us just around the corner? I loaned my chain saw to my son back in September. Even with the warmer weather we have burned quite a bit of my wood pile. We like it warm in the family room. So there is wood cutting in my near future. I'll get my saw back at Christmas time. My hip replacement is doing well, except I still can't put on my sock without the "helper." But I can reach a little farther each week. We are getting ready for Christmas programs at church and all the things that go along with that. We enjoy those things, but it gets tiring! I think all our present-buying is complete, and we look forward to kids and grandkids at Christmas. Let's all remember that there is a Christmas because God sent His Son to be the greatest present ever, our Savior. All we have to do is accept that present for ourselves. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all from Blaine Hill!fs

**Alton Taylor:** The Taylors hope to spend Christmas in Texas. Weather will be in control. Our son can run a snow plow, and MODOT knows that, even though he is not in maintenance.

**Hugh Curry:** Twenty years ago I walked out of the Missouri NRCS State Office for the last time as an active employee and began life as a retiree. And, it has been wonderful! I have missed the day-to-day interactions with other employees, both in the field and those in the state office, but really haven't missed the day-to-day work. Family, travel, a few short working stints, and time at our Michigan cottage have been the highlights for me and **Sharon**, my wife of 54+ years. Our red pickup pulled a fifth wheel trailer through all but two states (we did have to fly to Hawaii), 10 Canadian Provinces, and most of the states in Mexico. Foreign trips gave us the opportunity to visit at least 30 different countries. Our children are doing well, and most of the grandchildren have grown from infants to young adults. During this time I have remained active and put over 43,000 miles on my bicycles (yeah, the pedal kind). Our latest project is a remodel and addition at the cottage. I always enjoy visiting and hearing from those I worked with over the years. I feel fortunate to have benefited from our great retirement program and, health permitting, look forward to the future, but at a slower pace. Life is good.

**Jess Epple:** News at The Epple's from Indian Country (Muskogee, OK) is good. So far, we have had nice weather. We had good rains through fall, then they quit! Our summer hay crop sold before the haying equipment left our ranch! Also, our fall hay crop was good, and we will sell most of it in January/February. We made a trip to Huntsville, AL to see our newest great-grandson, and our Tennessee Clan met us in Huntsville. We all had fun at the Space Center. We went to Kansas City, MO for Thanksgiving with all of our Missouri Clan and saw the Christmas lights at Longview Park. They continue to improve decorations each year. The great-grandkids really enjoyed them. Our daughter, **Debbie** and son-in-law, **Boyd Hughes** are *almost* ready to discuss another "Cruise." Our vote is Australia, stopping at the Hawaiian Islands for a few days, of course! In 1960, **Jess** was offered a job in Australia, but they refused to pay for moving all of the family. We did not go! Would like to go see what we missed!

We continue to volunteer (at special occasions) at the Civil War Battlefield near us, the Junior College at Warner (Connors), and Oklahoma Panhandle State University at Goodwell, OK. We are planning to spend Christmas in Kansas City, MO again this year with our Missouri family. We at J P Ranch wish each of you "Seasons Greetings" and may "Santa" be especially generous and fulfill all of your Holiday wishes.

**Ken Vogt:** Greetings, I am still alive in NW Missouri after retiring with the class of Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1996. Most of you are aware the older you become, the faster time passes. We keep busy. My wife is Director of the Andrew County Food Pantry. My back is still good, so I'm her main assistant. My business card reads "Grandpa-Go-Getter." Job description is to get gas, groceries and general items in my wife's best interest. No earned income! This past summer we traveled to the state of Washington and saw the town we left when coming to the MO state office 40 years ago. There are a lot of changes in that length of time. We followed the general path of the Oregon Trail and visited the Interpretive Center at Baker City, OR. We visited some of **Marian**'s family in WA, returned through Glacier National Park and into North Dakota. The geographical center of the North American Continent is at Rugby. There is a monument with flags flying from the U.S.A, Canada and Mexico—neat place. We also enjoyed the Baker Creek Nursery Spring Garden Festival at Mansfield and Kansas City Symphony in the Flint Hills, KS. This next year should prove interesting with our current political and world situation.

The following retirees have recently passed away: **Lane Thurman, Ernie Hintz, and Mike King**. Their notices are included in the In Memoriam section of this newsletter.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

---

## MONTANA

**Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [inca@3rivers.net](mailto:inca@3rivers.net)

### Montana Big Sky Report

**Scott Hoag Report:** **Scott and Nancy** had a relatively uneventful summer. They made a trip to Red Lodge and over Beartooth Pass to Cooke City. Always a beautiful trip, still lots of snow and a herd of mountain goats. They traveled twice with their senior center, first to Cody, WY where they spent part of a day at the Japanese internment camp east of Cody where Japanese, after being rounded up, were sent for the duration of WW II. They also visited Buffalo Bill Dam on the Shoshone River. An engineer who had worked on the dam joined the group and explained a lot about the construction. It turns out that the contractors didn't understand WY winters and didn't stay on schedule.

Next, they traveled to Lewistown, MT for the Chokecherry Festival. They stayed at the Yogo Inn where there is a cross on the floor designating the center of Montana. They had dinner and a train ride on the Charlie Russell Chew Chew. The following day they made a circle through the countryside to view hay bales decorated for Halloween and ended up in Utica, where the Women's Club sponsored a craft fair—all of this adventure in the middle of the beautiful, Charlie Russell country.

In September **Nancy** tripped and fell and slammed her head against a door frame resulting in a concussion. It has taken nearly three months for her to work at recovering. After a couple of trips to ER, Urgent Care, and to see her primary care physician, she ended up with a speech therapist who helped her get the neurons reconnected. She's almost back to normal.

At this writing, they're in We wish Washington for Christmas, visiting Nancy's family in Maple Valley: sister, mother, nieces, nephews. They will then go to Bainbridge Island for a couple of weeks with their daughter, granddaughters, and their son who will fly up from California.

**Joyce Swartzendruber Report:** I've completed my first year as a Certified Interpretive Guide at the Museum of the Rockies. The current traveling exhibit was Traditional Indigenous Knowledge, and it was a diversion from all the dinosaur bones. The kids really liked learning about Umatilla lamprey restoration, Eastern Band of Cherokee river cane, Hawaiian fish pond restoration and management, Tulalip traditional foods and community gardens, and Fort Peck buffalo reintroduction.

**Gooby Ranch Report:** Merry Christmas from the Gooby Ranch. It seems like each year keeps getting tougher than the one before. **Mary Ann** can lift more now than she could last year

I traded half a beef for a logging truck load of fire wood logs last spring, but the logger was so busy most of the summer fighting forest fires he wasn't able to bring the wood. The first of September we had a break in an irrigation pipe. It flooded the road for a week before Mary Ann could get the parts to fix it. That was when the logger brought our load of fire wood. When he hit the flooded road the truck disappeared. There was no way he could get the truck unstuck without unloading the logs. We had to jack the truck up and put logs under the wheels to get him out. The big problem is that our firewood is now three quarters of a mile from the house, and we have no way to move the logs.

To get a load of wood to warm the house, Mary Ann has to take her wheel barrow and saw down to the wood pile, cut a load and wheel it back uphill to the house. I would like to help Mary Ann, but there is either a ball game on or one of my favorite soaps.

When they combined the grain in the field by our house, a lot of grain spewed out the back. Mary Ann was able to pick enough grain off the ground to feed her old horse all year. Now she is picking up grain that we will sell. A few days ago the grain thieves starting coming in like crazy. There were thousands of sand hill cranes, geese, and ducks landing in the field and gulping up the grain before Mary Ann had a chance to pick it off the ground. I got my shotgun and sat on the house deck, and whenever one of the thieves would come by I would try to harvest it. I hooked up the TV on the deck so I could watch it while I was looking for grain thieves. The grain thieves are smart. Only twice in two weeks did any of them fly by during a commercial. After a couple of weeks sitting on the deck, I got Mary Ann one sand hill crane, two geese, and one duck to put in the freezer. Mary Ann was really proud of me.

This year we bought two new Rocky Mountain horses. They were both young and not broke. Mary Ann did the round pen training and rode them around the ranch several times. She thought it was time to take them up in the mountains for further training. We took them out to look for elk. We chose an area that was not too steep or rocky. The elk stayed hidden until we were only a few feet away, then they jumped up and scared our horses. That's when the horses see if they can buck us off. Both times Mary Ann was able to stay on. Maybe next year I'll be able to stay on too. I asked Santa for my Christmas wish to not get bucked off my horse next year. He said it depends on whether I'm naughty or nice.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a fantastic New Year in 2018—Dick and Mary Ann Gooby.

---

## NEW YORK

**Nancy Lee, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [mlee0006@rochester.rr.com](mailto:mlee0006@rochester.rr.com)

**Don Lake**, former NY State Conservation Engineer, was one of the recent recipients of the First Annual Lifetime Achievement and Distinguished Service Awards presented at the ceremony held in San Diego, CA on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Lifetime Achievement Award and Fellows designations were bestowed upon seven pioneers of CPESC and ECI, and five exceptional individuals were awarded with the Distinguished Service Award, presented by President and Executive Director **Rob Anderson**. The contributions of these 12 recipients can never be fully honored or recognized, but it is the hope of the organization that these awards at least partially express our unwavering esteem and respect for these admirable individuals.

**Florence (Flo) Swartz**, NY State Economist, will retire at the end of December. Joining her in retirement is **Suzette Kocher**, District Conservationist, in Cortland County.

Wishing all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

---

## NORTH DAKOTA

**Robert "Bob" Bird, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [Rajmbird@aol.com](mailto:Rajmbird@aol.com)

By now you have celebrated Christmas with church services to remind you of why we celebrate this holiday. You have probably gotten your family together for reunions, gift giving, and food and goodies. My wife loved having the family together for Christmas, decorated the whole house and had me decorating all the trees outside, and she had more food and goodies than we could possibly eat. This year I have very minimal decorations and celebrated at **Jeannie**'s daughter's house with one of the grandsons in CA and her son in Mexico. I miss her every day. She was always getting the family to church because she had a very strong faith, and she never missed a family event if at all possible.

We recently lost the spouse of **Don Aho, Myrt Aho**. She was quite a lady with a smile and a twinkle in her eye and loved her family. Another retiree, **Neal McClure** celebrated his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> and has now seen 102 Christmases. Neal lives in West Fargo near his two boys and still sings the prayer at the meals at Sheyenne Crossing where he lives. He calls me quite often, especially after he gets his NARFE magazine and sees someone is messing with social security.

We had our annual retiree reunion on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> at the Bismarck Elks with 17 present. I think there was a picture in the last newsletter. Our group keeps getting smaller every year. I think the older retirees that started these reunions knew each other

better because they had social events outside of work where they got to know each other and the spouses. Today the NRCS doesn't get together outside of work for Christmas parties, birthday parties, or retiree parties as far as I know, so when they retire they have no reason to attend a retiree event.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas with family all around you and that you are looking forward to a New Year with good health, good wealth, and a positive outlook and spirit that carry you through another year. God Bless you everyone!

## OHIO

**Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [jgerken47@gmail.com](mailto:jgerken47@gmail.com)

It is with great sadness I have to share that **Tom and Catherine Holmes daughter, Elliana Grace**, passed away on December 18<sup>th</sup> as the result of a tragic accident. Elliana would be turning two in January. Please keep the Holmes family in your thoughts and prayers.

## OKLAHOMA

**Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [randy.freeland@suddenlink.net](mailto:randy.freeland@suddenlink.net)

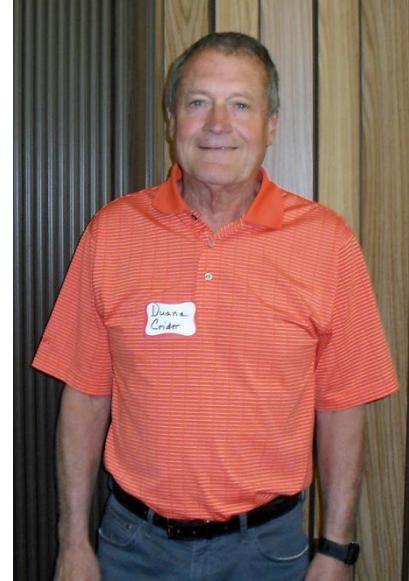
The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, OK on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Forty people were in attendance. They were: **Bonnie Freeland, Roberta and Jim Frie, Gayle Goforth, Bill and Jan Harney, Sandra and Terry Hough, Otho Lamar, Nick Lambeth, Jim McCampbell, Eunice and Glen Mullen and daughter Marilyn, Gary O'Neill, John and Joy Pewthers, Dan Runnels, Chris Shepherd, Milly and Bob Smith, Betty Todd, Keith and Phyllis Vaughan, Carolyn and Bob Webb, and Jamey Wood.**

**Duane Crider** introduced himself as the new president of the organization and **Chris Shepherd** as the new vice-president. It was **Keith Vaughan's** birthday, and **Carolyn Webb** said she recently celebrated her birthday. The group sang "Happy Birthday" to them.

First time attendees introduced themselves. **Brad Elder** is from Hinton, formerly the DC at Hinton and also worked in the Anadarko Field Office until his retirement. Prior to that he served in El Reno, Holdenville, Okmulgee, and Konawa, before his assignment to Hinton. He mostly just works around his home but still gets lots of calls from local farmers when they have an erosion problem. **Bill Harney** and his wife **Jan** are from Newkirk where he retired. **Jimmy Brewer** lives in Chickasha and retired in 1996. He worked mostly in detail planning and construction offices at Clinton, Wilburton, Marlow, Lindsay, Pauls Valley, and the Duncan Area Office. He and his wife enjoy singing and playing guitar at their church and Senior Citizen Center and nursing homes. Everyone introduced themselves and their spouses or guests.

**Randy Freeland** passed around forms for retirees to provide information about their retirement activities (i.e. volunteer work, travel, part-time work, activities, etc.) This information is used for the Oklahoma Retired SCS/NRCS Employees Association newsletter. He also reminded the group that our website [www.joepad.com](http://www.joepad.com) has pictures, minutes, and list of attendees from each of our meetings. **Geri Cutler** recently sent an updated address and shared that she looks at the website to see pictures of those in attendance and reads the minutes. Her health didn't permit her to attend but the website is the next best thing to being present.

Secretary/Treasurer **Sandra Hough** read the minutes of the April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017, meeting. Correct addresses are needed for **Jim Williams**, Ardmore; and **Dennis Stipe**, Mutual.



Duane Crider



Ken Awtrey and Brad Elder

**Joann Leaverton**, widow of **Erwin Leaverton**, sent a note shared with the group thanking everyone for their prayers. She recently lost her son **Mike** to leukemia.

Recent retirees include: **Kirk Schreiner**, DC, Lawton, 6/1/17; **Jim Williams**, DC, Ardmore, 8/1/17; **Joyce Mills**, District Secretary, Ardmore, 8/1/17; **Richard McCarty**, CET, Pauls Valley TSO, 9/1/17, 36 yrs. service; and **Randy Johnson**, SCT, Ardmore, 11/3/17, 35 yrs., 1 mo. service. The three retirements from Ardmore "wiped out" the staff at Ardmore. State Conservationist, **Gary O'Neill**, jokingly said they are looking for volunteers!

**Sandra Hough** read a list of retiree deaths since April 2017, also reported in the In Memoriam sections of previous newsletters. They were: **John Harlin**, 75; **Carolyn Sue Harper**, 79; **Bill Weaver**, 78; **Tim Mullins**, 93; **James Hubert Choate**, 91; **Glen Miller**, 70; **Paul Burton**, 75; **Mike Leaverton**, 59; and **James Alderson**, 70. **Perry Felkins**, 79, passed away in August, listed in the In Memoriam section of this newsletter.

**Gary O'Neill**, State Conservationist for Oklahoma, was introduced. He shared with the group a little about his background as he is a native Oklahoman. He thanked those who helped train **Jamey Wood**, as he has progressed into a good employee even though some thought he would never amount to anything. He gave an update to what is currently happening in NRCS. 250 people are employed in three zones; and lots of good conservation and water quality benefits are being put on the ground through the use of cover crops, no-till, and equipment and technology improvement. Oklahoma has 2,100 watershed structures, with the last one being built in 2008. A new watershed structure will be built on the Lower Bayou Watershed in McClain County. Watershed rehabilitation is still going strong. Restructuring of the USDA is being discussed, with NRCS, FSA and RMA being put into one mission area. There is concern about this consolidation. No heads have been appointed since the Presidential election. The restructuring is getting close in Oklahoma. There will be 21 teams and 21 district conservationists, to minimize locations. Hope to implement this plan in 2018. The goal is to get employees back to conservation planning activities in the field, even though digital technology is still going strong. The partnership between conservation districts and the conservation commission is still very strong. **Gary** expressed his appreciation to the group for their past commitment to conservation and enjoyed getting to share an update with the group.

**Jamey Wood**, Assistant State Conservationist for Management and Strategy, announced the USDA-Health Fair being held Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> in the USDA Building in Stillwater. Insurance health care representatives will be available. He also had a show-and-tell with a 1936 transit. Not many in attendance knew of its purpose. He also announced there would be a Student Pathways announcement for seven positions, including two engineers coming out with only a one-week window. This is currently the mechanism being used to recruit new employees. If any retiree has children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren wanting to pursue a career with NRCS, they need to make application or contact the State Office staff, and they will reach out to the prospective employee.

**Wayne Fjeseth**, vice-president of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society, gave an update on the progress of those trying to establish a conservation museum.

**Ben Pollard** will serve as president, **Wayne Fjeseth** as vice-president, and **Kim Farber** as secretary-treasurer. The museum will be named "The Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society." The Oklahoma Historical Society will accept and display artifacts that are donated, but they are not quite ready to accept artifacts. They are in the process of developing a format for curating items. They have submitted a 401c application for non-profit status and are awaiting approval. They are working on by-laws, and they are also trying to capture information from individuals who experienced the conservation movement progression. OSU has offered to help in this endeavor. **Tom Lucas**, who originally presented this concept, continues to work on this project and can be reached at 580-727-4397 or [tom.lucas71@gmail.com](mailto:tom.lucas71@gmail.com).

**Everett** and **Helen Cole** were honored by their children and friends at a Route 66 Anniversary (1951-2017) Celebration on October 7<sup>th</sup>. They had many funny stories to tell about their 66-year adventures and moves brought about from working for SCS and being a Soil Scientist. **Randy Freeland** spends a lot of time with NARFE as the Oklahoma Federation President. He does a little gardening, attending sporting events, and drinking coffee every Friday with some of his retiree buddies.

**Jim** and **Roberta Frie** continue as volunteers at the Stillwater Medical Center and have done so for nine years. **Roberta** stays busy with two great grandchildren and **Jim** at OSU athletic events. They also are members of a recreational club at Lake Carl Blackwell. **Ken Awtrey** joined us all the way from Nacogdoches, TX where he is retired but works part time with a couple of RC&D Councils. He also tries to golf about three times a week. **Gayle Goforth** said he isn't able to do much of anything but mow the yard and drink coffee. What's wrong with that?



Don Bartolina and Jamey Wood



Randy and Bonnie Freeland

**Don Bartolina** still works part time for the Oklahoma County Conservation District and assists with the National Land and Range Judging Contests. He has three new great granddaughters and is planning a trip to Italy next year. **Carolyn Webb** retired from the Bristow Office and still tutors four 1<sup>st</sup> grade students. She also is on the library board, hospital auxiliary, garden club, and church work. She and **Bob** travel some as he continues on the Creek County Conservation District Board. She said she guessed they both need a hearing test. The other day Bob walked through their home, and she said "I am proud of you," to which he replied, "I am tired of you too!"

**Tony Boeckman** and his wife travel the USA in a small fiberglass camper. His hobbies are gold, gardening, and reading. They still live in Medford, OK where he retired. **Keith Vaughn** plays golf and is now up to five holes-in-one! He and his wife travel, primarily visiting kids, grandkids, and attending their sporting events. They like to attend church activities and classes and also do volunteer work in the community. **Carolyn Webb** said she taught **Keith** everything he knows while he was stationed at the Bristow Office. **Phyllis**, **Keith's** wife, said, "I think he needs a refresher course." **Lester Brockmann** lives on a farm near Ponca City and raises a few cows. He cuts weeds, fixes fence, and generally anything else he wants to do. Every day is Saturday. **Bobby Smith** continues his ministry work as a supply pastor in area churches. He and his wife enjoy following great grandchildren sporting events all over Oklahoma and Texas.

**Dan and Sharon Runnels** still reside at the Taste of Heaven Farm in Kellyville, OK raising Registered Dexter Cattle and Chickens. **Sharon** expanded the chicken flock this past year, requiring an additional chicken castle for the new birds. All their calves were born healthy again this year, with two heifers and two bulls, a red and black of each, and a horned and polled of each. They have been traveling to close and far off places, including escorting their beautiful granddaughter to Las Vegas this past summer for an Invitational Rhythmic Gymnastics event where she took second overall in her age level. They welcome all visitors to their little Taste of Heaven.

By email **Ann Colyer** reported that she hoped to make the next retirees' meeting. She had knee replacement on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016. She is the owner/publisher of the Big Pasture News in Grandfield, OK. It is a weekly newspaper.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. The Golden Corral now opens at 10am, so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30am. Put it on your calendar now! Everyone is welcome and no reservations are required.

## OREGON

**Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [don.stettler@comcast.net](mailto:don.stettler@comcast.net)

A holiday time tradition for some retired and still-working members of the WNTSC's National Water Quality and Quantity Team, plus some others, is the annual "Staff Meeting" at the Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery. Attending this December's meeting were **Pat Willey**, **Gary Formanek**, **Harbans Lal**, **Paul Pedone**, **Lowell Kenedy**, **Jim Marron**, **Dan Moore**, **Joe Sahlfeld** and yours truly, **Don Stettler**. The group could not agree on an agenda, so there was much catching up and reminiscing.

**Roy Fox** was honored for his service in the Seabees during WW2 and in the reserves, with a story published in the Albany Democrat Herald and the Corvallis Gazette Times. During WW2 Roy was stationed in Guam.

The winter quarter retiree lunch is scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> at the Peppermill Restaurant in Aloha. Watch your email inbox for further details.



## PENNSYLVANIA

**Bill Bowers, ARSCE Representative**

Email: [wbowers@comcast.net](mailto:wbowers@comcast.net)

and **Timothy Murphy**, [vindemurph@verizon.net](mailto:vindemurph@verizon.net)

Frank Resides reported on the SEPA Retirees' Lunch Meeting. Thirteen lucky and dedicated members of our group met at the Chicago Pizza Grill in Newtown Square on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

It was the perfect venue for a get-together. We had a private room with a fire in the fireplace, a TV that nobody was watching, and large windows affording a view of the great outdoors. It is also conveniently located to some who may prefer not to drive too far. Thanks to **Carl DuPoldt** for recommending it.

**Ann Magee** has serious medical issues and is getting some home nursing care. We need to pray for improvement in Ann's condition.

**Howard Hall** was contacted before the meeting. Howard still lives alone in his apartment in Quarryville. He doesn't drive far any more, nor does he participate as much in the various activities offered there. Howard sounded good, and it was nice to hear his voice after several years. We wish him well.



*L to R: Jean Kirkaldie, Carolyn Gehlen, Jane Resides, Tom Iivari, Joyce Iivari, Fred Schuetz, Jane Schuetz, Helen Brossman, Frank Resides, Pat Burkett, Len Beck, Mary Beck, and Shirley Thomas.*

## TENNESSEE

**Allen Crowe, ARCSE Representative**

**Email:** [atctn60@hotmail.com](mailto:atctn60@hotmail.com)

Dana York submitted the following: The Tennessee SCS/NRCS retirees met December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at Ryan's Restaurant in Lebanon, TN. Those present were **Larry Blick, Debbie Brasfield, Allen Crow, Ray Curl, Donald Dotson, Terry Gupton, Larry and Connie Hasty, Patty Lane, Ardelle Langdon, Jim Lansford, Laura Lee, Jeanette Minor, Bobby Moore, Will Nesby, Lou Richards, Vic Simpson, Ray and Sue Sims and James Sims**.

All were in a Christmas mood, and Debbie asked everyone to relate a Christmas story or tell about their favorite candy. Chocolate seemed to take the day. Many recounted the chocolate-covered cherries.

Memorial gifts were made to Hospice Nashville for **H. C. Green** and to Friends of Warner Park for **Judy Bivens**. Receipt of the memorials has been received and acknowledged.

The next meeting is currently planned for Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, back at Ryan's Restaurant in Lebanon.

## TEXAS

**Arnold King, ARCSE Representative**

**Email:** [arnolddking@hotmail.com](mailto:arnolddking@hotmail.com)

Fourteen members attended the October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Those attending were **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Elaine and Billy Don Davis, Anita Plummer, Bernelle Baxley, Willeene King, Barb and Dave Stockbridge, Dave Drennan, Doug Seibel, Dennis Erinakes, Joyce Petty, and Bernie Owen**.

**Bernie Owen** reported that he will be having back surgery in the near future.

**Dennis Gaster** reported that he will be starting radiation treatments for prostate cancer (24 of 40 treatments completed as of this writing). His grandson, **Jake** (place kicker for his 9<sup>th</sup> grade football team) played very well, as the team went undefeated this season (9-0), outscoring opponents 299-74!

**Willeene King** reported that her grandson is graduating from college in December with a degree in Environmental Engineering. Her granddaughter is a freshman at Texas Tech. **Arnold** has just returned from a hunting trip in Colorado.

**Joyce Petty** reported that the child she has been watching is now five years old, in pre-K, and will be adopted next month.

**Elaine and Billy Don Davis** recently returned from a cruise to Alaska. **Elaine** drove out all the way to Seattle to catch the ship. Then she drove all the way back home to Quitman. **Billy Don** said he survived the 5,000 mile trip with a "woman driver!"

**Anita Plummer** reported that **Betty Sisson** enjoys watching the TCU football games on TV with **JoAnn Steers**.

**Dave Stockbridge**, an avid stamp collector, enjoyed his attendance at a recent American Philatelic Society Meeting in Belfonte, PA. He also attended his 50<sup>th</sup> college reunion on the same trip.

**Dave Drennan** and his wife have a cruise planned for February. He is glad they got to see the Napa, California area before it burned up. **Dave's** son got a nice promotion to a regional bank superintendent position. **Dave** finds much joy in attending his twin grandsons' baseball games.

**Phyllis Teels:** Here is what we've been doing with our lives the past year. We think of the retiree group often, even though we don't make many meetings.

In May, we visited Germany for 16 days. We were hosted by our granddaughter, Amber and her German husband, Christian who live in Dessau, Germany. They planned the trip, and we traveled with them and saw some spectacular sights. We spent a day biking the extensive trails around Dessau, seeing many sights and birds that were new to us. We visited the castles and gardens of Frederick the Great in Potsdam. We visited Wittenburg, where Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the church door, this year being the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that event. We went north, stopping at Bremerhaven to join a celebration and do some genealogy research, where I was able to connect with two more generations of my family. We continued on to the North Sea exploring the tidal flats with an expert of the area, then on to the Baltic Sea. We stayed in a little seaside town of Dagebüll and took a ferry over to the island of Amrum, where we spent the day exploring, eating and beer drinking. We visited the Leipzig church (St. Thomas) where **Johann Sebastian Bach** was choirmaster for many years. We had a super time and didn't want to leave.

In August, we took a trip to the Northwest, including Victoria, British Columbia. We flew into Seattle and rented a car. We spent a lot of time enjoying the out of doors. We first went to Mount Ranier. It is awesome! We hiked lots of trails and saw lots of birds and animals. We then went to Mount St. Helens where we did the same thing! We were able to watch the eclipse from the beautiful peninsula of Huma Huma, enjoying some wine, cheese and crackers on the trunk of the car.

We then went to the Olympic National Park to see some the nation's biggest and oldest trees. We drove to the coast and took the ferry to Victoria, BC where we did the tourist thing and saw as many sights, including the Butchart Gardens, museums, parliament, and the Empress hotel. Lots of good food. Back to Seattle to visit the Needle and the famous Pike Place Market.

Our second home in Rockport survived the eye hit of 140-mile-per-hour winds of Hurricane Harvey. Sitting two blocks off the waters of Aransas Bay, it pretty much stood like a rock, damaged but livable. It needs a roof and one wall repaired, and a few other things, but compared to the devastation around us we were truly blessed. Over 1,000 homes and businesses were completely destroyed. Over 3,300 had major damage, making them not livable. Over 3,000 more were damaged. Nothing was left untouched! Many will never be rebuilt. Many jobs were lost because of destroyed businesses, and many people still have no place to live.

The November 2017 meeting of the SCS/NRCS Alumni Club was held at 10am on Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at St. Ann Catholic Church, 100 SW Alsbury Blvd., Burleson, Texas.

Bernie Owen had the annual FEHBP program with representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield and GEHA presenting their plans. **Maxine Owen** and **Anita Plummer** brought the snacks.

Nine members attended the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Those attending were: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Elaine and Billy Don Davis, Anita Plummer, Bernelle Baxley, Clyde Goodman, Dennis Erinakes, and Bernie Owen.**

Vice President **Doug Seibel** called the meeting to order.

**Arnold and Willeene King** just returned from a great trip to Hawaii. We met my high school buddy and his wife at Kauai for five days and then another five days on Hawaii, the big island. Kauai is the oldest island and Hawaii (big island) is still growing from the volcano activity. All of the islands were formed from the same hotspot and crack in the earth crust. The islands are moving northwest at about the same speed as your finger nails grow. So, when Hawaii reaches a certain point and seals off, another island will begin to form over the same "hotspot." Very interesting. Anyway, the highlight of the trip was a full-day tour of Kauai beginning with an airplane trip around the island to view significant sights. We also had a great visit to the big island and saw the highlights via rental car. My only disappointment was that the Parker Ranch was closed the day we drove up to visit that beautiful place.

**Dennis Gaster** completed his 40<sup>th</sup> radiation treatment for prostate cancer on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Results of the treatment will be known in January. I encourage all of you men to get your PSA test if you have not had one in a while.

**Bernie Owen** had back surgery on December 4<sup>th</sup> and is at home recovering.

**Lovell Glasscock** passed away at Huguley Care Center on December 7<sup>th</sup>. **Merl Glasscock** had recently taken a fall and had hip replacement surgery at Huguley Hospital. Early last week she was transferred to Baylor rehab center in Fort Worth. Before **Lovell** passed away, **Merl** was well enough to get a temporary release to visit him with her nephew **Mathew** and his wife **Susan**.

A memorial service will be planned at St. Mathew Church in Burleson after **Merl's** recovery and the holidays. Merl is at Baylor Rehabilitation, 6601 Harris Pkwy., Room 220, Ft. Worth, TX 76132

#### HOW TO BECOME AN ARCSE MEMBER?

#### APPLICATION AT

<http://www.arcse.org/qFormMember.pdf>

## WASHINGTON

### Gerald Richard, ARCSE Representative

Email: [gir52pdr@aol.com](mailto:gir52pdr@aol.com)

Present at our November and/or December luncheons at the Timber Creek Grill and Buffet were **Harry Riehle, Ralph Schmidt, Larry Edmonds, Carl Vennes, Ken Kaul and Jerry Richard**. **Ralph Schmidt and Larry Edmonds** have made big strides in recovering from their heart procedures and are feeling good. **Carl Vennes** gave the group an update on **Jud Melton**. The recovery is slow but steady. Jud has alternating physical therapy and occupational therapy each week. He is able to walk about a 100 feet with a special walker. **Ralph and Lynn Schmidt** had their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this past summer with special visits with family and friends. **Ken and Tina** travelled to Texas to spend a pre-Christmas visit with their son and family. **Larry Edmonds** is active with his Spokane County Fire District 5 and has developed successful grants to help get new equipment. He has just been elected to a six-year term as one of the three Fire Commissioners. Larry is also doing some consulting work on a dairy project in Colville, WA.

We were saddened by the deaths of **John Wilson** and **Marilyn Mitchel**. John was a member of the state office round table lunch group always working away to solve the world problems. After Bob Mitchel passed away, Marilyn Mitchel continued to host an annual dinner for our ARCSE group for several years. Both will be missed. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

## WASHINGTON, DC, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

### John Peterson, ARCSE Representative

Email: [jwpeterson@cox.net](mailto:jwpeterson@cox.net)

From **Carl Bouchard**. "For the 26<sup>th</sup> year we have participated in the Wreaths Across America program. This year over 75,000 volunteers showed up at Arlington National Cemetery on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> to place wreaths on all veterans' graves. Over 1.5 million wreaths were shipped out to 1,500 cemeteries, not only in the US, but worldwide. This has grown to more than my past key role at Arlington. So instead of getting up early to get to Arlington, we decided to meet the convoy of 11 trucks, 18 law enforcement vehicles, Gold Star families, and others on its way down from Maine right here in Delaware at the Camden Fire Station. Quite impressive. From here, they were met by a special truck and trailer from Purdue to escort them to Salisbury, MD for another short ceremony on Thursday evening before heading to Arlington and DC on Friday and to be ready for Saturday."

Otherwise, the year has not been kind to me even though I feel fine where we have had to cancel plans. We discovered in September that even with a prostatectomy, my PSA (which should be zero) was climbing. On top of that, before we could address the situation, it was also discovered that I had invasive breast cancer. So we took care of that problem with a mastectomy and a brief healing period. Good news from that operation. **Janet** and the doctor cannot believe I did not need any pain pills. No feeling, no pain. Now I start radiation treatment to address the prostate cancer re-occurrence, starting the day after Christmas for eight weeks, five days a week. Let's hope that takes care of it."

We all pray it does, **Carl**. And thanks to you and your family for all your work with Wreaths Across America all these years. All veterans, including myself, and their families really appreciate it.

The following picture was taken from a good friend's daughter's home in Ventura, CA. **Rob Anderson** is the EnviroCert International (ECI) Board President. His home is about a mile away toward the fire. He said the wall of fire was 30 miles long, and the flames were 50 feet high. His wife **Sandy**'s parents had to be evacuated. This Thomas Fire is still only 10% contained. We are very worried for them. About 30 of the employees of Rob's engineering firm have also been evacuated. Rob is trying to help them all—a horrible disaster. And the opportunity for some additional environmental damage exists, should it start raining immediately after the fires. Stabilizing the land will be a major undertaking.



## WEST VIRGINIA

**Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [pegreesewv@gmail.com](mailto:pegreesewv@gmail.com)

We are saddened to report that **Alan Boone**, retired district conservationist for the Hamlin FO, died Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. You can read more about his life in the obituary section of this newsletter.

**Peggy Helmick** is having mouth surgery for suspected mouth cancer on December 28<sup>th</sup>. She asks that we keep her in our prayers.

**NEW SENIOR CONSERVATIONISTS:** *They have reached the minimum age of 83 years and have completed the Senior Conservationist Questionnaire. See IN MEMORIAM for the Senior Conservationists who have left us since the last Newsletter. Please help us identify retirees who should be named Senior Conservationists. Please provide their contact information to your ARCSE Representative or Regional Vice-President.*

**Henry Lee Nicholson, Sr.** Denmark, SC  
**Marvin L. Knabach** Lee's Summit, MO

## SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

by Marc Safley, Chronicler, Senior Conservationist

**Wayne Chapman**  
**Senior Conservationist**

Senior Conservationist **Wayne Chapman** was born October 28, 1932, in Dill City, a small, western Oklahoma town in Washita County. Wayne was taken home to the 80-acre cotton farm of his grandfather which was farmed by Wayne's parents. Wayne lived there through the dust storms and drought of the Dirty 30's for his first seven years. He and his older brother picked cotton and earned enough to buy a bicycle for Christmas, only to be told by their father that the money was needed to feed the family. His Dad gave each of them a heifer calf instead. The family moved to northeast Texas in 1939 where his father bought a 400-acre farm. He walked to school until his junior year. He rode a bus to Paris (TX) High School his junior and senior years. Wayne joined the Texas National Guard in his junior year. He played basketball in high school and was captain of the team his senior year. That year he was President of the FFA and earned recognition by the National Honor Society for his academic achievements. He attended Paris Junior College on a basketball scholarship. Wayne was president of the Agricultural Club and was an honors graduate. He then attended what is now Texas A&M at Commerce where he graduated in 1954. Wayne met **Patricia Ann Marchbanks** during his senior year at Commerce, and they married in September of 1954. He had applied to SCS but had not heard back from them, so he took a job at Irving High School teaching chemistry and science. After this, he and Pat went back to Paris and worked for his father on the farm.

The job Wayne had applied for with SCS was offered to him in June 1955. He worked as a soil conservationist at Greenville. He moved to Follett (TX) in 1957 and was promoted to Work Unit Conservationist (WUC) at Spearman (TX) in 1959. He moved to Abilene as WUC in 1964 and then to Vernon as Area Conservationist in 1965. In 1971 Wayne was selected to attend graduate school. He attended the University of Montana where he received a Master of Science degree in Resources Administration. Following school, Wayne and his family went to Auburn, AL, where he was State Resource Conservationist. In 1976 the family moved once again, this time to the Washington, DC, area as Wayne accepted the job of EPA Liaison for two years. After that job, he worked on the Rural Abandoned Mine Program, Great Plains Conservation Program, the Clean Water Program, and Conservation Planning. Wayne was a part of the Legislative Fellowship Program in 1985 and was the liaison between Congress and USDA as the bill was being written. He is proud of having helped to write the Conservation Reserve Program language in the 1985 Farm Bill.

Wayne retired in 1989 and moved back to Paris where he is enjoying his retirement years. Retirement has not been without tragedy. Wayne and Patricia lost their son to cancer in 2005. Patricia has survived cancer as have a brother and two sisters. Two brothers-in-law have recently died from cancer. Looking for a way to fight cancer, they have started a St. Baldricks Event to raise money for research. Wayne will have shaved his head 10 times since 2009 by next year. Nationwide, these events raise about \$38 million annually.

Wayne writes that he is "...so grateful for such a satisfying 34-year career..." and that "...at 85 years of age I feel blessed to be back where all my brothers and sisters are."

## OBITUARY INFORMATION

**Ron Marlow, Secretary–Treasurer**

*When you receive word of someone passing, with little other information provided to you, obituaries can often be found by doing an advanced search using Google, using the full name of the deceased. If you do not have access to the web, Ron Marlow will be glad to do the search. Please send death notices and obituary information directly to Ron at [arcse@cox.net](mailto:arcse@cox.net). Always include the position or the spouse's position with SCS/NRCS.*

<b>Surname</b>	<b>In Memoriam</b> (Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see <a href="http://www.arcse.org">www.arcse.org</a> )
Aho	<b>Myrtle "Myrt" Aho</b> (95) passed away at Fairview Ridges Hospital in Burnsville, Minnesota, on September 6, 2017. Myrt and <b>Don</b> resided in Bismarck, ND, where they raised their family from 1952 until 2007 when they moved to Prior Lake, MN. Don was the State Resource Conservationist in Bismarck for many years. Myrt is survived by her four daughters, <b>Sharon (Wayne) Anderson</b> , Rockville, MD; <b>Gayle (Steve) Potas</b> , Prior Lake, MN; <b>Vicki Werve</b> , Langley, WA; and <b>Marti (Loren) Fazio</b> , Mariposa, CA; and five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Don, and son <b>Richard (Rik)</b> .
Bivens	<b>Judith Ann Hill Bivens</b> (86) of Brentwood, Tennessee passed away peacefully with family by her side on October 25, 2017. She was born in Cookeville, TN. She met her husband <b>Don</b> at the Soil Conservation Service office where they worked while attending TN Tech. Don, the former SCS State Conservationist in Tennessee, preceded her in death in December 2015 after 64 years of marriage. She is survived by four daughters, seven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Friends of Warner Parks, 50 Vaughn Rd. Nashville, TN 37221 or Abe's Garden, 115 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville, TN 37205.
Boone	<b>Steve Allan Boone</b> (65) of Hamlin, West Virginia passed away on November 5, 2017 in St. Mary's Medical Center. Surviving is his spouse, <b>Virginia Boone</b> . Steve retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service as the District Conservationist in the Hamlin Field Office.
Burgess	<b>Marvin Kimzy Burgess</b> (89) of Columbia, South Carolina passed away October 27, 2017 at home with family by his side. He was born in Big Lick, TN. Marvin was a BS graduate of Tennessee Tech with a Master's degree from Indiana University. He was employed with the USDA Soil Conservation Service for 35 years, winning many awards including the National Award for Superior Service. He retired in 1985 as the State Resource Conservationist. He served in the Korean War and was a member of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Columbia. Surviving are his loving wife of 66 years, <b>Dorothy Yowell Burgess</b> , four children, <b>Kim Burgess (Barbara)</b> of Roanoke, VA, <b>Steve Burgess (Teresa)</b> of McDonough, GA, <b>Brent Burgess (Debbie)</b> of Carrollton, GA and <b>Cindy Burgess McGougan (Joe)</b> of Mt Pleasant, SC; seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, seven nieces and two nephews. Memorials may be made to Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, 5637 Bush River Road, Columbia, SC 29212.
Dykes	<b>Joey Brent Dykes</b> (63) of Campton, Kentucky passed away on December 13, 2017. He was born in Liberty, Kentucky. He is survived by one daughter, <b>Andrea "Andie" Nicole Dykes Owens (Josh)</b> of Russell Springs, Kentucky. In August 1976, he began working as a Civil Engineering Technician for the USDA-NRCS. His career spanned over 41 years. In 1987, Governor Wallace Wilkinson named him a Kentucky Colonel. He also won numerous awards and accolades during his employment with USDA-NRCS. If he wasn't working outdoors he could be found on the lake doing his favorite hobby, fishing.
Felkins	<b>Perry Felkins</b> (79) of Okmulgee, Oklahoma passed away on August 10, 2017. He retired from the Soil Conservation Service as a Watershed Inspector in Morris, Oklahoma.
Herron	<b>Hazel Lou (Rethorst) Herron</b> (92) of Spearville, Kansas passed away on November 9, 2017. She was born in Hutchinson, KS. She was the spouse of <b>Cecil Herron</b> who retired in 1988 as a Soil Conservation Technician for the SCS Dodge City Field Office. He preceded her in death in 2014. Hazel attended College at Emporia, graduating in 1947 with a Home Economics degree. She then taught for two years in Lyons. After raising their six children, she went back to teaching in the Windthorst and Spearville school districts. Hazel was a member of the Spearville Federated Church. Hazel was also a pianist and organist for many years. Hazel leaves as survivors her six children, 16 grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, nieces and nephews and many friends. She was preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Cecil and their daughter <b>Nancy Schroeder</b> . Memorials in Hazel's name are suggested to the Spearville Federated Church in care of the funeral home. Thoughts and memories may be shared in the online guest book at <a href="http://www.swaimfuneralhome.com">www.swaimfuneralhome.com</a> .
Hintz	<b>Ernest A. Hintz</b> (84) of Bethany, Missouri passed away November 24, 2017 at a nursing home. He was born near Clarinda, Iowa. He served in the U.S. Army for three years during the Korean War. After serving his country, he attended school at Clarinda Junior College and Iowa State University. He taught Vocational Agriculture at Elk Horn, Iowa for five years, worked for a fertilizer company for another five years and then started his career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service. He was an SCS District Conservationist, the Iowa State Agronomist and finally Regional Conservationist based in Lincoln, Nebraska. In 1993, he retired and started a new life he loved, farming and raising livestock in Harrison County. Survivors include his wife of 59 years, <b>Julia</b> ; sons, <b>Richard (Darcie) Hintz</b> and <b>Alan (Diane) Hintz</b> ; two grandsons; and a sister <b>Laura Loveland</b> , Moravia, Iowa. Memorials may be made to the American Legion Post #216 and/or Harrison County Hospice in care of Roberson Funeral Home, P.O. Box 46, Bethany, MO 64424. Online condolences may be left at <a href="http://www.robersonfuneralhome.com">www.robersonfuneralhome.com</a> .
King	ARCSE Life Member <b>Michael Franklin King</b> (74) of Spencer, West Virginia departed this life November 28, 2017, at the Camden Clark Medical Center in Parkersburg, after a brief illness. He is survived by two children, <b>Doug (Cristy) King</b> of Greenville, IN, and <b>Kelli King</b> of Huntsville, AL; and two grandchildren, both of Greenville, IN. He is also survived by a sister, <b>Kim (David Cox) King</b> . In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of nearly 54 years, <b>Mary Virginia Freshwater King</b> . A graduate of West Virginia University and honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy, Mike dedicated 29 years of service to the USDA Soil Conservation Service, retiring as Director of the Administrative Services Division. Retiring from federal service to fulfill his dream of becoming an ordained minister, Mike served several local churches including Clover Community Church, Meadow Dale Baptist, Gilboa Baptist, and First Baptist Church of Spencer. Finally retiring for good, Mike was honored to be named Pastor Emeritus in 2016, by First Baptist Church. A proud parent, grandparent, and former pilot, Mike loved flying and enjoyed even more that his son and grandson share his love of planes. A small grave-side service will be scheduled at a later date. In honor of Pastor Mike standing by Miss Ginn throughout her battle with MS, memorial donations may be made to the National MS Society, Virginia-West Virginia Chapter, P.O. Box 27326, Richmond, VA 23261-7326.

Condolences may be shared at [www.taylorfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.taylorfuneralhomeinc.com).

Kurth	<b>Russell Gene Kurth</b> (63) of Logan, Iowa passed away on November 7, 2017 as the result of a farm accident. He was born and raised in LeMars, Iowa. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1977 with a degree in animal science. He worked as a SCS trainee in May 1975 in LeMars. From 1977-1979 he worked in Logan as a soil conservationist. He retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service as the Harrison County District Conservationist after 34 years of service. Russ started farming the family farm in the 1990s. Russ was a member of St. Anne's Catholic Church, where he served as a trustee. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, a 4th Degree Knight, and served as Grand Knight. He was an active member of the Logan Kiwanis. Russ was currently a Harrison County REC board member and had been serving on the Harrison County Board of Supervisors since 2014. Russ was very proud of being from LeMars, the "ICE CREAM CAPITOL OF THE WORLD!" He is survived by his wife of nearly 39 years, <b>Peggy Kurth</b> of Logan, Iowa; three sons, and eight grandchildren.
Mall	<b>John Francis Mall</b> (86) of Shenandoah, Iowa passed away on November 29, 2017 with his family by his side. He was born in Wichita, KS. John attended Friends University for two years and then transferred to Fort Hayes State College, where he majored in Agronomy. In 1952, he received his draft notice to the U.S. Army. While serving in the U.S. Army, John became a Combat Infantryman serving during the Korean War, achieving the rank of Corporal. After receiving an Honorable Discharge, John returned to Fort Hayes State College, where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agronomy. He started working for the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Slayton, Minnesota. John served in several capacities and locations in Minnesota as a District Conservationist. John retired from the SCS in Shenandoah, Iowa. He was a Boy Scouts of America Troop Master. In 2016, John and Linda were honored to be a part of The Honor Flight for Veterans to Washington D.C. to tour many of the War Memorials. He was a member of the Guiding Light Community Church, Fort Myers, Florida, American Legion Posts in both Slayton and Morris, Minnesota and in Shenandoah Iowa. In 2012, John was very proud to receive his 50 year membership certificate with the American Legion. Preceding him in death, was a son <b>Jeff</b> . He is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, <b>Lorraine</b> ; daughter <b>LuAnn (Alan) Armstrong</b> ; son <b>Jerry (Julie) Mall</b> ; daughter <b>Linda (James) Christiansen</b> ; five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers memorials may be directed to the family.
Meyer	ARCSE Member and Senior Conservationist <b>Kenneth Walter Meyer</b> (90) of Denison, Iowa passed away on November 27, 2017. He was raised on a farm near Buck Grove, IA. After high school, Ken farmed near Buck Grove. After several years, he began his career with the Soil Conservation Service. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Northwest Missouri State University in 1972. He became the district conservationist for Webster County, a position he held until he retired in 1987. He farmed until 2000. Ken and Marge shared a love of gardening, cribbage, dancing and travel. They traveled to polka dances throughout the upper Midwest. Ken is preceded in death by his son, <b>James Meyer</b> ; and granddaughter, <b>Kenna Haglan</b> . Those left to cherish his memory are his loving wife, <b>Marge</b> ; daughter, <b>Kay (Rusty) Martin</b> ; five grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter. The Pauley Jones Pfannebecker Funeral Home, <a href="http://www.pauleyjones.com">www.pauleyjones.com</a> , Denison, was in charge of arrangements.
Mitchel	<b>Marilyn Mitchel</b> (90) of Spokane, Washington passed away peacefully on October 26, 2017. Marilyn was the wife of <b>Robert Mitchel</b> , State Soil Scientist with the Soil Conservation Service in Washington and then retired after two years in the Soils Division in DC. She was born Marilyn Mae Getzelman in Hampshire, Illinois. She was the second child and grew up on a farm with six brothers. Farm life was never her choice, so she trained to be a nurse in Madison, WI and practiced nursing for several years. She met Robert on a blind date while in school in Madison and they married on August 25, 1950 in Hampshire. They moved to Riverton, WY, then to The Dalles, OR, Walnut Creek, CA and finally to Spokane, WA in 1963. Marilyn was very creative and was a master at quilting, knitting, crocheting, counted cross, gardening, sewing and painting. If something needed to be fixed around the house, Marilyn was a better choice than Robert! They raised three children <b>Mike, Dan and Jane</b> . She is survived by her children, seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Please sign Marilyn's guestbook at <a href="http://www.thepaulmortuary.com">www.thepaulmortuary.com</a> .
Newman	<b>Wilma Newman</b> passed away on November 1, 2017. She was predeceased in 2010 by her husband of 46 years, <b>James B. Newman</b> who retired in 1994 as the Director of the Ecological Sciences Division for NRCS. Survivors include three children and several grandchildren. You may honor her by supporting her caretakers (where she lived for the last three years) and/or other organizations that carry on this spirit of looking out for those in need. You may write and send checks to: Betty's Place, 13656 Van Doren Road, Manassas, VA 20112.
Ross	<b>Darlene Ross</b> (82) of Ottawa, Kansas passed away on October 8, 2017, at Olathe Medical Center. Darlene was born in Ottawa County, Kansas. She lived in Pleasanton, Kansas, moving in the early 1960s to Ottawa. She graduated from Garnett High School with the class of 1953. Her husband of 56 years, <b>Marvin E. Ross</b> , preceded her in death on May 1, 2013. Survivors include her three children, four grandchildren, and a great granddaughter. Darlene was employed as an administrative assistant with Lake Region RC&D Ottawa, in the late 1970s, retiring in 1997. She was an active member of the First Christian Church and life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5901 Auxiliary. The family suggests memorial contributions to the First Christian Church or the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5901 Auxiliary c/o Dengel & Son Mortuary, 235 S. Hickory, Ottawa, Kansas 66067. Condolences and memories on Darlene's Tribute Wall at <a href="http://www.dengelmortuary.com">www.dengelmortuary.com</a> .
Sloan	<b>Catherine Sloan</b> (92) of Alexandria, Louisiana passed away on August 30, 2017. She retired from the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1985 after 20 years of service. She is survived by two nieces and two nephews and many great and great-great nieces and nephews. She was a 1942 graduate of St. Francis Xavier Parochial School; a member of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral Parish where she was a member of the choir a total of 60 years, served as Librarian of Music, and a 30-year member of the Cathedral Altar Society. She was elected to the International Bowling Hall of Fame in 1985 and the Louisiana Women's Bowling Hall of Fame in 1987, both for Meritorious Service. Memorials may be made to the St. Francis Restoration Fund.
Staubus	<b>Henry L. Staubus</b> (93) passed away at The Village in Indianola, Iowa on November 15, 2017. He was born in Douds, Iowa. Henry graduated from Mingo High School, served two years in the army, and then graduated from Iowa State College, now Iowa State University. Henry worked as a District Conservationist for the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Humboldt County for 20 years and in Warren County for 10 years. He enjoyed membership in the Indianola Garden Club, Lions' Club, and the United Methodist Church. He married <b>Mary Lou Braley</b> in 1947. They recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary surrounded by family. Henry was a wonderful father to daughter <b>Diane Staubus</b> of Atlanta, GA and to son <b>Tom Staubus (Sheila)</b> of Duluth, MN. He is also survived by four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorials

may be given to a charity of your choice.

**Sullivan**

**Albert Eugene (Gene) Sullivan** (81) of North Little Rock, Arkansas passed away on September 4, 2017, after months of battling cancer, and with all his family home. He was born in Lonoke, Arkansas, the fifth of nine children. As a young teenager he met and fell in love with the beautiful **Carrie Sue Kelly** and married her on May 29, 1955. Gene and Carrie had three children, and after 62 years of marriage they had seven grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren and one on the way. Gene was a member of Lakewood United Methodist Church in North Little Rock, Arkansas. He was an active member of Gideons International and was a godly man who was consistently generous, patient, and kind. After earning a degree in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Arkansas, Gene was employed with the USDA Soil Conservation Service. In 1990, Gene retired after having served as the Deputy State Conservationist in California, and State Conservationist in Nebraska, Mississippi, and Arkansas. During his tenure, he also served on numerous state and regional water resource committees and task forces. Gene was a registered licensed professional engineer and land surveyor. Following his retirement from the USDA, Gene began a second career, founding the engineering consulting business, Sullivan & Associates, P.A. and actively managed various water resource projects, including the White River and Bayou Meto Regional Irrigation Water Districts. He provided consulting services on water issues in Argentina and Bolivia. Gene was active in developing state and national legislation concerning water resources. Gene's volunteer activities included serving as president of Lakewood Property Owner's Association Board of Directors and coaching various LPOA football, softball, water polo, and track teams. He taught Sunday school and regularly ministered to the sick and the elderly.

**Surmeier**

**Alvin "Al" G. Surmeier** (68) of Ellis, Kansas passed away on November 14, 2017 at the Good Samaritan Society in Ellis after battling Parkinson's for many years. He was born in Colby, Kansas. Al attended Colby Community College. He had worked as a Certified Federal Meat Inspector and a Soil Conservation Technician with SCS in the Mankato, KS field office, retiring in 2006. He was a member of St. Theresa Catholic Church in Mankato, Kansas. Al enjoyed playing the accordion, snow skiing, and bowling, and was an avid sports fan. He is survived by a step-son, two daughters, eleven grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren. Condolences may be left by guest book at [www.keithleyfuneralchapel.com](http://www.keithleyfuneralchapel.com). (cont'd)

**Thurman**

**Lane Thurman** (82) of Springfield, Missouri passed away on November 24, 2017. He was born in Alexandria, LA. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, **Nancy Lay Thurman**, sons **Steve, Randy, Kevin, and Robert** and their wives **Anna, Beth, and Mikel**. They also have seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. After graduating from LA Tech University, Lane began his career with USDA Soil Conservation Service. After 35 years of service, taking him from Louisiana to Colorado to Missouri, he retired as an Area Conservationist in 1994. Lane had a very active life and enjoyed traveling the world with Nancy in his plane and RV.

**Wilson**

**John Addis Wilson** (89) of Spokane Valley, Washington passed away on December 11, 2017. He was born in Grand Island, Nebraska. John grew up on a farm outside of Grand Island and attended a one-room schoolhouse through eighth grade. In 1946, he graduated from Grand Island High School. He enlisted in the Army the following August and served in Japan as part of the occupation force. He attended the University of Nebraska where he earned B.S. degree in geology, graduating in June 1955. Following graduation John worked in Wyoming for the Atomic Energy Commission and in South Dakota for the Soil Conservation Service. In January 1966, John transferred to Spokane, WA as state geologist. John retired in 1986. Following retirement, John worked independently as a consulting geologist for six years. He is preceded in death by his wife **Maxine**. John is survived by his five children: **Gregory (Kathleen) Wilson**, Spokane Valley, **Shelley (Steven) Thomas**, and **Todd (Tamara) Wilson**, Liberty Lake, **Thomas Wilson**, Port Orchard, WA, and **Julie Shinall**, King City, OR, 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

