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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired SCS and NRCS Employees

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NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

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

2017 Appropriations—In early May, Congress approved the 2017 appropriations omnibus bill. The bill rejected spending cuts proposed by President Trump in March and instead provided an overall increase in spending for discretionary spending programs at USDA. NRCS's Conservation Operations account received a \$14 million increase compared to last year, bringing total funding to \$864 million. The Watershed Rehabilitation Program was funded at \$12 million. In a bit of a surprise, the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations account was funded for the first time since fiscal year 2010 at \$150 million.

2018 Budget—The House Republican leadership is expected to announce guidelines for the 2018 budget the week of June 25th, 2017. Some observers anticipate that the 2018 budget guidelines could lead to a cut in Farm Bill funding as part of the effort to offset expected increases in Defense spending and decreases in revenue associated with proposed tax cuts.

The budget resolution, which sets the overall funding target for the Appropriations Committees, could also be used to set the stage for tax reform, one of the Administration's priorities. It is anticipated that the budget reconciliation process, currently being used by Senate Republicans in their effort to pass reforms to the Affordable Care Act, will also be used for tax reform. The advantage for the Republicans in using the budget reconciliation process is that it requires only 51 votes to pass the Senate rather than the normal 60 votes.

Farm Bill—House Agriculture Committee Chairman, **Mike Conaway**, (R-TX), is expecting cuts to the Farm Bill funding. If the House and Senate can agree on Farm Bill funding cuts, there is a chance that the 2018 Farm Bill could join tax reform as part of the budget reconciliation process. Rep. **Glenn Thompson**, (R-PA), chair of the House Agriculture's nutrition subcommittee, has concerns about including the Farm Bill in the budget reconciliation process and said "The farm bill is about the rural economy. I don't think it should be used as some kind of trading chip in this process."

On Thursday, June 29th, the Senate Agriculture Committee continues hearings in preparation for developing the 2018 Farm Bill. This week's [hearing](#) is focused on conservation programs and forestry. The NRCS Deputy Chief for Programs, **Jimmy Bramblett**, will be one of several witnesses testifying.

USDA Reorganization—On May 11th, 2017, **Secretary Perdue** announced plans to reorganize USDA. Details regarding the full reorganization can be found here: <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/reforming-usda>. The reorganization plan creates a new "Farm Production and Conservation" Mission Area that includes NRCS, FSA, and the Risk Management Agency. Under the reorganization plan, the undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment will continue to oversee the U.S. Forest Service. In addition, the reorganization plan calls for the NRCS Chief and the FSA Administrator to review office locations and administrative functions within 60 days of May 11th, 2017, and report to the Office of the Secretary regarding opportunities to co-locate offices and share administrative services, consistent with existing authorities.

Personnel Changes—The **Trump** Administration has moved more slowly to fill political appointee positions than the Obama or Bush administrations. This is particularly true in the Department of Agriculture where none of the dozen or so political appointments requiring Senate approval have been filled. USDA Secretary **Sonny Perdue** has said that he doesn't expect a deputy secretary or the undersecretaries to be on board before September. The White House has given six names to the FBI and Office of Government Ethics for clearance, but the candidates are still waiting to be cleared.

About a month ago there were reports that **Steve Censky**, CEO of the American Soybean Association, would be nominated to the USDA Deputy Secretary position. In addition, current Iowa Agriculture Secretary, **Bill Northey**, was expected to be the nominee for the newly created Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation. Indiana Agriculture Department Director **Ted McKinney** was expected to be nominated as Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. Finally, **Sam Clovis**, who has served on the USDA transition team, is being considered as

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the next Undersecretary for Research, Education, and Economics. The news that Clovis, who does not have a science background, could be nominated to be the USDA's Chief Scientist has raised concerns.

Retirement Benefits—The President's budget for 2018, released in May, called for a cut in federal employee retirement benefits. The cuts include the elimination of cost of living adjustments under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), and reducing the COLA by 0.5 percent for Civil Service Retirement System employees. It was estimated the changes would save \$524 million in fiscal 2018 and \$41.8 billion over 10 years. In addition, the President's budget called for increasing employees' contributions to FERS by 1 percentage point a year for six years which could reduce spending by \$1.7 billion next year and \$72.1 billion by fiscal 2027. Other changes could include basing the value of employees' retirement benefits on their highest five years of earnings, instead of the current highest three years, and the elimination of supplemental payments for FERS employees before Social Security kicks in at age 62, beginning in 2018.

The [2018 federal retiree COLA](#) will be announced in mid-October 2017. The President's budget reaffirms the Trump administration's intent to give federal employees a [2018 pay raise](#) of 1.9%. Congress could override the pay raise; however, in recent years this has not happened.

The cost of living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security recipients and federal retirees has only averaged about 1% since 2012. Based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) data through April of 2017, the Senior Citizens League estimates that the Social Security COLA for 2018 will be about 2.1% [as reported in Investment News](#). The Senior Citizens League also estimates that Social Security beneficiaries and federal retirees have lost about a third of their purchasing power since 2000. This is because the costs of items more often purchased by older people have significantly outstripped annual inflation increases in their retirement benefits.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Cecil Currin

The St. Lawrence River is at an historic high level. Cottages are flooded, septic systems are overtopped, and most boat docks are under water. Marinas and other businesses are hurting, and shipping on the seaway is down to a crawl. Is it related to climate change? Does our world require numerous natural disasters to wake us from deep economic driven sleep? This one doesn't have a name like Katrina or tropical storm David, but there is widespread economic pain. It has never happened before, at least not since records have been kept.

Close to home, our docks are under water, and flooding is knee deep in the boathouse. It's a minor inconvenience for us, but the Great Lakes basin has serious troubles. It will probably dry out in the Fall and be forgotten until next time. How easily we forget natural disasters, though. My American Indian friends say, "Mother Nature has a fever."

What can we do? Building higher docks and changing building codes are reactionary but may be necessary. Next Spring the water could be at an historic low, closing marinas and impacting shipping. I built higher docks for the Summer. Will I need longer and deeper docks for the Spring? Long term we need a better solution. We need to stay informed and send the right message to our local, state and national governing bodies.

As retired conservation professionals, we are in a more informed position than many. We need to stay in touch with each other and support organizations such as the Soil and Water Conservation Society. ARCSE members and SWCS are the best sources of unvarnished truths about our natural world. I am privileged to be a part of both organizations. Hope to see many of you in Madison, WI.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Douglas Helms, Historian

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A Wonder Woman of Agrostology

A segment about the movie *Wonder Woman* on the June 11th episode of CBS Sunday Morning inspired this month's history item. The creator of the Wonder Woman comic book character was influenced in part by the suffragettes who demonstrated for equal voting rights for women. That reminded me of discovering a suffragette during my work as historian of SCS.

So what about this story made me think of something that happened in my work as historian? Here is how the discovery happened. The Soil Conservation Service, through its nurseries and plant materials program, collected and tested plants, both native and exotic, for their conservation uses. No one had done this before. The need for guides for identification soon became obvious, and the staff commenced with mimeographed lists for use in the field. In 1939, USDA published Native Woody Plants of the United States: Their Erosion-Control and Wildlife Values, by an SCS biologist, **William R. Van Dersal**. The grasses had generally been covered by **Albert Spear Hitchcock's Manual of Grasses of the United States**, which USDA published in 1935, the year of his death. SCS staff used Hitchcock's grass identifications in writing USDA bulletins on the grasses useful for conservation.



Agnes Chase, a Wonder Woman of Agrostology

Field staff sent in plants to be examined, and SCS grazing and range specialists enthusiastically sought as-yet-unidentified grasses and submitted them for identification and testing. Sometimes they would receive a note back from the Washington office saying that the grass was being sent to **Agnes Chase** for identification. After reading a few of these letters, I wanted to know who Agnes Chase was. She had been Hitchcock's assistant, had succeeded him, and had published among other things a revision of the manual of grasses. With no college credentials or formal botany training, she became the authority on grasses in the United States. Those wishing to know more about her life can consult this site, the Wikipedia entry, and other sites on the internet:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=CfGHM9KU7aEC&pg=PA147&dq=alice%20chase%20%20usda&pg=PA146#v=onepage&q=alice%20chase%20%20usda&f=false>

<http://inspiredwomeneveryday.blogspot.com/2013/04/mary-agnes-chase-1869-1963.html>

So how does this connect with the Wonder Woman segment? Well, she was a suffragette who was jailed in 1918 for a demonstration at the White House. She refused bail and instigated a hunger strike. Discoveries of links like these add fun to the study of history.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer

New Members

Sugg, Michael	NC
Dille, John	VA
McIntyre, Loring	NC

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 hardcopy of the newsletter must pay an additional fee of \$12.00 per year

ARIZONA

Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative

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Ron Moreland Report. Ron and Barb just returned from two plus weeks exploring Quebec Province. French immersion! Montreal was a favorite. We walked miles through neighborhoods with pockets of ethnicity and hidden French bistros, and a fabulous Chagall exhibit. Quebec City was beautiful, though a bit touristy. We concentrated on learning about the amazing history of the area. We then rented a car through Charlevoix, with its lush sheep, dairy, cheese country, the Route de les Montagnes, and seeing whales on Sanguenay Fjord. In the Charlevoix area most only speak French, so it was good that Barb is pretty proficient with that.

Ken Cookson Report. We had two very enjoyable trips recently. The first was a week in **Santa Fe**. We have been there several times and never tire of the beauty and things to do there. We went to the Valles Caldera National Preserve, one of the largest in the US. We were entertained in a Prairie Dog Town. They are active. We saw one lone elk. We were told the herd didn't usually come down out of the woods during the day. From there we were on the Jemez Mountain National Scenic Byway. This is beautiful country.

We went to Los Alamos and learned more about the Manhattan Project and the building of the Atomic Bomb. There is a very interesting history of Los Alamos even before the Manhattan Project. The location of Los Alamos is pretty remote, and it was not easy to get to, which made it desirable. It is hard to imagine being able to keep a place like this secret, but they did.

We did manage to find a little time to do some wine tasting at a few wineries. This is always fun.

The second trip was to **Sedona, AZ** and the magnificent red rocks in the area. This is an area we always look forward to seeing. There are numerous rock formations with interesting names, like Bell Rock, Coffee Pot, Cathedral Rock and more. We stayed at The Ridge on Sedona Golf Resort in Oak Creek. The morning drive into Sedona is spectacular with the sun behind us and Bell Rock and other red rocks looming in front of us.



Steve Black's Rail Fence

We went to Jerome one afternoon. This is a very old mining town that no longer does mining but has become an artist community. In the last few years several wineries now have tasting rooms.

Steve Black Report. I spent a week back at my farm in southwest Illinois in early June doing my normal maintenance and other tasks needed around the house and buildings. Some areas of the state were still wet from the heavy rains and planting was behind schedule for soybeans. The corn on my farm was planted in early June and probably grew 16 inches during the six days I was there and had a deep green color. I have used conservation tillage on the farm for many years along with some no-till for soybeans, even though the land is relatively flat. I have not seen a moldboard-plowed field around there for probably 40 years as most farmers now use some form of conservation tillage and residue management. Soil testing on a small grid and variable rate nutrient application has also become very common in the area. Will go back again in the fall to help with crop harvest.

I built the split rail fence in the picture to go along with the old farm house on the property that is 194 years old; it was built in 1823 by my great, great grandmother.

CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

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Greetings to all our fellow retirees across the Nation! Our wet season is finally winding down, and we are totaling near the 2nd or 3rd wettest seasons of record. I have kept a close look at how the Oroville Dam Spillway repair work has been progressing, and lots of work has been accomplished with much more still to be done.

The following two YouTube videos provide a good update on what is going on and how things are being done. The big focus now is on removal of the lower portion of the concrete primary spillway and improving the foundation for the new structure by filling all voids with dental grout and then roller compacted concrete. Blasting is being used to break up the remaining portions of the lower spillway to be removed.

<https://youtube/ZKoJ0JJkyPs>

Oroville Dam Spillway Update, June 7, 2017

<https://youtube/5TyBS-0Td58>

Oroville Dam Spillway Update June 15, 2017

Monthly Lunches and Breakfasts: California retirees continue to have a monthly luncheon and breakfast for all who can make it. With summer being a busy time for many retirees, the groups are smaller than normal but these opportunities to get together are always enjoyed by those who can make it. Four of us were at the recent June 7th Luncheon as shown below.



California Retirees at June 7th monthly luncheon. Lower left and clockwise: Bill Ward, Arturo Carvajal, Walt Sykes and Harold Honeyfield.

California has added some new NRCS retirees to our E-mail Distribution List who have either recently moved to California or worked previously in California but were not in the loop until now.

John Stierna, retired NRCS Economist, NHQ and his wife **Ruth** are now residing in Lake County, CA. John looks forward to keeping up with what is going on with California now and joining us for a monthly lunch when he can. John worked with a number of our California Staff who had dealings with NHQ.

Dave Patterson, retired Biologist, currently resides in Georgia but had multiple Biologist positions in California including Area Biologist and State Wetlands Biologist. He also was the State Biologist in Oregon before retiring. Dave has maintained contact with multiple California Staff, and I was recently able to get his contact information so he is on our list and can keep up with California retiree news!

Reina Rogers, Retired District Conservationist who lives in Greenville, CA has also been added to our list and now enjoys keeping up with California retiree news.

Tom Smith, Retired Soil Mechanics Engineer continues to enjoy working and doing well in the private sector as the owner and president of RiverSmith Engineering, Inc. Tom's work specializes in water-related, environmental and restoration work, with an emphasis on rivers, streams, levees and small dams. Here is a link to information about Riversmith Engineering:

<https://sites.google.com/site/riversmithengineering/home>

Tom recently combined his work with pleasure in a get-together with **John Hanes**, retired Engineer who worked on California's Design Staff. Here is the note and three photos Tom shared with me about his visit with John.

"Hi Bill, Just got home from a project in Redwood Valley near Ukiah. On the way back we went through Boonville to see John Hanes at his Art Gallery—a beautiful building and a great collection of art. John himself looks great and we had a good visit. John's son **Ward** designed the building and it's located on the main street in Boonville (maybe the only street in Booneville). You can't miss it.

If any of our retirees across the country are out visiting Northern California, I know John would love to have you stop by his Art Gallery in Boonville, say hello and see the wonderful art he has there. Here are the pictures Tom shared.



John Hanes and some of his beautiful art inside the gallery.



Two old friends, and engineers, John Hanes (left) and Tom Smith, enjoying their visit inside John's Beautiful Art Gallery.

COLORADO

Ivan Wilkinson, ARCSE Representative
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Ivan and Ginger Wilkinson at Ouzel Falls, Rocky Mountain National Park. Access is from the trailhead at Wild Basin, about a six-mile roundtrip hike. Late May or early June is a great time to visit with spectacular views during spring snowmelt.



IDAHO

Jim Cornwell, ARCSE Representative
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The Idaho retirees held their last lunch for the 2016-17 year on May 25th. The get-together was not very well attended. Just like a bunch of retirees, they have scattered in all directions I suspect trying to beat the summer crowds after school is out. Those in attendance were **Gene and Bev Crisman, Darrell Gallup and his son Darrell, Rob Fredricksen, Paul Malone, John**

Kendrick, and Jim Cornwell. We will return to meeting regularly on September 28th. There should be some interesting stories and adventures to report after the long summer break.

IOWA

Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative

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On June 2nd, I went with **Mark McCurdy, Christian Osborn, and Jean Sandstrom**, all engineers in the State Office, to West Union to attend a retirement open house for **Neal Struthers**, Civil Engineer in Area 3. Neal retired on May 29th after 37 years with NRCS in Iowa. Neal has had a hand in the design and construction of countless structures throughout the state, but especially in northeast Iowa. He has been keeping busy the last few weeks getting his Morgan horses ready for a trip to the Black Hills. One horse that he plans to ride a lot hasn't had a saddle on its back yet. I told him that we're looking forward to some good pictures! In addition to working with his horses, he plans to attend a class reunion in late June and has a nephew getting married on July 2nd. It seems as though this retirement thing can sure keep a feller busy!



Neal Struthers at his retirement party



Neal Struthers and his wife, Sheryl, receiving a plaque from George Schaefer, Area 3 Area Engineer

While I was at Neal's retirement party, I had the opportunity to see a few other northeast Iowa retirees. **Rick Cordes and Ed Andrews** keep their minds sharp by continuing to do some part time work, mostly writing nutrient management plans. It was also good to get to talk to **Linda Schmitt and Rhonda Aylsworth**.

Rhonda and Doug Aylsworth, Linda Schmitt and her friend **Lee**, along with other friends spent a couple of weeks in Homosassa Springs, FL, in February. They said they had a lot of fun golfing, playing cards, etc., and the weather was great. Linda and Lee went to Los Alamos, NM, for a week in April to visit Lee's son and family. Part of their travels was on the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway. They toured the little town of Madrid, NM. This town originated as a mining town, then became a ghost town, then sprang up again in the 60s as a lot of hippies settled there. This little town is where the movie "Wild Hogs" was filmed. Linda also told me that her grandson graduated from North Fayette Valley High School this spring. He will be going to Coe College where he will play football for the Kohawks this fall.

Volney Smith has been one of the faithful regulars with the Wednesday morning breakfast group that meets at IHOP in Des Moines. In mid-June, he pulled up stakes and moved to western Iowa. He is now living in the Elm Crest Senior Living Community in Harlan. Volney, we'll miss you at breakfast but hope you enjoy your new home and surroundings in Harlan.

Thanks to **Dick Hall** who sent in the following: "Retirees from the (Northwest Iowa) area get together for breakfast the third Wednesday morning of each month at the HyVee restaurant at the Southern Hills Mall in Sioux City. We would welcome anyone who would like to join us. Our group is small, normally only 5-8, with some retirees and some spouses of former retirees. Consistent members attending have been **Guy Hempey, Judy Claus, Jeri Ducommun, Betty Jahn and Dick and Marian Hall**. Marian and I will be celebrating our 62nd wedding anniversary the middle of July." Congratulations Dick and Marian on your upcoming anniversary!

Tom Oswald told me that in late April he had dinner with the former planning staff at Fletcher's Restaurant in Ankeny. Those who were at the "reunion" included **Tom and his wife Pat, Roger and Donita Link, Steve Manternach, Christina and Patrick Murphy, Mark McCurdy, and Alan Lauver**. He said they had a good time "catching up."

Ron Hersom reported that his garage, eve troughs, grill, front door area, etc., were being invaded by wasps. They may not be much of a bother, but I know from experience that they can sting! Ron found an environmentally friendly remedy that has worked for him. He says to simply take a medium brown paper bag, stuff it with plastic grocery bags just enough to fill it out, then tie the open end and hang it near the area where the wasps are active. The wasps think the bag is a hornet's nest and will leave within a day. He said he's tried it and has had no wasps for over a month.

Recently we have been saddened by the loss of a couple of our retirees. **Monica Mae Monk**, 48, of Polk City passed away on May 29th, 2017, surrounded by her loving family at the Taylor Hospice House in Des Moines. Monica had fought a courageous battle with cancer for over four years. She maintained a positive attitude and a will to survive throughout her fight and certainly was an inspiration to all of us who knew her. **Marlys Jean McAninch**, 91, Cedar Falls, passed away May 30th, 2017, at the Westview Care Center in Indianola. Marlys was the wife of **Bart McAninch**, a District Conservationist in Iowa for many years. Bart passed away in January of this year.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative

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Spring arrived in Kansas and I was anxious to plant *manta villas* next to a new trellis that I had purchased. Planting day finally arrived, and the trellis was put in place and two *manta villas* were planted at its base. While I was admiring a job well done, my husband was taking a break and was reading the *manta villa* container. Then he called out, "Honey, you have a problem." Sure

enough I had purchased “mounding” *manta villas* instead of “vining.” Oh well, the *manta villas* are blooming nicely, and I can still enjoy the trellis even though it's not covered in blooms.

Not hearing any news from members, I am highlighting a couple items from our Kansas SCS/NRCS Retiree Newsletter. **James Fitzgerald** (former Civil Engineer in the Engineering Design Section in the Kansas State Office) related several hobbies that I found unusual and interesting. In the mid-1990s he started researching the Oregon Trail that crossed the Fitzgerald farm. During the next eleven years he dug up many artifacts on the Fitzgerald farmstead and on the Oregon Trail ending up with eight 8-place tables of artifacts. The Kansas Historical Foundation in Topeka has looked at some of his artifacts and determined that they have scientific and research value.

Jim has also collected railroad date nails and old barbed wire. Before 1880, when manufactured barbed wire was not available, a contractor near Silver Lake built new barbed wire fences for farmers by stringing No. 9 smooth wire on posts, followed by a crew using special equipment to place barbs on the wire. He ended up with a sample of this barbed wire. Barbed wire made history by making the local people stop using the Oregon Trail to travel on and use township roads with their sharp 90-degree corners.

Mary Shaffer (former Public Affairs Specialist) is travelling, volunteering, and enjoying retirement. She went on a tour to New York City, visiting museums, dining at famous restaurants, and seeing two shows, one of which was “Tuck,” a stage play written by a Salina native. In late winter she was honored by Kansas for Agriculture in the classroom with the Golden Apple Award for her work and support during her time with NRCS and as a volunteer after she retired. She recently has completed six years as a trustee on the Salina Education Foundation, serving on several committees and as chair of the board of trustees. **Mary** enjoys travelling throughout Kansas with her husband, **Phil**. Last winter they visited several reservoirs scouting for eagles.

We are saddened to report several deaths. **Robert “Bob” Griffen**, former Kansas State Conservationist, passed away April 15th, 2017, in Pocatello, ID. **Bob** retired in 1980. It was after his first wife, **Merle**, passed away that he moved to Pocatello, ID, and married a longtime friend, **Jerry Younkin**, who survives. **Larry Sabata**, retired Soil Scientist from the Manhattan Area Office Staff, passed away April 25th, 2017. Larry served 39 years before his retirement in November 2016. His wife, **Lois**, survives. **Richard “Dick” MacKinnon** passed away May 13th, 2017. Dick retired in 2012 as an Engineering Technician (Civil) on the Technical Staff located in Dodge City, KS. He is survived by his wife, **Kay**. **Alan L. Waltner**, former Soil Conservation Technician in the Kingman Field Office, passed away May 19th, 2017. Alan retired in 2006. His wife, **Lila**, preceded him in death.

MASSACHUSETTS

Jim Wesoloski, ARCSE Representative

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Well, it's been a quiet few months for the Massachusetts retirees. Summer has sprung upon us, and we've already had two official heat waves. We heap great praise upon whoever it was who invented central air conditioning. Each month we receive a notice from the electric company that we are using more electricity than our average neighbors, and the hot weather ensures that we keep that record intact.

We note the passing of **Arthur L. Verdi**, retired State Administrative Officer, on June 20th, 2017 at the age of 94. Arthur was born in 1922 in Albania and came to the United States at the age of six, just in time to enjoy the Great Depression. Arthur started as a photographer for SCS using those big Speed Graflex cameras that weighed a ton. Arthur worked his way up the administrative ladder to become SAO, upon the retirement of **Charlie Brown**. Art's depression years had an effect on him, and he carefully shepherded all of the SCS pennies. He was noted for bringing home and repairing broken equipment so that it could be returned to service for some more years. Back in Arthur's day as SAO, the office seldom closed for winter storms. In one blizzard after the snow was a foot deep, **Frank Resides** called the SAO and asked: “Arthur! Is it snowing on your side of the building?” Arthur agreed that it might be alright to let the troops go home at 3pm.

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

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The Columbia area retirees met for their quarterly breakfast on May 10th at Denny's in Columbia. Those in attendance included **Robert Hummel**, **Neil and Margaret Randall**, **Ed and Judy Smith**, **Frank and Kay Miller**, **Gena Michalson**, **John Turner**, **Jerry Edwards**, **Mike Wells**, **Alan Wolfe**, **Dave Rastorfer** and surprise guests from the great northeast of Missouri: **Lynn Kilpatrick**, **Jim Stephens**, **Mack Ellis**, **Jim Henry** and **Bob Laird**. The next breakfast will be at 8am on August 9th at Denny's in Columbia.

Ross Braun: The St. Louis Science Center opened a permanent exhibition on agriculture, titled “GROW.” The exhibition covers one acre next to the main Science Center building and includes everything from DIY gardening to the latest in agricultural sciences. I volunteer on Saturdays and events, giving soil science presentations and teaching staff and interns about soil science. My soil health demonstration compares two samples of the same soil, one sample continuously no-till farmed since 1983 and the other conventionally tilled.

After six years of persistence, we captured the Smithsonian soil exhibition, “*Dig-It! The Secrets of Soil*.” The exhibition is on permanent loan to the St. Louis Science Center from the Smithsonian Institution and the Soil Science Society of America. Components of *Dig-It!* will be displayed on rotation in the GROW exhibition Pavilion. An Earth Day celebration for *Dig-It!* included NRCS representatives **J.R. and Nancy Flores**, **Ron Collman**, **Bill Pauls** (aka Menfro Man), **Grant Butler**, **Charlie Rahm**, **Renee Cook** and me.

What do you think? A career pays us to pursue things we believe in, and retirement is our opportunity to donate and pursue our passions. I am thrilled to be the upcoming president of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International, an organization that educates and certifies instructors, therapists, and establishments providing equine-based services for people with disabilities.



Ross and the All American Soils.



Earth Day at the St. Louis Science Center: Ron Collman, Bill Pauls (Menfro Man), J.R. Flores, Charlie Rahm, Renee Cook.

Gary Moreau: I will be giving mobility to 36 people in rural Guatemala from June 17-27 as part of the PET project.

Jim Rickman: We are still traveling a lot. On my bucket list is a visit to 100 countries, and I might make it. It will be close. We have trips planned to Iceland, Bali and Java, and some Eastern European countries through 2018. At my age you sort of hate to plan much further out than that. I still fish quite a bit and am going to Canada with my son next month to fish and am going trout fishing in Arkansas this month. Quail hunting has suffered some, but the past two years it has been very good in our area. I have a couple of bird dogs and plan to quail hunt quite a bit this coming year. I wrote a book, which has great potential. If you suffer from insomnia you should read it. My wife fell asleep after only a few pages. It is on Amazon, [Encounters in the Rolling Plains of Texas](#). It starts out slow and gets slower. Our health continues to be good, and for that we are very thankful and feel blessed. I hope all my old friends in Missouri are faring well.

Alton Taylor: We will be in Arizona for July with our daughter. **Vena's** health is best in years, but her memory is very short. But we are still on our own, moving about with some limits.

Lane Thurman: Hi everyone, I have some good news coming up—tomorrow is hopefully my last chemo treatment! After the treatment, a CT scan and a small colonoscopy will be done to determine if the tumor is gone, and hopefully it will all be over. This series of treatments has really taken it out of me. I didn't know something like this could get you down so bad and make you so weak so fast, but it does. But maybe we have seen the last of the treatments. I haven't been fishing since last fall and really miss that part of my life. But maybe that will also end soon and I will get to go back to my favorite sport. I haven't even had the boat out in the water. **Nancy** is really taking good care of me, though. She tends to all of my needs, and I couldn't ask for any more than what she does for me.

Dennis Shirk: Hello and Happy Father's Day to all the fathers. We are camped in northern Boone County and farm sitting for our daughter so that the whole family could go to church camp down by Lebanon, MO. I did not get to go on our spring ride and campout as there was too much flood damage to hold the ride at Riversedge campground on the banks of the Black River at Lesterville, MO. I did get to go to a Christian cowboy meeting at Golden Hills camp ground at Raymondville, MO. It was great riding and very inspirational. I met many new Christian horse people. I'm doing well after my gall bladder surgery, and right now both of us have no major health issues. I consider us extremely blessed. See you all down the trail.

Jess Epple: (from near Muskogee, OK) **Phyllis** and I are doing well. Our land has received much rain this spring. A Soil Scientist would call it "Field Capacity." It looks like a good year for many round hay bales. We are excited about our wildlife this spring. We counted about fifty wild turkey and several quail. However, we haven't seen many rabbits. The Honey Springs Civil War Visitors Center and Battlefield area near Rentiesville, OK is open. It was the first "official" battle where African-Americans fought, Friday, July 17th, 1863. It was fought the day before Ft. Wagoner, SC (the movie "Glory" in 1989). Also, West of Butler on 52 Hwy. (exit 131 off of 49/71 hwy.) is the first unofficial site where several hundred African-Americans fought in 1862 at Island Mound, MO. It took some time before Washington, DC approved of their being soldiers, thus Indian Territory got credit for the first "official" battle where 700 African-Americans (the First Kansas Colored) fought and helped win the largest battle against the Confederates in Indian Territory. If you have an opportunity, please visit the Honey Springs Visitors Center and Battlefield. We now have eight great-grandchildren! Wishing "you all" an event-filled healthy and happy summer.

Keith Davis: I've been busy building a deck, working at the farm, fishing, etc. Just this afternoon we put our Montana friends on a plane to fly home after a week-long visit with us. We had a lot of fun with them fishing and visiting. Our grandkids are growing, and our oldest son and his wife are working on another adoption. I have a question for you old timers. I turn 65 this year, and this Medicare thing has me flummoxed. Looks to me like the whole thing is an expensive substitute for our present health insurance. You get part A automatically, but have to pay extra for part B and D. What do you get for it that is not already covered by our regular health insurance? Do most retirees continue their health insurance and pay for B too? Advice would be appreciated.

Bill Pauls: Life at the Lake of the Ozarks continues to be awesome! **Kris** and I are truly blessed. We just wound up Father's Day with all our gang over in Forest Park, St. Louis at what I'm sure will become the annual family Father's Day wiffleball extravaganza. Both dads were the captains, and I got picked 3rd to last. **Jeff** had to pick between his mother and his wife for last picked (Whoa!)—talk about a rock and a hard place. Guess who he picked? I am heading to AK for marathon #98 at the end of July. Our garden is starting to look good, with 'maters, cucs, and radishes—mmm mmm good. I did the 50-year high school class reunion last weekend, with a fun time reminiscing about the good ol' days with the good ol' boys and girls. Everyone, enjoy your summer and come visit anytime. We entertain a lot and are doing a whole lot of volunteering.

John Turner: I read this article this morning about how soil saves lives and thought it was pretty neat. I thought it might be good for a newsletter article (or link) for MAPSS or the NRCS Retirees' News.

<http://onpasture.com/2017/02/20/from-our-archives-soil-saves-lives/>

Mike Blaine: The biggest news here in NEMO is we finally got some rain. We had received no rain of any significance since last October. The garden was just sitting there not growing, and the yard was shutting down. We finally got two inches of rain over a two-day period the second week of June. Things are greening up, and the garden is now looking better. It's funny how the weeds can grow without water, though, isn't it? Since last writing we have a new grandson, **Hunter Michael Blaine**, born to **Jeremy and Jo Blaine**. He is the first Blaine grandson in my line, so he is pretty special! Best wishes to all and God bless!

John Rice: It seems like much of our time is taken up with keeping up-to-date with our extended family, having children and grandchildren in four states: Missouri, North Carolina, Kansas and great grandchildren in Arizona. Volunteering is still a big thing for both of us. John is a member of Joseph L. Norton VFW Post 929 of Trenton and serves on their military honors team, serves as treasurer on the Grundy County Soil & Water Conservation District Board, is on our church's building expansion committee, and Trenton's Industrial Development Corporation. Well, you get the idea. The garden looks good so far, including a large sweet corn patch. I have most of the garden set up with a drip irrigation system. June and July are family reunion months, with one in June and two in July.

Plan now to attend the SCS/NRCS Annual Luncheon on September 14th, 2017 at the Senior Center in Columbia, MO (10am—2pm).

MONTANA

Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative

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Montana Big Sky Report

Normally this time of year the retirees in Montana are catching fish to eat so they can make ends meet. But this year with the extra rains, the waters are high and cloudy so they can't catch any fish. The only opportunity to get meat, unless they buy our delicious tender beef, is to harvest ground squirrels. The problem with harvesting ground squirrels in Bozeman is that you can't hunt with your rifle within the city limits. Also, you can't trap ground squirrels since you'll probably catch the neighbor's cat. All the NRCS retirees I know are harvesting ground squirrels using a sling shot. The way they hunt the squirrels is to sit in their lawn chair, since the squirrels in Bozeman are used to being near a lawn chair with a person sitting in the chair. I heard some of the retirees are such good squirrel hunters that they take some down to the Senior Center.

I also heard last week that **Joyce Swartzendruber** got 12 ground squirrels. Joyce hosted a high school reunion at her place in Bozeman last weekend. Twelve brave souls traveled from Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, and New York to enjoy eating Joyce's fresh-caught Montana trout. Since there were no Montana trout to be had, the former high-schoolers sat in the yard with Joyce while she harvested the 12 ground squirrels. They barbequed the ground squirrels and were so impressed with the taste and Joyce's sling shot ability, that next year they want Joyce to host the reunion, and they are all going to bring their sling shots and leave their fly rods home.

Gooby Ranch Report: On May 20th the Cliff Swallows showed up and started building their mud houses on our buildings. The husband and wife swallows work together to build their house. I can't tell which one designs the house. On one end of the garage we have 20 houses being built. That means 40 Swallows are working on their houses. Since swallows eat about 200 mosquitos a day, that means that one end of the garage is reducing our mosquitos by 8,000 a day. Plus, the swallows need a lot of good clay soil. **Mary Ann** pushed the wheel barrow down to the river to get a load of clay soil for the home builders. We are only five miles from the river so it's not a long trip for her. When Mary Ann parks the wheelbarrow in the yard, it is immediately full of swallows gathering building material. Every four days Mary Ann takes the wheel barrow down to get another load of building material.

Since it is early for the mosquitos in our area, Mary Ann put out a lot of pans with water in them to grow mosquitos for the swallows to eat. I decided to see how many



Cliff swallows at the Gooby Ranch.

mosquitos a pan produced. I started counting the larva, but they were transferring into mosquitos and flying off faster than I could count. So I gave up on that idea. Plus I got bit twice before the swallows got the little buggers. I would have had Mary Ann help me count them, but she was on her way back down to the river. Years ago the river was straightened out. Mary Ann is slowly building the curve back in the river one wheelbarrow load at a time.

NEBRASKA

Norman and Sylvia Kempf, ARCSE Representatives

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The April and June breakfasts were called to order by **Norman Helzer**, with 18 people attending in May and 15 attending in June.

Harold Klaege was introduced to the group. He and his wife have returned to Lincoln to be nearer to their grandchildren. He told the group that they first came to Lincoln in 1975 and stayed for 25 years. They are happy to be back.

Robert B. Kundlacek died on April 23rd, 2017 at the age of 96. He worked in the Lincoln NTC in financial management, and was married to **Leeana** for 67 years.

Gary Muckel reported that, after 11 years, **Nancy's** breast cancer has returned. Testing revealed that it is localized, and she is under treatment. She and Gary are in need of your prayers. **Gus Dornbusch** reported that he had his last chemo treatment, and the last check showed clear of cancer and he is now on maintenance.

Jim Harder reported that he is dealing with a pinched nerve, but it is getting better. He made a recent trip to the Sand Hills and Niobrara valley, and saw a lot of beautiful country.

Keith Sheets reported a unique way to enjoy a trip to Lake Louise in Canada. He rented a 48 passenger party bus with driver and invited 48 members of his family to join in.

Steve Stover headed up his 102nd high school reunion. The school closed 50 years ago. There were 40 people attending from 21 states, with 14 classes represented. The oldest graduated in 1934 and is 102 years old. She was planning to attend, but was not able to do so because of health issues. Five ladies aged 90 to 95 were sitting at one table.

Norman Kempf recently traveled to Kenya to visit his youngest daughter and family. "We spent eight days out on the Mmusi Mara looking at thousands of animals up close and personal. We spent three days on a guided safari in a van with the top up and a personal guide. We spent four nights in tents in the savanna with no fence to keep out the animals. One night hyenas came into camp and chased a camp cat on top of the kid's tent. Elephants, African buffalo, lions, leopards, baboons, and monkeys were seen close to or in camp."

Jim Culver and Norman recently spent a week in Canada fishing. "We had good luck and the weather cooperated for all but one rainy day when the temps were in the mid-40s." Norman was very pleased to have his two boys join in. Jim was providing guide service to the oldest boy when he caught a 29-inch walleye.

Norman Helzer has traveled to Texas. Norm and his wife recently spent four days of travel in NE looking for birds and saw 85 different species.

Jim Culver reported that the NE Game and Parks Commission provides free fishing to young children. They also collect used fishing equipment for their use. Jim has volunteered to fix the equipment and make sure it is in working condition. Go for it Jim.

NORTH DAKOTA

Robert "Bob" Bird, ARCSE Representative

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The North Dakota SCS/NRCS retirees will be having our annual Reunion Luncheon at the Bismarck Elks Lodge Room at 11:30am on Thursday, September 14th, 2017.

On a sadder note, I recently lost my wife, **Jeannie**, to a stroke that she was unable to recover from. She was feeling great and had no indication of any problems. She was my life, and we did many things together and had planned to do many more. Anyone who ever met her could not help but admire her gentle, compassionate and caring way. To know her was to love her. I was very lucky to have her by my side for almost 30 years, and I am at a loss to where I go from here. It seems like I'm moon walking and getting nowhere, and I don't even know where I'm going. I thank those of you who sent cards or called. I really appreciate it. Please see her obituary in the In Memoriam section.

Jeannie M. Bird, 75, passed away peacefully at CHI St. Alexius Health in Bismarck, North Dakota on Thursday, May 4, 2017.

NORTH CAROLINA

Jim Canterbury, ARCSE Representative

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On May 11th, 51 SCS/NRCS North Carolina retirees, spouses and guests gathered for their annual picnic at Lake Crabtree near Raleigh, NC. Lake Crabtree is part of the Wake County Park system and is one of the structures in the Crabtree Creek P.L. 566 Watershed Project.

Senior Conservationist **Elwood Guthrie**, who is 93 years old, was recognized as the oldest person in attendance. Other Senior Conservationists attending were **Arlie Culp, John Garrett, Ed Helme, and Harold Lile**.

Assistant State Conservationist, **Jerry Raynor** gave a report on NRCS Service Delivery Teams, funding, and the hiring freeze. He said it was a challenging time to accomplish the mission of the Service with limited personnel.



North Carolina picnic attendees: Lipe and Renda Barrier, Jim and Becki Canterbury, David Clapp, Nancy Clary, Dr. Maurice Cook, Arlie Culp, Donald Joyce, Tommy Cutts, Ray and Debra Dorsett, Frank Evans, Howard and Peggy Garner, Robert McCabe, Dick Gallo, Barbara and Coy Garrett, John Garrett, Charlie and Mary Kris Godley, Elwood Guthrie and Mitchell Guthrie. Also attending were Bill Harrell, Stanton Harrell, Boyce Harvey, Hubert and Jamie Hawkins, Ed Helmey, Larry Hendrix, John and Maggie Hill, Howard Hobson, Robert Horton, Rodney Johnson, Joe Kenyon, Harold Lile, Loring McIntyre, Roger Montague, Jerry Raynor, Cecil Settle, Alice and Wayne Short, Horace Smith, Mike and Kay Sugg, Wilson Spencer, Howard Tew, and Talmadge and Marjorie Wiggins.

OHIO

Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative

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Submitted by Bob Parkinson: Greetings Fellow Retirees! No doubt your days are so busy now you likely just don't have time for much else. But, if you did, have you ever considered doing your genealogy, especially during those cold winter months when you can warm your hands around a nice cup of hot coffee, hot tea or hot toddy as you do powerful research on-line from the comfort of your own home?

Still a relative newcomer to family history, I got bit by the genealogy bug back in 2011 when I retired, and I'm glad! Finding family factoids in retirement is way more fun than was finding arrowheads or edible mushrooms at work.

And you can get started in genealogy for free! Just log into Family Search, the largest collection of genealogy resources, records and family trees in the world! For free! There are billions of them! For free!

To get started, just type in your web browser: "<http://www.familysearch.org>." Create and then sign in to your free account and search away. Type in a surname and you're off to the races! Easy-peasy, or as my old SCS boss, **Niles McLoda**, would say back in the 70s, "It works slicker than snot on a brass door knob!"

You can search on records, family trees, genealogies, the catalog, and books. There's even a Family History Research Wiki at your disposal.

In May, I attended the National Genealogical Society 2017 Family History Conference in Raleigh, NC where some 2,000+ passionate attendees took in a full week of 170 presentations with more passion and dedication than a California convention center filled with Geographic Information System users! And that's really sayin' something!

But I digress. Suffice it to say the Raleigh conference was fantastic, where the beer was great and the darts good at the

Big Boss Brewing Company, 1249-A Wicker Drive; and the smoked baby back ribs were finger-lickin' good at The Pit, 328 W. Davie St.

In a subsequent article, I will touch on other sources of genealogical information that can help you pass more on to your descendants than just your DNA—your unique family's history! Just think of the information and perspective you can provide to your grandchildren and their kids, especially useful for helping put down familial roots as well as 6th grade genealogy projects!

By the way, the 2018 conference will be held in Grand Rapids, MI. See you there? <http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

The following was submitted by Warren Lee:

Here are some pictures taken at the South State Conservationists and friends gathering hosted by former Chief **Bill Richards** at his farm in Ohio.

Those in attendance were **Galen Bridge** and friend **Erwina**, **Dennie Burns** and **Lee Frederick**, **Rich** and **Jude Deusterhaus**, **Coy** and **Barb Garrett**, **Niles** and **Carolyn Glasgow**, **Shirley Klumpe**, **Warren** and **Barb Lee**, **Bill** and **Betty Milliken**, **George** and **Ellen Norris**, **John** and **Blanche Peterson**, **Bill Richards** and friend **Grace Moore**, **Jerry Seinwill** and friend **Carol Waite**.



Bill Richards and Grace Moore

**DEADLINE FOR THE
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017
NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS
AUGUST 25, 2017**



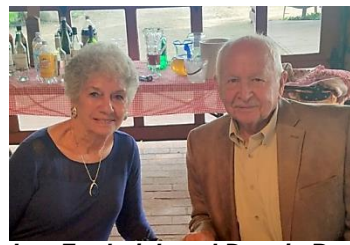
South State Conservationists and friends' gathering at Bill Richards' farm in Ohio.



Bill and Betty Milliken



Coy and Barb Garrett



Lee Frederick and Dennie Burns



Niles and Carolyn



Galen Bridge and Niles



Jerry Seinwill and Carol Waite



Rich and Jude Deusterhaus

OKLAHOMA

Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative

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The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, OK on April 28th, 2017. Thirty three people were in attendance. They were: **Don Bartolina, Steve Chessmore, Duane Crider, Wayne Fjeseth, Fred Fortney,**

Randy Freeland, Roberta and Jim Frie, Harry Fritzler, Sandra and Terry Hough, Winnie Jaques, Bill Knight, Otho Lamar, Nick Lambeth, Minnie Carol and Gordon Moebius, George Moreland and guest Betty Gilbert, Eunice and Glen Mullen and daughter Marilyn, Don Qualls, Fredia and Stan Rice, Dan Runnels, Chris Shepherd, Terry and Jim Smith, Milly and Bob Smith, Betty Todd, and Darrel Wells.

President **Gordon Moebius** called the meeting to order. **Bob Smith** provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, President **Gordon Moebius** again called the meeting to order. First-time attendees introduced themselves. **Bill Knight** currently resides in Shawnee. He worked in watershed operations in Oklahoma for 20+ years before resigning in 1982. He worked in the Marlow and Clinton Watershed Offices. He has a land survey business in Shawnee: Knight Land Survey.

The group was reminded that our website www.joepad.com is current. It is helpful in our effort to keep retirees informed. It has pictures, minutes and attendees from each of our meetings.

Recent retirees include **Ronnie Warren**, Soil Conservation Technician, Altus Field Office retired in December 2016; and **Cassandra (Sam) Sites**, Financial Management, Stillwater State Office, retired January 2017.



Don Qualls and Bill Knight

Fred Fortney read a list of retiree deaths since October 2016. See more details in the In Memoriam section: **Wes Fuchs**, 89, Fort Worth, former State Soil Scientist in Stillwater, retired in 1986 in Temple, TX 11/29/16; **H. F. Borcharding**, Duncan, husband of **Sandi Borcharding**, retired Duncan RC&D Secretary, 12/4/16; **John Cagle**, 87, Stillwater, retired State Office Geologist, 12/24/16; **Leland Burns**, 93, Cheyenne, retired Watershed Inspector, retired at age 50, 1/25/17; **Kenneth Thornbrough**, 77, Mountain View, worked in WS Office in Clinton and as Soil Conservation Technician in Mtn. View, left SCS to be a construction contractor, 2/18/17; **Mark Rose**, 56, Maryland, Director of Financial Assistance Programs Division within the Deputy Chief for Programs Area, formerly Great Plains RC&D Coordinator in Oklahoma, formerly from Ohio, died in service, 2/21/17; **David Ankle**, retired Resource Specialist in Perry, retired 1992, 2/21/17; **Betty Day**, 88, Clinton, widow of **Bob G. Day**, former engineer who passed Oct. 2015, 3/7/17; **Eddie Moffer, Jr.**, Grapevine, TX, former Project Engineer at the Clinton WO, 4/25/17.

A moment of silence was observed and **Fred Fortney** offered a prayer.

A note from **Joann Leaverton**, widow of **Ervin Leaverton**, had been received asking the group to keep her son **Mike** in their prayers. He is currently at MD Anderson in Houston undergoing treatment for acute leukemia. **Sandra Hough** has contact information if anyone needs it.

Wayne Fjeseth is the Acting President for The Oklahoma Conservation Museum group and provided an update on recent activities. The museum will be named The Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. The Oklahoma Historical Society will accept and display artifacts that are donated. The details of the written agreement are currently being worked out. There will be an independent board and a non-profit corporation. Prior to that being put in place, the Oklahoma Historical Society will be able to accept monetary contributions on behalf of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. When the agreement is in place and details worked out, the announcement will be made to the public.

Please continue to talk to others about artifacts that might be available for loan or donation once the mechanism is established. **Tom Lucas**, who originally presented this concept, continues to work on this project and can be reached at 580-727-4397 or tom.lucas717@gmail.com.

Glen Mullen suggested a book titled Worst of Hard Times. It is about the hardships of the Dust Bowl. **Dan Runnels** reminded the group that April 27th, 2017, was the 82nd Anniversary of the creation of the Soil Conservation Service.

Bobby Smith continues to serve as an interim pastor to Baptist churches in the Medford Area. **Stan and Fredia Rice** work part time, volunteer at church, travel, enjoy grandkids' activities, and spoiling their 1st great granddaughter. **Darrell Wells** does a lot of fishing, hunting, and gardening. **Donald Qualls** said he also does a lot of fishing, hunting, but added "sleeping." Pretty nice retirement, huh?



Stan and Fredia Rice

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 27th, 2017, 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.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Grady Adkins, ARCSE Representative

Ellis Morrow, ARCSE Representative

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Proving that retired NRCS planners ensure that landowners understand their conservation plan, Ellis Morrow (Center) explains the fine points to Jack the Donkey (Left) in Saluda County, SC. Red (Right) is trying to get involved in the discussion.



TEXAS NORTH

Arnold King, ARCSE Representative

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Arnold King Report: During April 25-26, Texas retirees met for their 24th annual reunion at New Braunfels, TX. Fifty seven attended and the traditional raffle (silent auction) brought in \$1,675. Those funds are used for scholarships for college students or scholarships for students to attend conservation camps where they learn about natural resources. There was an outstanding breakfast served on Wednesday morning and a BBQ lunch also served on Wednesday. A short business meeting was held, and the annual planning conference for the 2018 reunion will be held at the Brazos Agua Hielo Ranch near Glen Rose on January 16th, 2018. **Phillip Wright** will be the Chair for next year's meeting. We were encouraged to see more interest from the younger retirees. Hopefully, they can breathe new life into the organization.

The May 2017 meeting of the SCS/NRCS Alumni Club was held at 10am on Friday, May 19th, 2017, at St. Ann Catholic Church, 100 SW Alsbury Blvd., Burleson, TX. **Earl Blakley** and **Dennis Erinakes** were responsible for the snacks. Twelve members attended the March 17th meeting.

Those attending were: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Bernie and Maxine Owen, Anita Plummer, Dennis Erinakes, Billy Don and Elaine Davis, Clyde Goodman, Joyce Petty, and Dave Buland.** President **Clyde Goodman** called the meeting to order.

Doug Seibel reported that his wife has had a rough time and spent three weeks in the hospital. We hope that she will be feeling better soon.

Dave Buland reported that OPM held a retirement seminar at the Fort Worth Federal Center, which was well received. He also gave us an update on folks getting ready to retire this year. Dave sits on the board of directors for the NRCS Credit Union and serves as Vice Chairman.

Joyce Petty has two great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild—how blessed she is! **Anita Plummer** reported that **Betty Sisson** has not been eating very well and still is pretty weak. We all wish for better days ahead for Betty.

Maxine Owen said her granddaughter was thrilled to get her Texas A&M ring. Son **Steve** and wife **Carol** are very busy with their real estate appraisal work. Maxine and Bernie will be celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary on May 17th.

Elaine Davis has been wearing out the road between her home in Quitman and Tyler where she goes for doctor visits. She recently had a heart ablation procedure. She is doing better now. She has four great-grandchildren.

Bernie Owen, along with Dennis Gaster, participated in a presentation on the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) at the Fort Worth Federal Center on May 11th. We are trying to get the word out on the benefits of NARFE membership and hope to recruit many more members. **Dennis Erinakes** reported that his grandson **Ethan** got his Master's degree in engineering management. He lives in Minnesota and works for the Corps of Engineers.

Clyde Goodman's daughter has her own interior design business in Midland, TX, and is doing quite well. His son works for an oil company and mentioned that deep water wells in the Gulf cost about a million dollars a day to drill! Clyde's wife **Marla** continues her struggle with complex health issues.

Pat and Paul Larson attended the New Year's Day wedding of their granddaughter, **Sarah**, in Carmichaels, PA. **Sarah** is the oldest daughter of their son **Keith** and his wife **Lorna** who live in Hillsdale, MI. Sarah teaches German and is working on her Doctor's Degree in German and a Master's Degree in French. Their granddaughter **Elizabeth** has taught for three years and has a new home in Raleigh, NC. Their youngest granddaughter, **Priscilla**, who is a talented sculptress, graduated from Hillsdale College in May. **Keith** is the Senior Pastor at the Green Valley Presbyterian Church in Hillsdale, and Lorna also serves as the

church secretary. Pat and Paul's daughter, **Kelli Olson**, is in Minneapolis, MN with her husband who is a graphic designer. Pat enjoyed the Precept Inductive Bible Studies at their church in Arlington and has gone on to teach Precept classes the past 16 years they have been in Sherman.

Diann Wilmart has been immersed full time in the Religious Studies at the Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, TX. She has thoroughly enjoyed her studies and all she has learned. **Jerry McMIndes** said he has been "plugging along" these days since his wife passed away three years ago. He and his daughter enjoy lunch together once or twice a week. Jerry said he is still close to the members of his football team from his hometown of Ord, NE.

Henry Bogusch reported that his wife **DeeAnna** had a successful heart ablation to cure a runaway heartbeat, but then got a blood clot in her lung that set off a condition of non-smoker's COPD. She has improved a lot but still struggles. Henry has decided not to renew his membership.

Franklin Phillip Logan passed away Monday, Feb. 13th, 2017. Memorials: In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the family at <http://gofund.me/frankloganfamily>.

The June 2017 meeting of the SCS/NRCS Alumni Club was held at 10am on Friday, June 16th, 2017, at St. Ann Catholic Church, 100 SW Alsbury Blvd., Burleson, Texas. **Anita Plummer** and **Clyde Goodman** brought the snacks.

Fourteen members attended the June 16th meeting, including: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Bernie Owen, Dennis Erinakes, Joyce Petty, Diane Wilmart, Doug Seibel, Don Kapalka, Tom Hodges, Bernelle Baxley, Dave Stockbridge, Dave Drennan, Marie Garsjo, and Dave Buland.**

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

Willeene and Arnold King are heading to Colorado in late June for their usual summer vacation where they will meet long-time friends for fishing, cabin maintenance, jeep trails, etc. Arnold will be attending the SWCS annual meeting in Madison, WI during late July and participating in annual meeting the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE).

Bernie and Maxine Owen. Bernie and his son **Steve** made the trip to visit their son/brother **Mitch** and his family in Vail, AZ in early May. They were able to visit Bernie's sister and her husband, **Helen and Darrell Mahlik**, in Phoenix on two occasions while in Arizona. Maxine and Bernie also plan to drive to Kansas to visit Bernie's other sister and family in Kinsley and then drive to Salina to visit her brother **John Reh** and his family over Memorial Weekend. Her sister and husband will also be there to visit friends and family over the weekend. **Diane Walmart** and her daughter spent Christmas in North Carolina and then went to Georgia where they toured the first Coca-Cola factory. They also enjoyed a play held in a restaurant on New Year's. Diane spent Easter with her grandson who is a student at Stephen F. Austin State University. She then went over to visit a former co-worker, **Eddy Robertson**, in Natchitoches, LA.

Tom Hodges was recently in a car wreck. **Tom** thankfully was not injured. His leased car, however, was "destroyed."

Marie Garsjo recently spent time visiting her aunt in Panama. She is currently trying to sell two of her deceased mother's cars: a 1975 Lincoln and a 2003 Buick with 30,000 miles on it. The problem is that they are in Medford, Oregon (**Dennis Gaster's** hometown), and they are being shipped to Texas.

Bernelle Bailey attended the funeral of **Lu Logan's son**. She has planned a trip to Amish country in October.

Dave Drennan and his wife were very thankful to be able to make their trip to California after all of his health issues. They got to visit the National Park Service site at Alcatraz. He got to meet an ex-con who wrote a book about the place. There were 29 escape attempts, and only three were never solved. They also toured wine country. **Dave** and his wife are planning a two-week trip to Alaska in June. This will probably be their last trip up there to see his brother and sister-in-law who are planning on moving back to Texas to live.

Dave Stockbridge will be attending his daughter **Erika's** graduation where she will receive her doctor's degree in Public Health Administration. She will then become a professor. **Dave** and **Barb** recently toured Europe with **Don** and **Sue Deal**. He said the long flight overseas will be his last! **Dave** picked up a cold and tried to get over it, instead of going to the doctor, and thus had to miss the Annual Texas-Louisiana Fishing Trip to Toledo Bend.

Dennis Erinakes continues his interest in health issues and is taking an on-line course on mental health. His dog Rosie, who now weights 81lbs, is behaving much better and only chewed up one wool sock since the last report. **Dennis** recently upgraded his boat with a 20hp Mercury motor, electric start (no more pullin' the cable).

Doug Seibel reported that his wife's health is much improved.

Don Newman passed away May 26th, 2017. Don worked 40 years for the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) at Lubbock, Plainview, Hereford, Houston, Temple, Dallas, and Fort Worth, TX. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

WASHINGTON

Gerald Richard, ARCSE Representative

Email: glr52pdr@aol.com

Present at our March and/or April luncheons at the Timber Creek Grill and Buffet were: **Hans and Katie Krauss, Harry Riehle, Chet Jahn, Ralph Schmidt, Larry and Jean Edmonds and their daughter Annie and grandson Cassius, Carl Vennes and Ken Kaul.** **Ralph Schmidt and Larry Edmonds** continue to make big strides in recovering from their heart procedures. **Jud Melton** had a bad fall on April 25th that resulted in pinched and bruised nerves in the spinal cord in vertebrae 3-6 and the resulting

loss of feelings below. He had surgery to the neck area to relieve the pressure on the spinal cord and is on the mend, but looking at a long period of physical therapy. **Karen Melton** is keeping us up-to-date. Jud can't hold a phone at this stage, but here is their address. 11361 W. Riverview Drive, Post Falls, ID 83854. **Phyllis Richard** continues to receive hospice and homecare.

WASHINGTON, DC, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

John Peterson, ARCSE Representative

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Barbara Osgood prepared this report on the National Capital Area Spring Luncheon. Thanks Barbara.

"The Spring ARCSE Luncheon at the Ft. McNair Officer's Club on May 4th included a great group of retirees and an excellent speaker. Retirees in attendance were **Paul Benedict, Jerry Bernard, Bill Boyer, Janet and Carl Bouchard, Roger Cronshey, Douglas Helms, Tom Iivari, Bill Irwin, Bob Kohnke, Diana Morse, Barbara Osgood, Blanche and John Peterson, Frank Resides, Kendrick and Marc Safley, Lee Shields, and Ann and Ron Marlow.** Our speaker from Headquarters was **Frank Geter**, who is team leader of a new group called Enterprise Business Initiatives. Frank gave us many interesting handouts on new programs and initiatives at NRCS. (Some of you may remember Frank's Dad, **John Geter**, who is a retiree from NRCS.) Much to the delight of many of us old-timers, **Frank** talked about a renewed emphasis in NRCS on Conservation Planning.

Once all the formalities are completed, we always enjoy our personal updates, where everyone in attendance has a chance to update us on his or her recent activities, grandchildren,



Fort McNair Officer's Club, Washington, DC.

hobbies, travel, etc. It is always interesting to hear how people are spending their time in retirement—sometimes in very unexpected ways!

NOTE: There has been a change in the security check-in at the Ft. McNair gate. Guests now have to complete a brief information form to be given permission to enter. We hope we have made the process easier. For the next luncheon, we will send the form to you with your luncheon invitation, and you can return the completed form with your check to Diana. Once that is done, Diana will handle the rest, and your name should be on a list at the gate when you enter.



Washington DC National Capital Area spring luncheon. From left to right: Carl Bouchard, Paul Benedict, Diana Morse, Frank Resides, Bill Irwin, Barbara Osgood, Bob Kohnke, Janet Bouchard, Lee Shields, Ron Marlow, Roger Cronshey, Tom Iivari, Ann Marlow, Marc Safley, Jerry Bernard, Kendrick Safley, Bill Boyer, John Peterson, Blanche Peterson, and Douglas Helms.

Our next luncheon will be on October 5th. Please mark your calendars now! Many thanks to **Diana Morse**, who does such a great job of processing checks and reservations, and to **John Peterson**, who always finds the best speakers!" By the way, your humble National Capital Area Representative worked with **John Geter** in IN. I was the Watershed Planning Party Staff Leader in Paoli, and **John** was the Asst. State Engineer. Imagine my surprise when I picked **Frank Geter** up at USDA to bring him to the luncheon, and found out he was **John's** son. It is a small world indeed.

John Peterson testified on the benefits of NRCS's watershed programs before the House Ag Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry on June 13th. John was asked to testify by the Subcommittee Chairman **Frank Lucas** (R OK-3rd), who knew John. John assisted Chairman Lucas as he championed the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments (PL 106-472) passed in 2000, and John also directed the watershed program while with SCS.

He is also now the Chairman of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District which is the co-sponsor of the Pohick Creek Watershed, and some Pohick Dams have been rehabilitated using the Rehabilitation Amendments. Deputy Chief for Programs **Jimmy Bramblett** testified for NRCS. The Spring ARCSE Luncheon at the Ft. McNair Officer's Club on May 4th included a great group of retirees and an excellent speaker.

Douglas Helms combined his interests in history and Formula 1 racing on a trip to Europe, May 24th to June 7th. After staying in Nice and going to practice, qualifying, and the race in Monaco, he went to Seville, Gibraltar, and Madrid. Seville was a particular treat. Though 50 miles inland on the Guadalquivir River, it was the port city and seat of government during Spain's period of exploration and colonization.



Doug Helms took this picture at a Formula 1 race. He had a good view of the pit lane and race track, where a McLaren (race car) had just crashed against the fence during qualifying.

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

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We are saddened to report that retired conservationist **Harold Matlick** died on April 27th, 2017. You can read more about his life in the obituary section of this newsletter.

Skip Bell, Soil Survey Office Leader for the Eastern Allegheny Mountains and Plateau in Morgantown, WV plans to retire on June 30th.

The West Virginia annual meeting was held on June 5th at the Golden Corral Restaurant in Morgantown. Sixteen people attended the meeting. The guest speakers were NRCS State Conservationist **Louis Aspey** and musical historian **Joe Paull**. Thanks to Joe, we now know the history behind the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" song. **Dick Judy** won the 50/50 drawing and donated the funds to the organization. A huge thank you to **Jim Clevenger** and **Jim Cooper** who organized the event and donated door prizes. The West Virginia Chapter turns 30 next year, and both Jims agreed to work on a special meeting to commemorate the milestone.

Marlene Menear is recovering from knee surgery.

WISCONSIN

Jim Enlow, ARCSE Representative

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Wisconsin retirees meet for lunch.

The Wisconsin retirees met for lunch and fellowship on June 8th, 2017 at Langford's Pub & Grill, Lawsonia Golf Course, Green Lake, WI. **Erv Lesczynski and Steve Prissel** were the gracious hosts.

Attendees included **Jim Enlow, Jim Kaap, Erv Lesczynski, Howard and Sue Gundlach, Roman and Bea Statz, Stan and Marlene Dingle, Gene Nimmer, Steve Prissel, Ted Manning, Dave and Betty Gruber, and John Campbell.**

Howard Gundlach had his shoulder replaced the week before the luncheon and was able to attend. He is doing great. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and renewed old friendships.

The next luncheon is scheduled for August 10th, at Gordon's Grill & Pub in Eagle River, WI. **Dan Lynch** will be the host.

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.*

Billy F. Headden
Ralph A. Mashburn
Rollin N. Swank

Cornersville, TN
England, AR
Graysville, PA

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Billy F. Headden, Senior Conservationist
Marc Safley, Chronicler, Senior Conservationist

Senior Conservationist **Billy Headden** was born September 25, 1933, at Yorkville, TN. Yorkville is a community in Gibson County and is about 50 miles northwest of Jackson in the western portion of Tennessee. Bill grew up on his family's general agriculture farm where he learned to milk cows by hand and to pick cotton. Bill's parents were early adopters of soil conservation on their farm. Bill attended local schools graduating from high school in 1951. Following high school, Bill enrolled in the University of Tennessee-Martin where he majored in General Agriculture. He graduated with a B.Sc. in 1955. During college he worked as an SCS Student Trainee in the summers of 1953 and 1954.

After graduation, Bill was hired as a Soil Conservationist at Jackson, TN, and worked there until May 9, 1956, when he entered service in the United States Army. He served until May 8, 1958, when he was honorably discharged. From 1958 until 1959 he worked as Soil Conservationist in the Lexington, TN, work unit. In 1959 he was promoted to Work Unit Conservationist at Lewisburg, TN. He held that position until 1961 when he took the job of District Conservationist at Somerville, TN. He held that position until 1966 when he took the job of District Conservationist for Madison County headquartered at Jackson. Bill was awarded a Kellogg Fellowship for graduate study in 1969. He enrolled at North Carolina State University and received a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Economics in 1970. Returning to Tennessee, he was Resource Conservationist for 21 West Tennessee counties. In 1971 he accepted a promotion to Area Conservationist for the Knoxville (TN) Area. Bill was there until 1974 when he accepted the position of State Resource Conservationist at the SCS state office in Nashville. Bill retired from that position on January 3, 1987. Bill's SCS career took him from the rolling, loessial fields of West Tennessee to the mountain agriculture of East Tennessee. Following retirement from Federal service, Bill worked as a real estate broker, auctioneer, and appraiser until 1998.

Bill met his wife, **Gayle Finley Headden**, while he was working in Lewisburg. They married January 7, 1961. When Bill took the SRC job in 1974 they were able to settle down in the Cornersville, TN, area where, except for a few years in Lewisburg, they have continued to reside. Bill and Gayle have three sons, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. He reports that most of their extended family live within a 90-minute drive of their farm outside Cornersville. Bill and Gayle enjoy family get-togethers and traveling. They have visited 47 states and 27 countries on 4 continents. They also enjoy gardening and fishing in their managed farm pond. Bill says that the "fishing is free to friends and neighbors." Bill believes that life is truly what you make it and that it is important to look ahead no matter what one's stage of life. Doing good for others, keeping an inquiring mind, and having goals allow one to contribute all along the way.

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. Always include the position or the spouse's position with SCS/NRCS.

Surname

In Memoriam (Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see www.arcse.org)

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|--------------|--|
| Adams | Billy Adams (86) of Grover Hill, Ohio passed away on May 7, 2017, at his residence. He was born in Grover Hill. He was united in marriage to Leona V. Martin Cross , who survives in Grover Hill. Billy worked for the Division of Wildlife – Soil Conservation Services and the Watershed Services, combined for 42 years. He also served in the Marines. He is survived by two step-children, Michael (Joyce) Cross of Van Wert and Donna (Jerry) Wannemacher of Ottoville; five grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a step-son, Philip P. Cross ; and seven brothers and five sisters. |
| Alley | Elaine Rolley Alley (93) of Henrico, Virginia passed away peacefully May 7, 2017. She was born in Cheriton, VA and was preceded in death by her husband, Ira Walter "Pat" Alley . Elaine retired from the Soil Conservation Service. She was an active member of Welborne United Methodist Church for over 60 years. She is survived by her daughter, Trish Minter (Allen) ; her son, Bill Alley (Janet) ; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial |

contributions may be made to Welbourne United Methodist Church, 920 Maybeury Dr., Henrico, Va. 23229. Online condolences may be sent to woodyfuneralhomeparham.com.

- Barkley** **Joseph Barkley** (97) of Paris, Illinois passed away on May 8, 2017 in Paris Healthcare Center. Joe was born in Paris and graduated from Paris High School in 1936, was a member of the First Christian Church Disciples of Christ, and the Montana Historical Society. Joe retired in 1979 as a District Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service. He enlisted in the U.S. Army and served from February 4, 1942 to October 23, 1945 in WWII. He returned to Edgar County after the war and briefly resumed farming. He used the GI Bill to attend the University of Illinois, earning an agriculture degree. He was an avid reader of history, especially about the American west. He married **Frances H. Honeywell Barkley** in October of 1946, and she passed away April 30, 1983. He is survived by his son, **Dan Barkley** of Paris, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his son, **John Barkley**.
- Bell** **Benny Bell, Jr.** (83) of Clarksville, Tennessee passed away January 6, 2016. He was born in Natchez, MS. He retired from the U.S. Army and the State of Kentucky. He was an active member of Concord Missionary Baptist Church. He was a District Conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service in Metcalfe County, Kentucky for a brief time. He leaves to cherish his memory, his wife **D'Ella Bell**; sons **Malcolm Bell** Fort Stevens, **Calvin Bell** Springfield, IL and **Aaron Bell** Hazel Crest, IL; three sisters; five brothers; and four grandchildren.
- Berry** **Hollis Berry** (72) of Pickens, South Carolina, passed on June 21, 2017 at his residence. Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, he served his country honorably in the United States Air Force for 20 years. Following his military service he went to work as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Greeneville office of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service where he retired. He is remembered as a good man. He enjoyed attending car shows, going boating, fishing and camping. He enjoyed working in his yard and driving his Corvette. Those who will most treasure his memory are his wife of 28 years, **Aurelia Ann Berry** of Pickens, South Carolina; his daughters, **Karen Welch (Nicky)** of Tennessee and **Barbara Domen (Bruce)** of Florida; and his six grandchildren. Hollis is also survived by members of his extended family.
- Bird** **Jeannie M. Bird** (75) passed away peacefully at CHI St. Alexius Health in Bismarck, North Dakota on Thursday, May 4, 2017. She was the wife of North Dakota Representative **Bob Bird**. She is survived by her husband, **Bob** of almost 30 years; her children, **Linda (Clay) Hoag**, Bismarck, and **David Hertwig**, Austin, TX; grandsons **Byron (Alisha) Hoag**, **Justin (Breana) Hoag**, and **Bender (Shannon) Hoag** all of Bismarck; great-grandchildren **Braydon**, **Kylan**, **Bryson**, **Kellen**, **Quinn** and **Easton**; her brother, **Bob Watts**, Forsyth, MT; sister, **Judi (Steve) Erickson**, Greeley, CO; brother-in-law **Gary Bird**, Highlands Ranch, CO, and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, **Kandie**; and her first husband, **Carl Hertwig**.
- Bowling** Member **Ernest Hooper Bowling, Jr.** (89) of Dillwyn, Virginia passed away at home on May 13, 2017, following a courageous battle with stomach cancer. He was born in Jonesville, VA. He had lived at Oak Grove Farm in Buckingham County since 1932. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, **Rebecca Hines Bowling**; daughter, **Sarah Frances Bowling**; sons, **Ernest Hooper Bowling III** and his wife, **Karen**, **James Hines Bowling** and his wife, **Sun Bun**; a granddaughter; and two great-granddaughters. He is also survived by two sisters. He was preceded in death by a son, **Benjamin Allen Bowling**; and a sister. He attended Buckingham Central High School and was a graduate of Virginia Tech. Ernest was a World War II veteran and retired in 1988 as District Conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service. He was a lifetime farmer. He was a member of New Store Presbyterian Church, where he served as deacon, elder, clerk of session and Sunday school teacher. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations be made to New Store Presbyterian Church, c/o Bettie Bass Mitchell, 3221 Buckingham Springs Rd., Dillwyn, Va. 23936, or a favorite charity.
- Burns** **Leland Burns** (93) Cheyenne, Oklahoma passed away on January 25, 2017. He retired as a Construction Inspector at age 50. Leland was born in Cheyenne, Oklahoma and graduated from Cheyenne High School in 1942. After graduation he enlisted in the United States Navy where he served as a radar technician on the Niblack destroyer ship in the Mediterranean, as well as the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean. Leland participated in the invasion at Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. While in the service, he was married to **Bernice Colleen (Hawkins) Burns** at Sayre, Oklahoma on June 5, 1943. After his discharge, he returned to Cheyenne where he and Bernice purchased their farm northwest of town and raised their family. They later purchased the bowling alley in Sayre, Oklahoma in 1980 and operated it until 1985. Leland loved fast-pitch softball and was known throughout Roger Mills County for his pitching skills. He is survived by his wife, **Bernice**, of the home; three children, **Mickey (Janet) Burns**, Minco, OK, **Judy Wood**, Kingfisher, OK, and **Jim (Mary) Burns**, Cheyenne, OK; seven grandchildren; and 16 great grandchildren.
- Cagle** **John Sherman Cagle** (87) of Stillwater, Oklahoma passed away on December 24, 2016 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. John was born in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma. On July 5, 1958 he married **Vivian Melissa Gray**. After graduating from Wilburton High School, he continued his education at Oklahoma State University where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Geology. He worked as a Geologist for the USDA Soil Conservation Service where he engineered many bridges and dams across Oklahoma. He was a member of the First Baptist Church in Stillwater, Oklahoma and an avid Cowboy fan. He is preceded in death by his spouse. He is survived by one daughter, **Lori Strickland** and husband **Parker** of Tulsa, Oklahoma; and two grandchildren. As a memorial, the family requests that all do something for their families that will be a treasured memory. That is the memorial John would have wanted. Condolences may be emailed to the family and an online obituary viewed by visiting www.strodefh.com.
- Day** **Betty Day** (88) Clinton, Oklahoma passed away on March 7, 2017. She was the widow of **Bob G. Day**, former engineer with the Soil Conservation Service who passed Oct. 2015. Betty owned and operated a beauty shop in Clinton for more than 20 years, and then spent the next several years helping to care for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Betty is survived by two sons, **Daniel Day** and his wife, **Betty**, of Clinton, and **Dr. Patrick Day** and wife, **Suzanne**, of Arapaho; four grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren. The family has suggested that those wishing to give memorial contributions do so to the First United Methodist Church.
- Harlin** **John Harlin** (75) of Muskogee, Oklahoma passed away on March 25, 2017. John was the sixth of eight children and was born in Mazie, OK. Johnny graduated from the historic Manual Training High School with the class of 1960. Johnny was employed with Bower Feed Company until he was drafted into the United States Army where he served three years and a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam. He was honorably discharged from the armed forces and retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service after 41 years of service as a Soil Conservation Technician. He was an avid golfer, bowler and loved

going to the casino. He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, **Bertha** of 54 years, of the home; one son, **Bernard (Krystal) Harlin**, Wagoner, OK; and two grandsons.

- Harper** **Carolyn Sue Harper** (79) of Weatherford, Oklahoma passed away on June 3, 2017. Sue was born in Chickasha, Oklahoma and graduated from Chickasha High School in 1956. Sue attended Oklahoma College for Women in Chickasha on an Alumni scholarship. On August 30, 1957, she married **Melvin Dean "Dick" Harper**. Born to them were **Jimmy Dean** and **Johnny Bryan**. In 1964 Sue began her long career in Soil and Water Conservation by going to work at Chickasha USDA watershed planning office. As a young girl growing up on the Little Washita near Ninnekah, Sue and her family were flooded out three times. Years later, a watershed work plan ended up on her desk. It was a plan for the same area in which her family had been flooded. It pleased her greatly to know that flooded area would be corrected. In 1971 Sue was able to transfer and continue her conservation career at Deer Creek Conservation District. Sue retired from Deer Creek in April 2005, but remained as an associate director until 2012. Sue was inducted into the Conservation Hall of Fame in 2012. Sue and family have been long time members of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Weatherford. **Sue and Melvin** were married 46 years until Melvin's passing in July 2003. Sue was then married to **Loy Brown** from April 2005- August 2015. Sue is survived by her two sons, **Jim** and wife **Kathy** of Forney, Texas; and **John** and wife **Christine** of Weatherford; four granddaughters; and three great-grandchildren. It is requested that memorials to be made to ALZ.org, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Weatherford or Weatherford Lady Eagles Basketball.
- Hawkins** **Douglas E. Hawkins** (85) of Washington DC/Virginia passed away May 4, 2017. Growing up in the Mountain Home, Arkansas area, he graduated from high school there in 1950. He attended and graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in Agriculture Engineering, and started to work with the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1954. Doug entered on military leave from SCS and joined the U.S. Marine Corp. He attended Officer Candidate School in Quantico, Virginia, graduated, and received his commission July 1955. After completing flight school in Pensacola, Florida, Doug was assigned to the Marine Corp Air Facility, New River, North Carolina, serving out his active duty tenure as a helicopter pilot. After his Marine Corp Service he returned to the Soil Conservation Service in Pine Bluff Arkansas and Little Rock State Office in the Watershed Planning capacity. He was selected and moved to Gainesville, Florida as State Engineer. Doug took a two-year assignment with the EPA in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1980 he moved to become the Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources in North Carolina. Doug moved to the National Headquarters, Washington DC as Watershed Specialist in the Watershed Project and Maintenance Division. In November 1987 he was selected as the State Conservationist for the state of Delaware. He returned to the National Headquarters January 1989 as Assistant Director for Engineering Technology. **Doug** retired December of 1990. **Doug** is survived by his wife **Joan Small Hawkins**, daughter **Kelly** and son-in-law **Nathan Carnes**, grandchildren **Jason** and **Haley**, his brother **Dwain Hawkins** and sister **LaRue Wyatt**, nieces and nephews. Doug was buried May 10 near his home in Arkansas with full military honors.
- Hobbs** **Patricia Joanne Hobbs**, (79) of Grand Junction, Colorado passed away on June 9, 2017. She is survived by her husband, **Kenneth**; one son, **Raymond** of Ely, NV; one sister, **Diane Ivie** of Bremerton, Washington; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Pat worked in the Area Office in Grand Junction, CO. She had worked in various office positions but with additional training served as computer specialist as well.
- Jackson** **Joe Norman Jackson** (87) passed away on February 21, 2017. "Mr. Joe" was a devout Christian and resided in Opelika, Alabama for the past 43 years. Joe was born on his parents' farm near Piedmont, Calhoun County, Alabama. He graduated from White Plains High School in June, 1947, and left home the following day to enlist in the U.S. Army. His military career spanned nearly 21 years across the U.S. and around the world, retiring as a Major in 1967. Joe embarked on a second career with the Soil Conservation Service in Auburn, Alabama in September 1967, retiring in 1988, as the Alabama State Administrative Officer. Joe was predeceased by his wife of 56 years, **Agnes Conaway Jackson**. He is survived by his children: **Andrea Jackson (David McAlister)** of Auburn; **David Jackson**, **Jerry Jackson** and **Susan Jackson (Don Jackson)**, all of Opelika; and **Joseph Jackson (Lynelle)** of Jacksonville, Florida. Other survivors include his five grandchildren and his four great-grandchildren. He was a caretaker at heart, caring for his wife with deep devotion during her many years of continuing sickness, as well as her increased needs following a stroke during the latter years of her life. In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully suggests donations to the Parkinson's Disease Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018 (pdf.org); or to the First Baptist Church Opelika Benevolence Fund, P.O. Box 329, Opelika, AL 36803-0329.
- Kudlacek** **Robert B. Kudlacek**, (96) of Omaha, Nebraska, passed away on April 23, 2017. Bob worked in administration for the Soil Conservation Service in the State Office in Lincoln, Nebraska, the Helmand River Project in Lashkargah, Afghanistan, the Resource Conservation and Utilization Project in Kathmandu, Nepal, and Washington, DC. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, **Leeana Rezny Kudlacek**, daughter **Mary deSouza (Dr. Euclid J.)**; son, **John R. Kudlacek**; four grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. He was born in Swanton. At 19, he left home to serve the Navy during WWII. After being discharged, he spent 40 years in the Naval Reserve, retiring as a captain. He attended the University of Nebraska, graduating with a degree in business, and spent his career with the Soil Conservation Service.
- LaFlamme** Member **Kenneth J. LaFlamme** (82) of Old Town, Maine peacefully passed away at home on June 17, 2017. He was born in Old Town and a 1953 graduate of Old Town High School and the University of Maine, class of 1957. He was employed as a soil scientist in the state of Maine for the Soil Conservation Service for 38 years, retiring in 1994. He was a communicant of the Parish of the Resurrection of the Lord and a member of the Orono-Old Town Kiwanis Club. He is survived by his beloved wife, **Corda LaFlamme** of Old Town; by two sons--**Morris "Moe" LaFlamme** and wife, **Donna**, of Bangor and **Thomas "Tom" LaFlamme** and his wife, **Marcia "Annie,"** of Apopka, FL--and two daughters, **Mary St. Peter (Arthur "Butch")** of Otis and **Carol Lowney (Robert)** of Oviedo, FL; two granddaughters; and three great-grandchildren. Kenneth was a man who cherished his family. Corda was the love of his life since the day he laid eyes on her. They shared 56 years of devoted love and a happy marriage together. They enjoyed many happy times at the family camp at Beech Hill Pond with their children. Ken loved walking on his land, planting trees, eating wild blueberries, and bird watching. For many years he was a member of a bird club at Birds Acre in Ellsworth. Ken had a deep love of music throughout life. He played the trombone in high school and was passionate about his children all learning how to play many musical instruments. In lieu of flowers, those who wish may contribute to the charity of their choice. A private burial will be held by the family at a later date.
- MacKinnon** **Richard (Dick) A. MacKinnon** (76) of Ulysses, Kansas passed away on May 13, 2017, at Via Christi St. Francis in Wichita.

He was born in Leadville, Colorado. Dick was on the Florence High School football team that won the state championship in 1957. He went on to attend Pueblo Community College. In 1963, he moved to Moscow, Kansas, where Dick farmed and raised cattle and sheep. Then in 1971, the family moved to Ulysses. During this time, he became a private pilot and flew the family on vacations. While living in Ulysses, Dick also served as an EMT for 15 years. In 2001, they moved to Dodge City. Dick worked for the Soil Conservation Service until his retirement in 2012. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church. Dick is survived by his wife of 55 years, **Kay**, Dodge City; son, **Ross MacKinnon**, Olathe; daughter, **Shelley Alexander**, Ulysses; a sister; two brothers; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Memorials to the First United Methodist Church of Dodge City or the KSU Alumni Foundation in care of the funeral home.

- Matlick** **Harold Lester Matlick** (92), a resident of the Blackman Heights Community, Hambleton, WV, passed away on April 27, 2017 at Lavender Fields Assisted Living at Beverly, WV. He was born at Newburg, WV. On September 23, 1944 at Red House, MD, he was married to the former **Mary Lee Shriver**, who preceded him in death on January 31, 2014. Surviving are one son, **Gerold Sheldon Matlick (Lois)** of Parsons, WV; one daughter, **Diane Ruth Matlick Wilfong Wade (Danny)** of Blackman Heights, Hambleton, WV; three grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. Preceding him in death are one son, **Keith Edmund Matlick**, and one daughter, **Carla Jean Matlick**. He was a graduate of Fellowsville High School with the class of 1942. He was a Veteran of the United States Navy, serving during WWII. He attended Fairmont State and West Virginia University. Harold was owner and operator of dairy farms in the 1950's. He worked for the USDA SCS as a Soil Conservation Technician and retired in 1984 as a Conservationist. He then worked for the WV Soil Conservation District in Philippi and later worked for Sunrise Construction. He was a member of the Parsons Kiwanis, the Osiris Shriners, the Pythagoras Lodge #128 A.F.&A.M. of Parsons, and the First United Methodist Church of Parsons. The family suggests that expressions of sympathy be in the form of contributions to Lavender Fields Assisted Living, 150 Water St., Beverly, WV 26253. Condolences may be expressed to the family at www.lohrbarbfuneralhome.com.
- McAninch** **Marlys Jean McAninch** (91) of Cedar Falls, Iowa passed away May 30, 2017, at Westview Care Center in Indianola. Marlys was baptized and confirmed at St. John Lutheran Church in Sumner. She graduated from Sumner High School in 1943 and earned her Bachelor of Science degree in education from Iowa State University in 1948. Marlys was married to **James Barton McAninch** who passed away in January of this year. Bart retired as a District Conservationist with SCS. She taught secondary and adult education in the states of Washington and Iowa. She is survived by one daughter and three sons, ten grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren; one brother, **Douglas**; and two sisters, **Darlene and Marilee** and their spouses.
- Moffer** **Eddie Moffer, Jr. (78)** of Grapevine, Texas, passed away April 25, 2017. He was the former Project Engineer with the Soil Conservation Service at the Clinton, Oklahoma watershed office.
- Monk** **Monica Mae Monk** (48) of Polk City, Iowa passed away on May 29, 2017, surrounded by her loving family at the Taylor Hospice House in Des Moines. Monica was born in Atlantic. She was baptized and confirmed in the Exira Lutheran Church. Monica attended the University of Iowa and graduated in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. She then worked as an engineer for the Federal Aviation Administration in Kansas City. Monica attended graduate school at the University of Montana and received a Master of Science degree in Natural Resource Conservation. She joined the Peace Corps in El Salvador as an agroforester. In 2006, Monica and her family moved to Polk City, Iowa where they have resided and raised their family ever since. In Iowa she was the State Wetland Coordinator for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Monica was a member of the Polk City United Methodist Church. Those left to cherish her loving memory are her husband **Steven**; three children **Rio, Maya, and Talula Monk**; parents **Gail and Evelyn Petersen**; two sisters and a brother.
- Newman** Member **Don Forrest Newman** (85) of Fort Worth, Texas passed away on May 26, 2017. He was born in Amarillo, TX and graduated from Amarillo High School in 1949. He then entered Texas A&M University and was a proud member of the Corps of Cadets. Following graduation in 1953, he married the love of his life, **Berniece Linack**. He served two years active duty in the U.S. Army, stationed in the European Theatre. He then continued his service to our country for an additional 8.5 years in the Army Reserves and received an Honorable Discharge as a Captain. Don worked 40 years for the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) at Lubbock, Plainview, Hereford, Houston, Temple, Dallas, and Fort Worth, TX. After retirement in 1992, he volunteered for SCS and a couple of other retiree groups. He also spent 20 years with Citizens on Patrol. **Don and Berniece** have two wonderful children, **Mark and Karen**. He was so proud that both Mark and Karen graduated from A&M, and each married Aggies. To make him even prouder, **Mark and Janet** have two children, **Laura Sayers and Brian**, who also graduated from A&M. **Karen and David Pronger** have two children, **Caroline and Brent**. Caroline is a sophomore at A&M, and Brent plays baseball at a jr. college where he is a left-handed pitcher.
- Sabata** **Larry R. Sabata** (65) of Topeka, Kansas passed away in his home on April 25, 2017 after a courageous battle with cancer. He was cremated, and celebration of life services will be held at a later date this summer in Topeka, KS and in Sterling, IL. Memorial contributions can be made to St. Francis Cancer Center, Midland Hospice House, or Christ the King Catholic Church, all in Topeka, KS. He was born in David City. Larry obtained his B.S. in Soil Science from the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 1974. Over his 39 years with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) he completed mapping for six different county soil surveys in Iowa and Illinois. He spent five years as a District Soil Conservationist in Wyoming and Minnesota. After that, he worked in Topeka, KS as a Resource Soil Scientist for the Manhattan Area Office until his retirement in November 2016. One of his great passions was gardening and for the last 20 years he grew and propagated cannas. He had about 25 different varieties of cannas, including a number of cultivars he started himself. Larry married **Lois Ann Schumacher** on Aug. 23, 1986 in Sterling, IL, and they were married for 30 years. She survives. Other survivors include one daughter, **Cassandra M. Sabata** of the home.
- Thornbrough** **Kenneth LeDon Thornbrough** (77) of Mountain View, Oklahoma passed away on February 18, 2017. He worked for the Soil Conservation Service in the watershed office in Clinton and as Soil Conservation Technician in Mtn. View. He later left SCS to be a construction contractor. He was born in Rhea, OK and graduated from Clinton High School in 1957. He soon enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves and was a helicopter pilot and achieved the Rank of Warrant Officer. He married **Charlene Miller** on November 23, 1958 in Rhea. He enjoyed working on electronic devices and is a U.S. Patent holder. As one of his hobby interests he worked on and remodeled Model T cars. He was preceded in death by his parents and infant twin sons, **Mark and Marvin**. He is survived by his wife, **Charlene**, of the home; three daughters, and a son, eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and two foster great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested memorial contributions go to the

Ronald McDonald House, 1301 Northeast 14th Street, OKC, OK 73117.

- Verdi** **Arthur Lazar Verdi** (94) passed away Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at Hospice of the Fisher Home in Amherst, Massachusetts. He was born in Boboshtice, Albania and at the age of six immigrated with his parents to the United States. In 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Army serving his country during WWII as a Staff Sergeant in the Asiatic Pacific Theater. He met his beloved wife **Vasilika** in the Albanian Orthodox Church choir, and they later married July 21, 1946. Arthur worked for the USDA Soil Conservation Service for 38 years and was the State Administrative Officer in Massachusetts before retiring in 1980. Arthur loved music, had a beautiful tenor voice, and composed and arranged various music pieces. For many years he was a member of the Worcester Music Festival Chorus, which performed with the Philadelphia and Detroit Symphony Orchestras. He was an active member of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church and served as the choir director for 46 years. His family and friends quickly relied on Arthur and his ability to master anything encompassing fine woodworking, mechanical and electronic repairs. Arthur will be deeply missed by his devoted wife of 71 years, **Vasilika (Arthur) Verdi**; his four children, **Dennis Verdi (Victoria)** of Holyoke, **Philip Verdi** of Florence, **Elaine Prinzivalli (John)** of Hadley, and **Matthew Verdi (Roxanne)** of Northampton. He also leaves his three sisters, one brother, three grandchildren, and a great-grandson. Arthur was predeceased by their beloved daughter, **Marianne** and their infant son. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in his memory to the following: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Hospice of the Fisher Home, 1165 N. Pleasant St., Amherst, MA or VNA of Cooley Dickinson, 168 Industrial Dr., Northampton, MA.
- Walker** **Ralph Howard Walker** (83) of Litchfield, ME, formerly of Turner, ME, passed away peacefully at his home on May 30, 2017, with his wife and daughters at his side. Born in Alfred, ME, he was the third child of eight. A graduate of Kennebunk HS, class of 1954, he was drafted into the Army July 1954 during the Korean War. Ralph served as a soil conservation technician in Lewiston/Auburn Maine for the USDA Soil Conservation Service, retiring in 1985. He wintered the past 15 years in Zephyrhills, FL. He especially loved playing golf. He got his first Hole In One at the Turner Highlands and his second at the Municipal Golf Course in Zephyrhills, FL. He was a competitive archer in his younger years, winning many trophies. He was a member of the Nezinscot Masonic Mason Lodge in Turner, ME. He was a member of Friendship Squares, square-dancing club. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, **Florence Hume**; three daughters, **Theresa (Michael) Sheehan** (Biddeford, ME), **Rebecca (Norman) Gagnon** (Roxbury, ME), and **Kathlene (Kenneth) Clarke** (Litchfield, ME); nine grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Memorial donations may be made in his name to the Dempsey Center, 29 Lowell St., Lewiston, ME 04240.
- Waltner** **Alan L. Waltner** (71) of Hutchinson, Kansas passed away on May 10, 2017. He was born in Kingman, Kansas. He graduated 1963 from Pretty Prairie High School and from McPherson College in 1967 with a degree in Agriculture. In 1969, Alan, along with his wife **Lila**, started dairy farming on the home place at Pretty Prairie. He farmed until 1997. He then worked for NRCS until he retired. Throughout his many years he served on many boards: Reno Co. Extension, MCC boards, Pretty Prairie school board, as well as the Kingman County Club board. Alan is survived by his two sons and their wives, **Brent** and **Betsy**, and **Lance** and **Jennifer**; four grandchildren; and his companion, **Nancy McConnell**. He was preceded in death by his wife of 40 years, **Lila**. Memorials may be made with the MCC Relief Sale or McPherson College, both in care of Livingston Funeral Home.
- Weaver** **William C. "Bill" Weaver** (78) of Muldrow, Oklahoma passed away on June 21, 2017. He was born in Muldrow. He was a retired soil conservation technician for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, retiring after 40 years of service. He was also a retired Master Sergeant in the Air National Guard after serving for 32 years and was a member of First Baptist Church in Muldrow. Survivors are his wife of 55 years, **Nancy Carolyn Smith Weaver** of the home; a son **Randall (Jenni) Weaver** of Muldrow; a daughter **Kari Weaver** of Muldrow; 12 grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.
- Westom** Honorary Member and Senior Conservationist **Donald Westom** (93) of Portland, Oregon passed away peacefully on May 15, 2017 surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Minot, North Dakota. After high school graduation Don enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served as a Corporal in the South Pacific during WWII before being Honorably Discharged. In 1946 He returned home to the love of his life, **Lois Marie Walsh**. The two were married June 20, 1946 and had five children together. They celebrated 49 years together until Lois's passing in 1995. The family farmed for 12 years in Minot before moving to Portland, Oregon in 1959. Don worked various jobs before settling with the USDA Soil Conservation Service. He worked for 28 years until his retirement in 1987. He was a faithful member of St. Rose of Lima in Portland. He also served at St. Vincent de Paul and loved tending to the roses on the Church grounds. Don enjoyed CYO coaching, woodworking, gardening, spending time and working on his beach house, playing cards, record keeping, photography, making "Walmark" cards for family celebrations, and spending time and visiting with his family and friends. He was also a member of the Elks and American Legion. Don was preceded in death by his first wife, **Lois**; son, **James Westom**; and grandson, **Joseph Westom**. He is survived by his second wife, **Theresa**; sons, **Donn (Janice)** of Palm Springs, and **David (Suzanne)** of Vancouver; daughters, **Sheila (Clarence)** of Camas, and **Jerilyn (Charlie)**, and daughter-in-law, **Ellen** of Vancouver; 12 grandchildren; and 12 great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Rose of Lima Church or St. Vincent de Paul.
- Yenter** **James Milton Yenter** (84) of Estes Park, Colorado passed away in his home with his family present on May 4, 2017. He was born in Wray, CO. Jim served in the Army from 1952 until 1955 in Korea. Jim then attended Colorado State University in Ft. Collins and graduated in 1961. Jim resided in Alamosa, CO from 1962 to 1990, working for the Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Scientist and was awarded a certificate of appreciation from the USDA national cooperative soil survey program for mapping one million acres of soil in Colorado. In Jim's free time he enjoyed woodcarving, both hand and chainsaw, fixing and restoring antique tractors, gold panning, and gold dredging. Jim was predeceased by a son **Daniel**. He is survived by his wife of 58 years **Audrene Knotwell Yenter**, son **James Calvin (Jennifer Holder)**, daughter **Katherine Sue Yenter**, five grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. A service will be planned this summer. See www.allnutt.com to send a message to Jim's family.



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