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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired SCS and NRCS Employees

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Website: www.arcse.org

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

Doug Lawrence and Patty Lawrence

Although there is a lot going on in Washington, DC, we are focusing this edition of Notes from the Potomac on Farm Bill implementation and the fiscal-year 2019 budget. Have a great Spring.

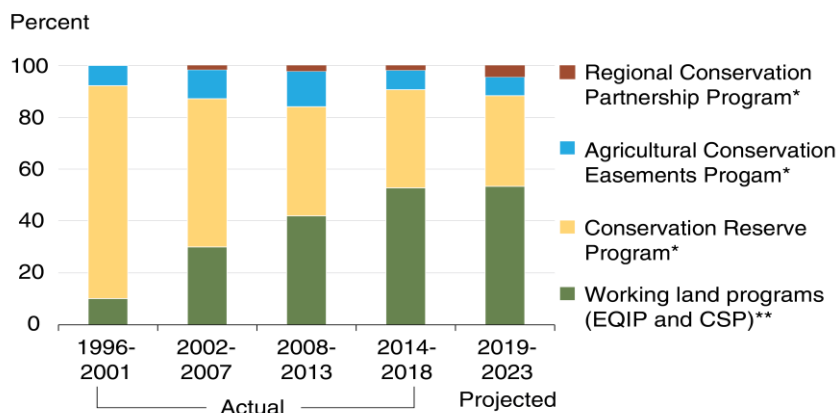
FARM BILL-

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Act) (<https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr2/BILLS-115hr2enr.pdf>) (PL 115-334) was signed into law on December 20th, 2018. You can read the Economic Research Service's summary of key changes here. These are the highlights associated with the Conservation Title:

- Increases overall mandatory funding for conservation programs by a total of roughly 2 percent during 2019-2023.
- Continues the working land programs' share of total conservation funding at the same level as under the Agricultural Act of 2014.
- Increases Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage cap from 24 million acres to 27 million acres by 2023.
- Increases funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).
- Provides \$300 million in direct annual funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP).
- Continues the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), but replaces the acreage cap with a funding cap, which results in reduced funding.

The following figure displays how the share of funding for the four major categories of conservation programs has changed over the past five Farm Bills.

Share of conservation spending by major programs and predecessors in the 2018 and previous farm acts



*Includes predecessor programs

**Includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and predecessor programs. The programs are shown together because they are combined in the CBO estimates.

Sources: ERS analysis of Office of Budget and Policy Analysis data for 1996-2017 and Congressional Budget Office Estimates for 2018-2023.

In addition, the 2018 Farm Act brought back an Adjusted Gross Income Limitation waiver for certain conservation programs on a case-by-case basis if the Secretary determines that it would

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES

protect environmentally sensitive land of special significance. That provision had been available prior to the 2008 Farm Bill and was incorporated into the Regional Conservation Partnership Program in 2014. Now it is accessible across conservation programs with, the exception of the Agricultural Management Assistance Program (7 U.S.C. 1524(b)).

The 2018 Farm Bill continued all major conservation programs, but also made policy changes, some notable, and all of which will require regulatory action.

Implementation: The 2018 Farm Bill authorized temporary administration of conservation programs under existing regulations through September 30th, 2019 and also allowed for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to operate under an announcement of program funding (APF) in 2019.

With the interim authority, NRCS is able to operate programs currently, and now has a scant seven months to complete the rulemaking process, a somewhat daunting task, given the complexities of rulemaking.

In addition to the specific program changes, the Farm Bill reaffirmed Congress' interest in streamlining program rules and simplifying participation in conservation programs along with other provisions for improving alternative funding arrangements, targeting programs for source water protection, and promoting regulatory certainty, among others (Sec. 2503). Many of which align with USDA's Farm Bill and legislative principles, and all of which will be considered in the rulemaking process (<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2018-farm-bill-and-legislative-principles.pdf>).

Listening Session: As part of this effort, on February 26th, USDA hosted a public listening session to obtain public input on the changes to existing programs implemented by the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Risk Management Agency. The public was notified of the session through a February 14th Federal Register notice (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-14/pdf/2019-02360.pdf>) that outlined key questions posed by three agencies (NRCS, FSA, and RMA). Over 900 individuals registered for the session, which was also live-streamed, and some 55 individuals presented public comments, over one-half of which were related to conservation programs.

The Session was hosted by **Under Secretary Bill Northey**. In his opening remarks he cast the Farm Bill as one of the most important pieces of legislation that Congress passes and that USDA has a responsibility to carry out this congressional intent. Mr. Northey also highlighted the challenges, noting that each farm is unique and USDA programs have to work effectively in essentially every circumstance across the country. He also highlighted his interest in stakeholder thoughts about how USDA can streamline and improve program delivery and enhance customer service; both of which are deeply held objectives for Secretary Purdue.

The Conservation part of the Listening Session was introduced by **Chief Matt Lohr** who provided a great introduction for participants on the key questions for the Agency (listed in the Federal Register Notice).

Unsurprisingly, conservation generated the greatest number of comments from the audience. Many comments were general support for the changes made by the Farm Bill, such as removing the requirement for an Agricultural Land Easement plan in the Agricultural Conservation Easement program, while others offered suggestions for implementation of specific provisions or recommendations for implementation partnerships. There were a healthy number of comments addressing all of the question areas outlined by NRCS. In addition, the new source water protection targeting provision (Sec. 2503(d)) was a major focus for comments, as were water quality opportunities in general through EQIP, CSP, and RCPP. Soil health demonstration pilots in CRP and soil health measurement in general across programs also received a great deal of attention. Many commenters identified cover crops and the relationship to crop insurance as a priority, both in Conservation and in Risk Management segments of the session. Outcome based measurements and reporting for programs in general and for grant recipients was another emphasis area. Several commenters highlighted program accessibility for historically underserved producers.

All presented comments were also provided in written form and additional written comments will be accepted through March 1, 2019. To submit comments, go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID USDA-2019-0001. Commenters are instructed to follow the online instructions for submitting comments. Comments received will be publicly available on www.regulations.gov. No information is available on any future listening session plans, or the availability of transcripts.

If you're interested in providing comments, NRCS is seeking public input in the following areas:

- Specific ideas to simplify program implementation and enhance customer service.
- Specific ideas on how NRCS can use its programs to support precision agriculture.
- Mechanisms to improve the targeting of financial resources to address resource concerns.
- The 2018 Farm Bill introduced a new incentive contract enrollment option for EQIP that provides for practice installment and annual payments. How should EQIP and CSP be used in conjunction with each other to prevent overlap and improve opportunities for producers to address resource concerns?
- The 2018 Farm Bill includes EQIP provisions for water conservation or irrigation efficiency practices that are available to States, irrigation districts, groundwater management districts, acequia, land-grant mercedes, or similar entities under a streamlined contracting process to implement water conservation or irrigation practices under a watershed-wide project that will effectively conserve water, provide fish and wildlife habitat, or provide for drought-related environmental mitigation, as determined by the Secretary. What issues or factors should NRCS consider when developing procedures to implement these provisions?
- Both CSP and EQIP have provisions for organic producers. How should the programs be used to maximize service to producers while avoiding overlap and competition between CSP and EQIP?
- The 2018 Farm Bill updated the Conservation Innovation Grants provisions to expand the list of eligible partners and focus a portion of the enrollment to on-farm conservation trials pursuing new or innovative conservation approaches. The term "new or innovative" is

defined as precision agriculture technologies, enhanced nutrient management plans, nutrient recovery systems, and fertilization systems; water management systems; soil health management, including systems addressing soil carbon levels; resource-conserving crop rotations; cover crops; irrigation systems; and any other conservation approach approved by the Secretary as new or innovative. What criteria should NRCS use to prioritize funding proposals defined as “new or innovative” approaches?

- The 2018 Farm Bill introduces new authority under ACEP—Agricultural Land Easements in the “Buy-Protect-Sell” provision (see section 2602 of the 2018 Farm Bill). Describe scenarios where you anticipate having a quality conservation easement that is legally effective under the “Buy-Protect-Sell” provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill.
- The 2018 Farm Bill modified the requirements for the non-Federal share provided by eligibility entities under ACEP Agricultural Land Easements. The Managers’ report indicates that the program should not be limited to entities that can provide a cash match. Further, the Managers’ report indicates that Congress does not intend for NRCS to reject cash matches entirely but broaden options available to eligible entities. How can NRCS ensure both equity for producers and flexibility for entities? (See House Report 115-1072 (<https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/hrpt1072/CRPT-115hrpt1072.pdf>) for the Managers’ Report, at the end.)
- For RCPP:
 - What are ways to streamline program administration and increase transparency?
 - How should NRCS prioritize partner contributions (financial and in-kind)?
 - The 2018 Farm Bill encourages NRCS and partners to move RCPP projects toward environmental, economic, and social outcomes-based reporting. What are ideas for doing so?
 - What are ways for NRCS to incentivize participation of historically underserved producers in RCPP projects?

A lot has to happen between now and September 30, 2019, but knowing the NRCS Farm Bill Team, we are certain that things are well in hand! We were told that the Agency is not yet authorized to release information on the schedule and timing for release of (what we assume will be) interim final rules for the programs, but that is expected to be available soon.

Appropriations—On February 15, 2019 Congress passed and the President signed an omnibus bill containing the remaining seven fiscal year 2019 appropriations bills. Earlier, on January 25th, a three-week continuing resolution was enacted to reopen the government, ending the 35-day partial government shutdown, the longest in American history. The other five appropriations bills had been previously enacted through two “minibus” spending packages before the start of fiscal year 2019.

The Private Lands Conservation Operations program, which includes Conservation Technical Assistance, Soil Surveys, Snow Surveys, and Plant Materials programs, received \$819,492,000 for fiscal year 2019. This was well above the \$669,000,000 requested by the President, but less than the \$858,000,000 provided by Congress in fiscal year 2018.

The Private Lands Conservation Operations sub-programs were funded as follows:

- \$726 million for Conservation Technical Assistance, down from \$754 million in 2018.
- \$75 million for the Soil Surveys Program, down from \$80 million in 2018.
- \$9.5 million for the Plant Materials Centers, about the same level as 2018.
- \$9.4 million for the Snow Survey and Water Forecasting Program, about the same level as 2018.

The conference agreement also provides \$150 million for Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (\$149 million was provided in 2018) and an additional \$10 million for the Watershed Rehabilitation Program (an estimated \$6 million was provided in 2018).

The conferees emphasized their support for the new Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area. And in order to fund FPAC, the conferees are directing the following funding shifts to FPAC: \$128,491,000 from the Farm Service Agency, \$70,801,000 from the Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and \$17,058,000 from the Risk Management Agency.

In addition to providing funding for NRCS discretionary programs, the conferees directed that no less than \$5 million shall be used to support cooperative agreements focused on innovative phosphorus removal strategies where agricultural runoff has contributed nutrients to a waterbody.

The conferees indicated that they are concerned about the number of staff vacancies at NRCS because unfilled state-level positions are creating delays in application approval and the expenditure of conservation funding. NRCS is therefore directed to provide a report no later than 90 days after February 15th, 2019, updating the Committees on staffing levels at each NRCS office across the country, by location, including vacancies that have remained unfilled for more than 6 months, plans to fill those vacancies, and the workload analysis that demonstrates the total number of employees needed compared to the national staffing cap.

The conferees reiterated their support for irrigation agriculture and encouraged NRCS to leverage all possible funding streams to support the expansion of on-farm irrigation in regions that have previously not had widespread use of irrigation systems, specifically in the Southeastern United States.



And finally, Sec. 771 of the appropriations act directs the Secretary to, not later than 180 days after February 15th, 2019, submit to Congress a report describing the ways in which conservation programs administered by the NRCS may be better used for the conservation of ocelots (which are native to the Southwest US) and any action taken by the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service relating to the conservation of ocelots.

Federal Employee Pay Raise—In the last issue of Notes from the Potomac we noted that there was a great deal of uncertainty associated with the 2019 federal pay raise. We have certainty now after Congress approved a 1.9% pay raise as part of the omnibus appropriations bill

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dana York

Spring is a Time for Change

What a “weather extreme” spring! Between the Polar Vortex and Rain, Rain, Rain here in the South we are certainly having an eventful start to spring.

New ARCSE Officers!

We are likewise going through big changes in your leadership at ARSCE. As you know, **Ron Marlow** has been the Secretary-Treasurer for over 10 years and is stepping down in March. He has been a guiding force behind the organization and we thank him for his service! Starting at various times we have three new officers: **Jack Carlson (Colorado) Secretary; Donna Beggs (Idaho) Treasurer;** and, **Paul Benedict (Virginia) Membership Chair.** We appreciate these three folks stepping forward to serve. You will be hearing from them in their various capacities over the next few months about where to send your dues, etc.

I also want to mention that **Melvin Womack** stepped up to be our Vice President for the East, so each of you from those states will coordinate your state news with him!

For now ARSCE is in good hands. If you have not already marked your calendar, the Annual Luncheon at SWCS will be July 29 in Pittsburgh, PA. See the notice below and plan to attend!

More on the new officers from **Ron Marlow**:

The Board has designated three individuals to fill positions recently created to fulfill the duties Ron Marlow has covered as Secretary-Treasurer and Membership Chair for over ten years. Short bios follow.

Jack Carlson, Secretary, Effective April 1st, 2019

Donna Beggs, Treasurer, Effective TBD

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair, Effective February 15th, 2019



Jack Carlson

Jack Carlson retired in 2008 following a 37+ year career with SCS/NRCS as field conservationist in California, PMC manager in New York, PM specialist in the Washington state office, ecological sciences staff leader at the Portland West National Technical Center, team leader and director of the Information Technology Center in Fort Collins, CO, and Chief Information Officer in NHQ. Since 2011, he has worked at Colorado State University in a natural resource modeling laboratory with the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Residing in Fort Collins, he and wife Vicki of 46 years frequently visit grandkids (and their parents) in Washington DC and Albuquerque.

Donna Beggs is from a rural area in the North Country of New York approximately one-hour South of Montreal. She has 30 years of accounting experience, including work for the nonprofit organizations Volunteers of America, Carl Vogel Center, and the North Country Girl Scout Council. Donna also created and managed the local North TX SWCS chapter website for three years and assisted with chapters in Maryland and Texas.

Along with her spouse, NRCS retiree **Cheryl Simmons**, Donna relocated to North Idaho to be close to family and the grandson. Donna enjoys reading and is an avid genealogist, tracing her family to the Mohawk Tribe of the Iroquois and the May Flower. Currently, she is a part time GED instructor with North Idaho College.



Paul Benedict

Paul Benedict retired in 2013 after 35 years of working with SCS/NRCS. He grew up on a dairy farm in Turlock California, the oldest of nine children. He attended Modesto Junior College and Cal Poly where he received a bachelor's degree in soil science. His career with SCS started as a soil scientist in Los Baños, CA in 1978. He went on to work on several California soil surveys in Bishop, Fresno, Edwards Air Force Base and Bakersfield, the last two locations as a project leader. In 1991 he became the area soil scientist in Pocatello, Idaho. In the 1995 restructuring of NRCS, when area offices in Idaho were eliminated, Paul applied for over 40 positions all around the United States. He was selected for the State Soils Specialist (Technical Soil Services) position in Little Rock, Arkansas where he handled hundreds of wetland appeals, reviewed soil survey manuscripts, and was a liaison with university and state government agencies. In 1999 he went back to California to be the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in the newly created area office in Riverside, California. Then in 2002 he was selected to lead the Northern Plains

Regional Soil Survey Office in Bismarck, North Dakota. In 2008 Paul became the Program Manager for the Soil Survey Division at National Headquarters, which later became the Soil Science Division, where he finished his career in 2013. Paul

has been married to his wife **Delena** for 36 years. They have two grown children (**Josh and Breanna**) and two grandchildren (**Alana and J Wolfe**). He enjoys gardening with heirloom vegetables, traveling and watching his grandkids grow. He is also involved with the Virginia Chapter of SWCS, his church and remains a registered professional soil classifier.

Mark Your Calendars: ARSCE ANNUAL MEETING- July 29, 2018

The Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees will hold its annual luncheon in the Brigade Meeting Room at the Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh on Monday, July 29 from 12pm-1:30pm with the social hour beginning at 11am. Luncheon speakers will include representatives from ARCSE, SWCS, and NRCS at the state and national level. The 2019 luncheon reservation form will be available by May 1st.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Diana Morse [New]

Email: morsediana@comcast.net

A Close-up of SCS-CCC Work in Missouri, 1935-1939



Thanks to the documentation of **Otto E. Griessel**, a former SCS engineer in Columbia, MO, we have a close-up of agency work with the Civilian Conservation Corps to install soil and water conservation practices on farmland in Moniteau County, MO.

Here are some highlights from his historical paper:

- During the month of June 1935 a company of about 160 Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees, under the supervision of three Army officers, and a staff of nine Soil Conservation Service employees moved into a camp in the west part of California, MO, for the purpose of working as a unit in carrying out the soil and water conservation program on the farms in Moniteau County.
- The Army staff (including a doctor) was responsible for the housing, feeding, clothing, and discipline of the enrollees, most of whom were 17 to 20 years old.
- The SCS staff, with the help of enrollees, was responsible for planning and installing the soil and water conservation measures on the farms.
- The titles and annual salaries of the SCS personnel were as follows: superintendent, \$2,600; agronomist and two engineers, \$2,000 each; and four foremen and auto mechanic, \$1,600 each.
- The superintendent was responsible for the SCS personnel in their association with the Army staff, enrollees, and general public.
- The Army provided the following: five barracks for the enrollees, smaller ones for each of the Army and SCS staffs, kitchen and mess hall, infirmary, bath and latrine, recreation hall, and a unit for the SCS office and Army office and storeroom.
- The SCS office was large enough for four desks, drafting table and chairs, all of which were built from scrap lumber left from building the barracks.
- An enrollee experienced in typing was assigned as an SCS clerk.
- The SCS barracks included nine small rooms, a complete bathroom, and a common room for visiting, reading, letter writing, and radio.
- For each small room, the Army provided a steel cot with mattress, sheets, pillow, and blankets. Scrap lumber was used in making chairs and a table for the common room.
- An orderly (enrollee) was assigned for making the beds, keeping the barracks clean, and maintaining a fire in the hot water heater in the bathroom and, during cold weather, a fire in the heating stove in the common room.
- It was optional whether SCS personnel stayed in the barracks or not. Some chose to live in town with their wives or families.
- The Army provided all personnel three hot meals a day cooked in the kitchen by experienced enrollee cooks and served in the mess hall by enrollees.
- Exception to this was when the crews were working on the farms; hot meals were delivered by Army trucks to each crew during the noon-hour break period from work.
- The cost of the meals for the SCS personnel was fifty-seven cents per day. They had the option of eating the Army food or eating at home with their wives and families.
- The SCS staff was provided with office supplies, surveying equipment, hand tools, five stake trucks with tool boxes, two pickups, two dump trucks, a 40-horsepower tractor, a 22-horsepower tractor with a blade, two small terracers, and a half-bag concrete mixer. The auto mechanic was responsible for maintenance of minor repairs on all of this equipment.
- Enrollees with experience were assigned special jobs such as cooks, office clerks, truck drivers, and survey crews.
- Most of the enrollees were turned over to the SCS staff from 8am to 4pm on Mondays through Fridays to assist in planning and installing the soil and water conservation practices. Each foreman was assigned a crew of 25 to 30 enrollees, including a leader and assistant leader and a stake truck with an enrollee driver.
- A farmer interested in having the SCS plan and install soil and water conservation practices on his farm would make an application to the County Agent.
- The application would be turned over to the SCS staff. The agronomist and the engineer would visit with the owner in order to look over his farm and discuss a conservation plan with him.
- There were no aerial photos or similar maps available at that time. One of the engineers, along with enrollees on the survey party, would make a base map of the farm by measuring the boundaries of all fields and location of all drainage channels.

- The agronomist and the engineer used the base map in making a soil map of the farm showing soil type, land slope, and degree of erosion. The agronomist took soil samples from the fields in order to determine the acidity of the soil and how much limestone was needed.
- Using the base map, the engineer and the agronomist made a land use map which showed the location of the proposed grassed waterways, terraces, diversions, ponds, and grade stabilization structures. A listing of land use and crop rotation for the fields was recorded.
- The conservation plan was reviewed with the farm owner, and if necessary, changes were made. The cooperative agreement was completed between the SCS and the landowner.
- The engineer made designs of ponds and grade stabilization structures such as drop spillways and chutes built out of concrete and masonry. Some designs had to be sent to the Area Office for approval.
- The engineer, with the help of the survey crew, laid out and supervised the building of the terraces and diversions. They also laid out the ponds, structures, and grassed waterways and supervised the building of them which was done by the foreman and their enrollees crews.
- Some terraces were built by trained enrollees using the 22-horsepower tractor and blade.
- Other terraces were built by trained enrollees using the small SCS terracers pulled by the farmer's team.
- The County Road District made a tractor and blade available for building terraces at a nominal cost to the farm owner.
- A small crew of enrollees worked in the rock quarry to produce rock aggregate for concrete structures and agricultural limestone. A trained SCS foreman did the blasting of the rock. The 40-horsepower tractor was used as power for a rock crusher which was provided by the Moniteau County Commission. The SCS dump trucks were used to transport the rock and limestone.
- The Army doctor took care of all minor injuries and illnesses of the enrollees. Those confined to bed were kept in the infirmary. The doctor also provided care of minor injuries and illnesses of SCS personnel without cost.
- In accordance with Army regulations each enrollee was immunized for smallpox, typhoid fever, and meningitis. Since the SCS personnel worked closely with the enrollees, Army regulations required that they also be immunized. This was done at no cost to the SCS personnel.
- In October 1939 the SCS staff, the Army staff, and the company of CCC enrollees as a unit moved to Marshall, MO, to provide the same type of conservation program in Saline County that they had provided in Moniteau County.

*Written in 1997, many thanks to those who shared this document with ARCSE,; **John McCarthy, Dave Rastorfer, and Ron Marlow.***

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer

New Members

Garrity, John	IL	Jones, Bob	AK
Green, Allen	CO	Keil, Stuart	CO
Jerome, Dwight	MI	Oja, Mark	MN

Status of 2019 Membership Dues and Additional Fee Payments

In years past ARCSE has sent a post card to those who have not paid their annual dues by March 1st. In 2017 and 2018 and again this year we have chosen to include in the March/April newsletter a list of members who have not paid their 2019 dues. We are also including a list of those who currently get the printed copy of the newsletter but have not paid the additional fee for the printed copy, giving them another chance to pay up or provide a valid email address for electronic news.

These lists are for the benefit of you, the member, and we are hopeful that our members appreciate the information. We were hesitant to disseminate the lists to a large audience but decided that the benefit far exceeds any down side. We hope that you agree, but if you feel otherwise, we do sincerely apologize for this action.

We are providing these lists for three reasons:

1. To reduce the number of post cards to be mailed.
2. To ensure that members get correct information as there may have been some labels printed with inaccurate dues payment information. Members often get dropped from the roles without realizing that they are being dropped and why they were dropped.
3. All board members are concerned that members be given ample opportunity to pay the additional fee for the printed newsletter or provide a valid email address so that they will not miss out on the newsletter. This action does that.

Please check the two lists below to see if your name is listed. To pay dues and/or additional fees please make checks payable to ARCSE and mail to: ARCSE, P.O. Box 7454, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454.

The 2019 dues have not been paid by the members listed below. To maintain your membership and receive the electronic newsletter, your dues in the amount of \$18 must be paid. If you believe this information to be incorrect, please send an email to arcse@cox.net stating such or call Ron Marlow at 703-503-9219.

First Name	Last Name
Joseph F	Ausan
Jim	Ayen
Bob	Ball

Jimmy R	Bell
Donald	Bowers
Roy E	Bright
David V.	Buland

James	Burgess
Sally	Butler
Frank N.	Carroll
Dana C	Chapman

Ronnie L.	Clark
Charles D	Clarke
James P	Clevenger
Ralph	Collins

Daniel L	Conrad	Rodney F	Harner	Christopher	Knudsen	P. Benjamin	Robinson, Jr.
Maurice	Cook	Robin	Heard	(Chris)		Aubrey C	Sanders
Raymond E.	Coombes	Johnnie F	Henry	Loretta	Krall	Garry L.	Schaefer
Donald L	Cooper	Albert (Hank)	Henry	Keith	Krause	Larry	Schardt
James M	Cooper	Betty	Holder	Hans	Krauss	Stanley R	Simmons
James A.	Cornwell	Rachel E	Hollins	Paul F	Larson	Richard F	Smith
Allen T	Crowe	Robert	Horton, Jr.	Cindy	Lauster	Donnel L	Stelling
Joseph	Csiki	Dennis L	Hurtz	Chuck S.	Lebeda	Steven C	Stover
Douglas W.	Deaderick	Joe A.	Icenhower	Mark	Lindflott	Arthur	Taylor
James L	Dove	Calvin M	Jackson	Anna R	Magee	Fred D.	Theurer
Jess C	Epple, Jr.	Dale E	Jakel	Steve	Manternach	Margaret	Theurer
Matthew H.	Fillmore	Donald R	Jantz	Bobby D.	McGee	Byron	Thompson
O Dale	Fischgrabe	Ottie G	Johnson	Billy W	Milliken	Alfred	Vander Stucken
Charles S	Fisher	David & Joan	Johnson	John S.	Moore	Mary	Wenberg
Penny L.	Galinat	Leonard	Jolley	Jon E.	Nestoss	Lee C.	White
Margaret	Gangl	Janie	Jolly	Albert	Neu	Robert L	Wilkes
John	Geter	Billy H	Jones	Edwin W	Olmsted	James	Williams
Ted	Gilbert	Harris	Judy	Janet	Perry	Norman G	Wolfrom
Wendell	Gilbert	David P	Kitchie	John S	Pirie	Kristi	Yasumiishi
Laurel	Grimsted	Norman R	Klopfenstein	Lane	Price		
William G	Hance			David C	Ralston		
				John M	Robbins, Jr.		

The additional fee of \$12 has not been paid by the members listed below who currently receive the printed newsletter. To receive future copies of the printed newsletter for 2019, the \$12 fee must be paid in addition to your annual dues. In lieu of payment, a member may provide a valid email address to receive the electronic newsletter. You may also check the above list to determine if your annual dues are due.

First Name	Last Name	Billy H	Jones	Roy L	Fox	Cecil N	Martin
Joseph F	Ausan	Loretta	Krall	Hector	Gonzalez	Lyle	Noblitt
Jimmy R	Bell	Janet	Perry	George T (Tom)	Haynes	Richard J	Patronsky
Frank N.	Carroll	John S	Pirie	Robert L	Hilliard	Dwight & Norma	Quisenberry
Joseph	Csiki	Stanley R	Simmons	Judith C	Hummel	Craig M	Right
Margaret	Gangl	Richard F	Smith	David O	Kile	Mike	Simmons
John	Geter	Marlene	Mechelke	Robert E	Kohnke	Raymond P	Sims
William G	Hance	Maralee J	Sarasio	Charles F	Lamborn	James F	Steinkamp
Rodney F	Harner	June	Bizaillion	Ernest E	Lincoln	Jimmy D	Thomas
Joe A.	Icenhower	Malvern	Allen	Douglas R	Lowe		
Donald R	Jantz	H Glen	Buchta	Francis	Lum		
David & Joan	Johnson	Charles D	Cheek				

ARCSE MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

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

ARCSE President's Award for Outstanding Community Service.

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

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

Qualifications:

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

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

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

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

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

ALABAMA

Earl Norton, ARCSE Representative

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The retirees who meet monthly in Auburn met on January 7th and February 4th for breakfast and conversation. As far as I could tell, we did not solve any international, national or local problems. However, I should add that it seems that most of our attendees seem to have a higher interest in explaining causes and cures for aches and pains than in solving other problems.

Several of our group have a continued and active interest in protecting our natural resources and continue to work in some capacity. **Jeff Dowdy, Mack Nelson, and Perry Oakes** are working part-time at the NRCS State Office in Auburn. Other retirees are working part-time for NRCS in other locations in Alabama: **Larry McCray**, Tuscaloosa; **Bennie Moore**, Luverne; **Steve Yelverton**, Andalusia. **Earl Norton and Perry Oakes** are working part-time with the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee whose Executive Director is retired State Conservationist **Bill Puckett**.

Earl Norton and Perry Oakes attended the recent conference of the International Erosion Control Association in Denver and were pleased to cross paths with **John Peterson**. It is always a pleasure to see John.

I promised in the previous newsletter some pictures from the 2018 Christmas Luncheon that the State Office hosted and shared with retirees and pictures from a recent monthly breakfast. **Charles Love** is our unofficial photographer and has provided some good pictures. I have the pictures, but will not provide them until I determine how to add a legend – maybe by the next newsletter.

ARIZONA

Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative

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Karl Klingelhofer Report, Tucson, AZ: I think I previously indicated I was having some health problems. And, what can you expect at 92. Still not playing tennis because of back problems and decided to sell my airplane. That is sad news, but the good news is I got what I paid for it three years ago. When I bought the airplane, they said I had to name it and I decided to call it the Spirit of '45. I did enjoy flying it.



Bud Bowers, Joe Knisley, Ken Cookson, Bruce Munda, Don Walters, Chris Cochran.

Ken Cookson Report, Tucson, AZ: Every Tuesday morning at the Old Times Café in Tucson, several AZ retirees, people who worked together in AZ, meet for breakfast and recall their times together. I joined them recently and had a very good time. Some were soil scientists, DCs, plant materials specialists, and soil conservation technicians. Some are members of ARCSE and hopefully others will soon join.

My wife, **Connie** and I (**Ken Cookson**), were on a Viking River Cruise of the Rhine River last October. We were in Cologne, Germany and were going to visit a Chocolate Museum when Connie tripped and fell. She was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital where x-rays showed she had fractured her pelvis in three places.

She was hospitalized for 41 days in Cologne, Germany where she was not only dealing with a fractured pelvis but also a sodium deficiency problem. The sodium deficiency was a major concern, and the doctors said it had to be brought up slowly to avoid any lasting effects.

During her hospital stay she lost a lot of strength. The pain medication she was given had very little effect so she was in considerable pain most of the time. By the time she left the hospital she was not able to stand on her own.

When the doctors decided that the sodium level had sufficiently stabilized, they thought she could be discharged to go home. They were, however, concerned about her weakened state and how well she would be able to travel on her journey home.

The travel insurance transportation team did a terrific job in making all the arrangements for us to travel home. She went by ground ambulance from Cologne to Frankfurt, Germany, 1½ hours. We flew on a Lufthansa 747 commercial airline from Frankfurt to Vancouver, Canada, a little over 10 hours. From Vancouver we flew on a private, two-propeller, Air Ambulance to Tucson, AZ, a little over four hours. From the Tucson airport she went by ground ambulance to the Northwest Medical Center where she was hospitalized for another 3 days and then admitted into the Inpatient Rehabilitation facility in the Northwest Medical Center for 19 days.

On December 15th she was discharged and was able to go home with me. She had been in a hospital and rehab facility for 63 days.

She is making good progress in her recovery. When we left the rehab facility they told us this is a marathon and not a sprint.

She has had excellent care throughout this ordeal in all locations. She is now getting out-patient physical therapy and responding well to this challenge. Hopefully in the very near future she will be able to walk on her own and get back to what she was like before the fall on October 13th, 2018.

CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

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Greetings and Happy New Year from California! California had a good turnout for our February Retiree Lunch get together.



Starting from the lower Left and going around the table, Jim Chapman, Ed Schmidt, Marilyn Hoppes, Ron Schultz, Pat Grover, Bill Ward, Arturo Carvajal, Ron Hoppes, Harold Honeyfield, Janet and Jack George

As retirees, we all come to expect or not be too surprised when we hear news that close friends of ours are now experiencing serious health challenges. Such was the case recently when a number of us learned that **Danny Maxim, Retired Civil Engineering Technician** was experiencing some serious health challenges including dementia. With his Daughter **Dani Maxim-Hughes** now overseeing his care, Danny is being taken care of in an Assisted Living Home in Elk Gove, CA. Danny has a long and colorful history going back to work in Arkansas, New York, and California with many close friends made along the way.

A number of Danny's close retiree friends have recently been able to reach out and reconnect with Danny by phone or personal visits including: **Ralph Mashburn, Bob Snieckus, Tom Smith, Tom Benson, Gary Bullard, Bill Ward** and numerous others. These phone calls and/or visits were all positive and uplifting for Danny and those reaching out to Danny.

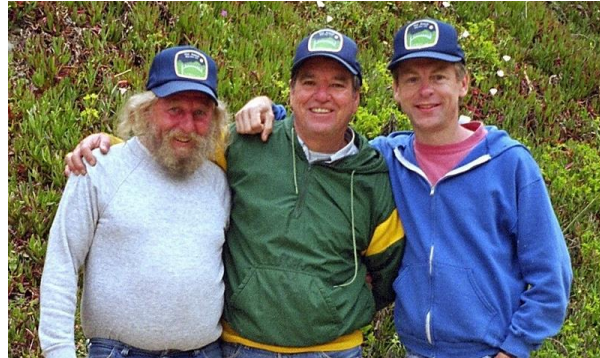
One particular visit and reconnection was noteworthy to share here. On February 8th, **Tom Benson and I (Bill Ward)** were able to see Danny and arrange a surprise phone call from Bob Snieckus. Tom Smith, Bob Snieckus and Danny were the closest of friends in California, sometimes referring to themselves as the "Three Amigo's."



Left, to right, Tom Smith, Danny Maxim, and Tom's wife Libby, from a "Steve's Pizza" SCS Gathering after work sometime around 1988

With a text message signal from Bill Ward to Bob Snieckus that morning, Bob called Bill's number. With the Speaker phone on, what followed was 30 minutes of wonderful conversation, reminiscing about work, old times, special friends and lots of opportunities for laughing as well. Danny and Bob were both in fine form, recalling fond memories of their annual "Full Moon in June Campouts" with **Tom Smith**, their passion for cars and other things they enjoyed together. Danny was clearly touched to hear Bob's voice and reminisce as we all did.

Many old photos were gathered and shared with Danny, bringing back fond memories, smiles and laughter. Following are some of the photos that were dug up and shared with Danny.



Danny, Tom and Bob, 1981, at Tom's Ranch, "Full Moon in June Annual Campout"

Tom Smith, retired Civil Engineer, continues to keep busy with his private Engineering Practice, RiverSmith Engineering, focusing primarily on engineering in the river environment. While a full-time job, RiverSmith does offer a very liberal time-off policy for its one employee. One of the most rewarding aspects of this job is working with the younger engineers in other companies and in Government.



The "Three Amigo's" Bob, Danny and Tom, 2013



Tom Benson, Danny and Bill Ward, 2/8/19 just prior to our phone Conversation with Bob Snieckus



Corvette recently driven By Tom Smith at a "High Performance Driving School" near Las Vegas NV

One of Tom's passions he shared with both Danny and Bob Snieckus was for "fast cars," Corvettes in particular. He is definitely still pursuing that passion. Tom recently shared with me that he had just returned from a couple days at the "Corvette Performance Racing School" in Pahrump, NV, near Las Vegas. He said he got to drive the Corvette in the photo below, similar to one he also happens to own. He said, "They are an amazing piece of technology, coupled with a ton of horsepower." Tom is now 74.

Update on Santa Monica Debris Basin

Santa Monica Debris Basin continues to protect the community of Carpinteria, as it went through several significant storm events that required mandatory evacuations in the nearby Montecito area with no significant problems. The recent storms moved some debris into the basin and the lowest of the three towers was buried. There is, however, plenty of capacity in the basin, and Santa Monica creek flows are safely being moved through the basin through the lowest tower and the principal spillway box conduit under the basin.

Progress has been made by NRCS and Santa Barbara County in their pursuit of Watershed Operations Rehabilitation funds from NRCS to improve the performance and maintainability of this vital PL-566 Watershed Project. An Engineering Investigation report has been completed by an NRCS designated committee and provided to **Greg Norris**, CA State Conservation Engineer. Upon final reviews and approval of this report by **Noller Herbert**, Director of Engineering, funding is expected to be approved for this work. **Tom Fayram**, Santa Barbara CO Deputy Director and **Doug Toews**, Retired NRCS Engineer and now Santa Barbara County Civil Engineer, made a trip back to Washington, DC to meet with the new NRCS Chief **Matt Lohr** and staff and review details of the proposed work and funding request for the basin improvements.

That's all for this time around folks. Best Wishes from California!

COLORADO

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Representative

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Welcome to new Colorado ARCSE members **Wendell Hassell** and **Stu Keil**! Wendell was a long-time plant materials specialist for Colorado and New Mexico, and National Revegetation Technical Advisor to the National Park Service before retiring in 1998. He has remained active in the field, in particular with a Colorado company supplying seed for revegetation projects in the Intermountain West and Great Plains. Stu, joining ARCSE as a life member, was involved in the SCS/NRCS consolidation of its information technology function in the late 1980s and early 1990s, coming to the IT center at Fort Collins as a computer specialist. He ably served in several capacities as the NRCS built out its IT infrastructure, retiring a few years back.

While on this topic, most continuing to work at the IT center in Fort Collins have transitioned from NRCS to the FPAC Business Center of the Food Production and Conservation Mission Area that includes NRCS, FSA, and RMA. As this has occurred, we note the 25th anniversary of the National Soil Information System (NASIS) and PLANTS (<http://plants.usda.gov>) developed and brought online by the NRCS Fort Collins IT Center in 1994. NASIS continues to support the National Cooperative Soil Survey, helping to sustain national and international leadership in this domain. PLANTS, heavily used within and beyond government, remains the authoritative online source of plant species information. These applications were designed and built by NRCS conservationists, many now retired, some ARCSE members.

We also note the passing of **Alvin (Butch) Jones** last November, acknowledging the conservation impact he made in western Colorado, including 30 years as district conservationist in Meeker.

INDIANA

Harold Thompson, ARCSE Representative

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Annual Indiana NRCS Retirees Lunch Meeting—Thirty-five Indiana NRCS retirees, including several representatives from the Indiana State Office, attended the informative annual Indiana NRCS Retirees' Meeting. Indiana's new State Conservationist, **Jerry Raynor**, updated us on our programs. Assistant State Conservationist, **Roger Kult**, provided us with updates on hiring,

the budget, agency priorities, and the Farm Bill. **Kevin Norwood**, Soil Survey Regional Director, updated us on the East Central Glaciated Soil Survey Region 11 (SSR 11) program. This program, as part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey program, provides technical leadership and support in the production, quality assurance, and delivery of scientifically based soil survey and ecological site inventory information.

Dan McCain received the 2018 Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees President's Award for Outstanding Community Service for his work with the Delphi Historic Wabash and Erie Canal Association. Dan led a team of Earth Team Volunteers for many years that helped with restoration of the canal. They built trails, managed invasive plants, and planted trees to reduce soil erosion in the canal park.

Geraldine Bond submitted this report on the IN meeting.

Congratulations to **Harold Thompson** on receiving the Marion County SWCD Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award at the District's 50th Annual Meeting. Harold was recognized for his 40-yr career with NRCS, service as an Earth Team volunteer in five counties, work in urban soil health and with watershed groups, training and mentoring of partnership employees, etc. Presenting the award: **Paula Baldwin**, SWCD supervisor and **John Hazlett**, SWCD Director.



Harold Thompson receiving SWCD Award

ILLINOIS

Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative

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We are saddened of the death of **Harold "Boge" Kraut** on January 14th. He was 105 years old. Harold was born, raised, worked, and retired in Calhoun County. We offer our sympathy to his six children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great great-grandchildren.

The retired SCS/NRCS employees in Illinois will gather for lunch and visiting on April 4th, 2019 at the Perkins Restaurant in Urbana beginning at 11:30am. All are welcome.

IOWA

Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative

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Don and Kay Peterson spent Thanksgiving week visiting their son, **Corey**, his wife **Lisa** and grandkids **Abby**, 9, and **Ben**, 7, in Cupertino, CA. The grandkids had some extra days off from school because of smoke from the fire north of Sacramento. It was a lot of fun to spend time with Corey and his family again.



Barb and Randy Stewart in the Big Apple



Barb and Randy Stewart in Arches National Park

In October, **Barb and Randy Stewart** visited Arches and Canyonlands National Parks in Utah to do some hiking. With the beautiful scenery and great sights, it was well worth their trip out west. In December, they made a trip to the Big Apple, New York City, to see the holiday lights and visit with friends. They saw a lot of beautiful sights but were glad to leave the crowds and get back to a more tranquil Iowa.

For many years, a group of retirees, current employees, and others have made an annual trip to Colorado for some skiing, snowshoeing, etc. The following fourteen folks participated in this year's event: **Jody Christiansen, Emma Muehlberg, Craig Muehlberg, Joel Muehlberg, Kim Muehlberg, Bob Dayton, Bill Dayton, Rick Knutson, Duane Miller, Jim Schneider, Joanne Bruce, Dale Bruce, Chris Davis, and Rick Rubenstein**. Thank you to Jody Christiansen for the following: "For our 34th trip on the annual Colorado Ski Event, we decided we needed a new experience. There were eight of us, out of 14, taking on the challenge to sleep in a yurt for one night – yes, it was very cool (-3 degrees) outside, and fun. We skied and/or snowshoed at Ski Cooper and Tennessee Pass the first day, then headed up to our two sleep yurts. We also ate dinner at the dinner yurt, about a half mile down the trail from our sleep yurts. The next day we took on a few more trails before heading back to Silverthorne and joined the rest of the gang. We may try it again some year, now that we know what to expect. As usual, it was a fun and relaxing trip and always great to hang out with friends."



Former NRCS employee Craig Muehlberg, his wife Kim, and their niece Emma warm by the fire outside the dinner yurt.

Future retiree **Norman Friedrich**, Civil Engineer (CADD/Technology) in West Union was selected this year as the NRCS Engineer of the Year and was the NRCS nominee for the Federal Engineer of the Year. **Norman** and his wife **Susan** just returned from Washington, DC where **Noller Herbert**, Director of Engineering, presented the award to him. Congratulations Norman!



In front of one of the yurts, Left to Right, Emma Muehlberg, Bob Dayton, Craig Muehlberg, Bill Dayton, Rick Knutson, Kim Muehlberg, and Rick Rubenstein. Photos by Jody Christiansen.

We missed **Jerry and Marian Stevens** at the Christmas party last November. Jerry was having some health issues. He had knee surgery last June. More work was done on it in November. A third surgery is scheduled to do a little more work on it. Recently, Marian fell and broke a knee cap so she is on the mend also.

Another health issue: On January 23rd, **Lyle Asell** had an aortic valve replaced. The new valve was fabricated from the muscles from around the heart of a cow. Lyle is recovering on schedule and is looking forward to being allowed to drive and to lift items that weigh more than ten pounds. He said he's getting really bored sitting around the house!

During the past few months, several employees have joined us as retirees. We welcome the following folks to our ranks: **Thomas Gust**, Soil Conservation Technician in Jefferson; **Dennis Perkins**, Soil Conservation Technician in Logan; **David Tackett**, Soil Conservation Technician in Clarinda; and **Connie Roys**, District Conservationist in Clarion.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative

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News-wise it has been very quiet in Kansas since the holidays. We have had some bitter cold, snowy, and icy weather. One morning my husband left the house for a luncheon and immediately came back into the house and announced that he had just picked himself up from the bottom of the front porch steps. Needless to say he did not go to the luncheon. Other than his pride and a couple of sore spots that developed, he was not hurt.

I don't know how the simple plans of our children visiting for the holidays could go so awry. It started with our granddaughter being involved in a car accident the week before Christmas. Thank goodness she was not seriously hurt; however, she had no desire to travel. This was followed by news that our grandson would be starting a new job in western Texas the first of the year, and his parents wanted to help him relocate during the holidays.

Then our daughter was stranded in Texas when a family pet needed emergency surgery and could not be left with a pet sitter for the holidays. Realizing that my husband and I would be alone on Christmas day, we decided to attend the community-wide Christmas dinner. You are directed to a table as you enter the building and within a few minutes are served a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. It takes many, many volunteers to prepare 200 turkeys, 800 pounds of potatoes, 800 loaves of bread, open 250 cans each of green beans and peaches, and show up to serve in the neighborhood of 4,500 meals on Christmas day.

There have been four recent retirements. **Janice A. Eylar**, Soil Conservationist in the Holton Field Office, retired December 28, 2018. After 25 years of service, **Gary M. Long**, Soil Conservation Technician in the Stockton Field Office, retired December 31, 2018. **Joyce A. Wade**, District Conservationist in the Erie Field Office, retired January 3, 2019, after 37 years of service. **Gary L. Parks**, Soil Scientist in the Hutchinson Area Office, retired January 31, 2019.

I am very happy to report that since the last newsletter, I have not learned of any deaths.

MAINE

John Simon, ARCSE Representative

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2019 January: Our Tuesday breakfast on January 8th was lightly attended by **Art Taylor, Judy and Charlie Boothby, and John Simon**. All of us were apparently in good health and good spirits, in spite of the all-day snowstorm!

On Tuesday January 15th Art Taylor and I went down to the Ag Trade Show in Augusta. We attended a talk by the Revision Energy solar energy company. Quite interesting to see the slides of some of the large agricultural solar systems and what the company sees ahead. We met **Paul Hersey** at the show, who gave us the update on NRCS and talked to **Rosetta** of Franklin county SWCD. She indicated that a bunch of big solar installations are going in at the Farmington area. **Bussy York's** farm is one site. Bussy and seven other organic dairy farmers got a notice that in six months their dairy will no longer accept their milk. Bussy sold some cows and kept twenty or so to sell as local milk. Hang in there Bussy!

Last Friday **Charlie** called me to say that **David G. Unger** of Castine, ME passed away last Thursday the 17th. Some of the folks in the D.C. area probably knew of David. He attended one of our breakfasts a few years ago to introduce himself. Watch for his obit in the next monthly report.

2019 February: It was a beautiful sunny day on Tuesday the 12th as six happy souls attended the breakfast. Attending were **Art Taylor, Judy and Charlie Boothby, Chris Jones, Tom Smith, and John Simon**. On the following Wednesday, the 13th we got 8 inches of snow to keep us occupied. As of today, Friday the 15th, we had 5,047 heating-degree days (the long term average for Bangor is 5,062 for this date) out of a total heating season of 7,000 HDD, so we are 71% through winter. Only 29% left, yahoo!

Tom Smith drove up to Bangor from Portland for our breakfast. Tom and I go back many years to our days in the Lewiston FO in the 80s and 90s. We have many fond memories of working together on farms, for sure. Tom was going to stop by at his Winslow farm on his way back to Portland. Tom indicated he has been helping lately at a local soup kitchen in the Portland area and finds it interesting, to say the least.

Chris Jones also helps out at the Hampden Food Bank sorting out the tons of material donated by stores and individuals so they can be shipped to the food kitchen throughout the state.

Heard from **Joe Bertolaccini** who is unable to attend our breakfasts for health reasons. Joe is not feeling well. He said hello to all.

Art had to leave early but did say that his solar panels and heat pumps are doing just fine. On our way back from the Augusta Ag. trade show in January Art and I talked about large solar arrays and especially the one in Hampden. Using google you can find it at N 41 deg 44' and 24.44" and W 68 deg 57' and 9.83". On dropping Art off at Dysarts, we noticed a new large solar array in the field behind the White House Motel near Dysarts. Haven't yet looked at Google for it, as the array looks awfully new.

Charlie Boothby reminded the group that he and **Judy** celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary on February 8th. Congratulations to you both!

Upon my asking how their two sons were doing, Judy informed me that they had lost their 51-year-old son last November. So sorry for such a great loss to the family. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. I am sure it was devastating to the family. All parents I am sure feel that we should not outlive our kids. Charlie was able to find the obituary for David G. Unger who died on January 17th. I sent the obit to ARCSE for the next report. David was the associate Chief of the SCS years ago and retired in Castine, ME.

David was a Town Selectman for years, was in the town band and very active in the community. When David was in DC, he hired Charlie Boothby out of Maine for his NACD position in DC many years ago.

Bob Wengrzynek sent me an email informing me that **Larry Long** (91 years old) is now in the VA home in Bangor. He has advanced Parkinson's disease.

God bless all till next time.

MICHIGAN

Bill Fude, ARCSE Representative

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A gathering of retired Michigan snowbirds was arranged by **Bill Frederick**, who retired as MI State Soil Scientist and now resides in Florida. We met for lunch and lots of conversation at the Harborside Restaurant in Winter Haven, FL on February 19th.



Michigan retirees, clockwise, left to right. Ken and Kathy Kelly, Gay Lynn and Doug Kinter, Deb and Dave Burgdorf, Bill Fude, and Irene and Bill Frederick

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

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Left to right: Rita Fitzgerald, widow of Warren Fitzgerald, former State Conservationist in Illinois, Rose Lowery and John Lowery both retirees from Michigan, Steve Black and Licia Black, Hugh Curry and Sharon Curry, Dennis Alexander and Debra Alexander, Janice Stover and Steve Stover (NE).

The Columbia area retirees met for their quarterly breakfast on Feb. 13th. Those in attendance were: **John and Carol McCarthy, Rich and Marjorie Koenig, Frank Miller, Jean Herman, Ed Smith, Odie Swanegan, Jerry Edwards, John Turner, Gail Sallee and Dave Rastorfer**. The next breakfast will be held on May 8th at Denny's in Columbia. These breakfasts are not only for the Columbia area retirees. All SCS/NRCS retirees are invited. We would welcome any visitors.

Dennis Shirk: We got to experience the big snow storm that hit Columbia and north Missouri. Our daughter and son-in-law were on a mini vacation to Washington State, so we got to enjoy the 24 inches at Hallsville, staying with the grandkids and farm sitting. We had ice yesterday (2/8/19) and it was slicker than greased owl poop. I got the chores done but had to use a pitchfork as a walking stick. Around noontime, it warmed up a bit, and the ice started to melt. Had a nice ride recently at Kaintuck. Noting else to report. See ya down the trail.

Jim Rickman (native Missourian now in Texas): We are traveling a lot. Going to Africa next month and to Japan in August. My son and I are electrifying a pole barn, and so far we have avoided electrocution of ourselves. However, I got into a few spots that I wasn't certain I could uncoil from, and have discovered the miracles of glucosamine. I know we are all aging at the same rate, but it doesn't seem that way sometimes. I hope everyone is enjoying the end game as much as I am. Keep in touch, and if anyone can't tolerate the weather in Missouri, you are welcome to come visit **Jere** and me in Texas - if we are home.

Bill Pauls: I put my nose in the trade wind breezes of Maui, sipped my umbrella drink, and headed off for more beach bunny bikini\clad\chickee watching/whale watching (definitely not in bikini's) and a face-to-face sea turtle snorkeling adventure to assuage my sadness. OK, I'm better now.

We have returned from Maui, and marathon #105 is in the books (pretty slow, and it got a little warm by the end). But the course was gorgeous, great ocean views the whole way. Twice around our beautiful 50 states is now complete. Starting on round three around the states in Little Rock, AR on March 3rd. Actually that will be state #3 because I've already done two in MO and OH.

We're watching "our" lake/dock/golf course/cabin from our perch high up in the Ozarks, and all seems copacetic. Doing my running in the hills amongst the deer, mountain lions, black bear, neighbor pit-bulls and yorkies and other assorted Ozark varmints and critters. OK, I personally haven't actually seen either a mountain lion or black bear myself, yet, but I do "hear tell!" We are happily doing volunteer work, going to G'kid ballgames of all sorts in and around STL, and resting up for the big 2019 spring and summer season at the Lake of the Ozarks. If you're in our hood, stop by anytime. We'll hoist a beverage, go fishin', go for a boat ride, or simply watch the boats go by. It's all good, and so is LIFE! God bless You'ins! You all are always in our thoughts and prayers.

Paula Price: Today is just another ice, snow, rain day in NW Missouri. The snow finally all melted and now the ice is thick on my driveway, and I'm thrilled that I retired December 14th. I don't have to think about getting to work in these messy weather days. I've a new internet/Wi-Fi/phone provider and have watched too many Netflix movies since Christmas. Also, I've reintroduced myself to the joy of book reading. My new venture is becoming a volunteer at Mosaic Life Care (hospital) gift shop that starts Wednesday morning.

With **Alan's** passing, our family experienced many firsts through the holidays. His mind was sharp to the end, but his body was so wasted there was no way we could have expected him to try yet another chemo at the 10-year mark. However, the loss was huge and the adjustments are, too. One just doesn't cast aside 45 years of marriage! Andrew and I have a lot to be thankful for to include many good memories.

It was nice to reconnect with **Carolyn and Buck Burch** this fall on a week end trip to Columbia. I plan to spend more time with them when the weather straightens out. Our four-year-old twins are participating in a basketball clinic that I got to watch and participate in just a little last Saturday. They now know I can dribble a basketball! **Jordin**, who is now 10, is becoming quite the volleyball team member. I've enjoyed her games in North KC this winter. She doesn't yet know I can also play volleyball! Speaking of Florida, my friend **Mary Lou** invited me to join her on a bus trip to Florida for two weeks. We are leaving this Friday the 15th and returning the 28th of February. I won't promise I'll send you a postcard so just know I'm enjoying myself.

Mike Blaine: Hello all from the frozen hills of Knox County! We are having quite a winter here. Ice, snow, really cold temps then more ice! We are burning a lot of firewood. The fireplace converted to wood stove has a fire 100% of the time! Pam and I really like the wood heat. We heated with wood all the years we lived in SEMO, WV, and now NEMO. We are blessed with a couple of guys that go to church with us. While we took our Christmas trip to see grandkids (and kids too), they cut, split, and stacked enough wood for this year and some for next year too! I was just dumbfounded when we got home and I saw that stack of wood!

In the last year we completed a two year process of replacing all our windows and the two external doors with ones much better for keeping heat in and cold out. The house is much warmer this year. My plans for the coming year include installing solar panels to pretty much eliminate our electric bill and maybe installing a ground source heat pump. Those things, along with still puttering on the farm, will take all the time I'll have available this year. I'm looking forward to spring so I can get to work! Best wishes to all.

Alton Taylor: (From Texas) I went by the FSA office to sign papers. I was on 82 and noticed trucks loaded with picked round bales of cotton. Now I knew it has been too wet to pick cotton here in weeks so what goes? Kansas made a bumper crop with limited gins so they were headed to Texas gins. If anyone wants to start growing cotton you have two choices here: one, go it on your own and pay \$500 for one of those little bags of seed and all the other things needed; two, sign up with the former owner of Pilgrims chickens. This way you get a set cents per pound produced and they take care of you as they did for chicken growers. You provide the land, normal farm equipment needed to produce the crop. They do the rest including harvest,

hauling, ginning, marketing and the tech support from beginning to the end. I will spend a few weeks in AZ this spring. Otherwise will stay pretty close to home. If ever on I-35 and cross Red River, I'm just 30 minutes ahead. I can show you development eating up farms fast. I think they are making room for California deserters.

On a sad note, we were Saddened to learn of the passing of **Clark Eacker**, former Area Conservationist at Warrensburg. Our sympathies go out to Clark's family. Obituary at: <http://carsonfuneralhome.com/book-of-memories/3734237/Eacker-Clark/service-details.php>.

MONTANA

Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative

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Montana Big Sky Report

Doreen Peters Report: We are enjoying the warmer weather in Wellton, AZ. Ha! Ha! Our kids and family joined us, and we all went to Disneyland and Sea World. No grass growing under our feet in retirement!

Gooby Ranch Report: After the grain is harvested, the geese move in to eat the grain that fell on the ground. In order to have a good grazing rotation so the geese properly fertilize the grain field, Mary Ann has 12 goose decoys she sets out to draw the geese into a certain area of the field. In order to determine how far to move the decoys, I had Mary Ann get some rebar and weld it so it was a square yard. Then she cross-welded the rebar to identify the square feet.

She took the rebar measuring device down and did a study of how many goose droppings there were in each square foot. There is sufficient grain on the ground to where there should be four goose droppings per square foot. Every day she moved the decoys and she measured the droppings to determine if the geese were fertilizing the field the same amount each day so she could figure out how far to move the decoys. Finally she knew how far to move the decoys each day to get the area properly fertilized. Mary Ann is a dedicated rotational grazer. The next day it snowed and the geese left. Oh well, Mary Ann did some good research.

The other night at 3am Mary Ann woke me up. The house was totally full of smoke. We checked to see what the problem was, and the smoke was pouring out of the stove. The chimney was plugged. It was 10 degrees below zero, and the wind was blowing 45 miles an hour. Mary Ann got all her winter clothes on and her tools plus her headlamp, so she was ready to clean out the chimney. I got all my clothes on and headed out to get the ladder so Mary Ann could get up on the roof. I held the ladder so it wouldn't blow over. Mary Ann climbed up on the roof and crawled over to the chimney. She wrapped her legs around the chimney so the wind wouldn't blow her off the roof. It took both hands to get the chimney cap loose. As soon as Mary Ann got the chimney cap loose, it blew off the chimney and the soot that plugged the chimney exploded out of the chimney and covered Mary Ann. Just then a big wind gust came and blew Mary Ann off the roof.

I ran around the house to see what happened, and Mary Ann had lit on a snow drift about 100 feet from the house. She was lying on the snow drift on her back waving her arms and legs trying to get the soot off. After she got cleaned off we headed to the house so Mary Ann could get the fire going and I could get back to sleep. The next day there was still a sooty snow angel in the drift.

NEBRASKA

Norm Kempf, Jim Culver, ARCSE Representatives

Emails: nkempf@neb.rr.com, j4culver@aol.com

The Lincoln SCS/NRCS Retirees Club January meeting was called to order by President **Norm Helzer**. There were 20 present; **Jim Culver, Louie Buller, Paul Bartlett, Gus Dornbusch, Joe Calder, Dana Snyder, Harold Klaege, Bob Engel, Steve Scheinost, Norm Helzer, Val Bohaty, JoAnne Thiele, Donna Dornbusch, Norm Kempf, Sylvia Kempf, Dave Camper, Chris Chapman, Gary Muckel, Arlis Plummer, and Jim Harder.**

Arlis Plummer retired December 31st and attended the retirees' breakfast for the first time.



JoAnne Thiele, our Vice-Chair, and Norm Helzer, our Chair discussing agenda items for the February meeting.

Rod Harner is currently in a nursing home in North Platte. **Harold Klaege** visited the grandchildren over Christmas. **Jim Harder** visited his daughter and family in Texas over Christmas, then traveled to Florida to see his 8th grade grandson perform at the Navy Sea Cadets, then on to South Carolina to visit other relatives before traveling home. **Norm Helzer** went to Francis King's 98th birthday party.

Norm Kempf reported that ARCSE is recruiting new officers. **Harold Klaege** talked about NARFE, National Association of Retired Federal Employees, an organization to lobby for retiree benefits. Everyone is encouraged to join and to contribute to the Capitol City Chapter of NARFE. Contributions can be made at Wells & Fargo. He handed out applications to join NARFE.



Entering: Dave Camper, Sylvia Kempf and Norm Kempf. Standing and seated Val Bohaty, Norm Helzer, Steve Scheinost, and Harold Klaege.



Val Bohaty is welcoming Arlis Plummer, our new member who retired December 31, 2018. Arlis was a Hydraulic Engineer on the NRCS-USDA Nebraska State Office Engineering Staff.



Norm Kempf, standing, discussing the need to recruit new officers for ARCSE. Around table on left: Norm Helzer, Steve Scheinost, Bob Engel, and Harold Klaege. Right side of table: Lou Buller, Paul Bartlett, Gus Dornbusch, Joe Calder, and Norm Kempf.



Harold Klaege, standing, discussing the NARFE, National Association of Retired Federal Employees current activities as a result of closing Federal offices due to lack of appropriated funding. Left to right: Steve Scheinost, Bob Engel, Harold Klaege, Dana Snyder, and Dave Camper.

Kay Westerman will come again this spring when the weather is better. **Jim Culver** handed out the 2019 Soils Planner calendar to those who wished to have one. Norm Helzer had perfect attendance during 2018 and received a free breakfast. There was no meeting in February due to bad weather.

NEVADA

Elizabeth Warner, ARCSE Representative

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Nevada had several retirements in the past few months:

Gary Roeder, assistant state conservationist for programs, retired after 38+ years on Jan. 3, 2019. **Vinh Hoang**, state conservation engineer, retired on Feb. 1, 2019. He retired due to medical reasons with 27 years of service. **Debra Hoffmann**, area conservationist, retired with 30 years of service on Sept. 28, 2019. **Carmella Irwin**, assistant state conservation engineer, retired on 9/29/18 with 34 years of service. **Lex Riggle**, district conservationist, Fallon, retired on 10/13/18, with 38 years of service.

OHIO

Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative

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ACES employee **Charles Gray** kindly shared the sad news of the passing of retired Soil Conservation Service employee **Donald Behner** with whom he had worked.

"Don was the SCS Soil Conservation Technician in Mahoning County from about 1951 to his retirement about 1984 or 85. He was probably one of a group of SCS technicians hired to initially staff newly formed SWCD's in the late 40's to early 50's, after DCs were assigned to assist the SWCD. I worked with him from 1977 until his retirement and remained friends thereafter. In the early days, most county offices had a "one-county" SCS DC and Soil Conservation Technician. SWCD staff was usually limited to a part time secretary and a budget that covered SWCD postage. Don was well respected and left his mark upon the land."

OKLAHOMA

Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative

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The Friday What-A-Burger Group. Left to Right: Dwain Phillips, Roland Willis, Keith Vaughn, Darrel Dominick, Jimmy Hill, Les Conner, Bill Littlefield, and Norm Smola.

The next meeting for Oklahoma Retirees is scheduled for Friday, April 26th, 2019, at the Golden Corral Buffet, 520 South MacArthur Blvd. in Oklahoma City. The doors will open at 10am. We invite all former SCS/NRCS employees from Oklahoma and other states to join us. No reservation is required.

To see more information about Oklahoma Retirees take a look at our website at joepad.com. Retirees find it quite helpful in our effort to keep them informed. This website also has a posting of the attendees, minutes, and pictures from each of the semi-annual meetings.

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

Email: don.stettler@comcast.net

The Oregon retirees met for their quarterly lunch on January 23rd at the Peppermill in Aloha. The average low January temperature for the Portland area is 36 degrees F. While much of the country was under siege with low temperatures, ice, and snow because of a Polar Vortex we woke up to a morning with a balmy low of 50 degrees F. A wonderful day to be out and about.

The group welcomed **Don Leach** who was attending the retiree lunch for the first time. About a year ago Don moved to Hillsboro after living in Astoria for many years. Not so much horizontal rain for him anymore. **Frank Anderson**, a luncheon crasher, was also welcomed. Frank initially thought he was joining the Aloha Business Association monthly lunch. Turns out he was either a couple of weeks late or a few weeks early. Others attending included **Clifton and Marva Jo Deal**, **Jack Kanalz**, **Dick Verboort**, **Eldena VanderZanden**, **Don Leach**, **Dick and Kathy Sylvester**, **Leland Saele**, **Gary Formanek**, **Gene Sturdevant**, **Ralph Wadleigh**, **Beth Zetter**, **Pat Smith**, **Joe Sahlfeld**, **Terry Mitchell**, **Joe Sahlfeld**, **Bunny Leuthold**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**.



Beth Zetter, Gene Sturdevant, and Ralph Wadleigh

News shared with the group included **Terry Mitchell** telling us she is being her busy self. **Bunny Leuthold** told us she is working part-time at The Springs at Tanasbourne, an assisted living facility. Asked if she would like to live there, Bunny said it would be very hard, having lived in rural Washington County for so long. Like Terry, **Pat Smith** told us she is also busy. **Dick Verboort** said he is busy being his wife, **Theresa's**, agent. Her recently published book, **The Communing Tree**, is being considered for a movie. **Leland Saele** recently found a non-functioning Keurig coffee maker that had been stashed away. Since he always enjoys finding out what makes something tick, he decided to see if he could repair it. He was amazed at all the circuit boards, piping, and valves it contained. He did manage to find what was wrong and make the repair. Problem was that he misplaced one part he has yet to find.

Like many of us, **Ralph Wadleigh** is also busy. We congratulated **Gene Sturdevant** when he told us that he is having a big year, turning 90 and celebrating his seventh wedding anniversary. Gene also enjoys reminding me of the farmer who announced at a public meeting we were both attending that he would shoot me if he ever caught me on his property. That was during my project engineer days. **Beth Zetter** is enjoying a beaver that has taken up residence in the creek that borders her and **Butch's** property. **Dick and Kathy Sylvester** are finishing their garage to serve as a shop/studio. **Eldena VanderZanden** told of her husband's feat of killing 69 gophers.



Clifton and Marva Jo Deal

Clifton and Marva Deal are enjoying the success of a grandson completing the Navy's pharmacy training. They plan to go to Texas for his graduation. **Gary Formanek** is still up and going. **Joe Sahlfeld and Beckie** recently vacationed in Mexico. **Jack and Geneal Kanalz** celebrated their 60th anniversary with a Mediterranean cruise, visiting Italy and Spain. They were especially taken with a tour of Pompeii. Congratulations to Jack and Geneal!

The spring quarter lunch is scheduled for April 24th at Clackamas, The Old Spaghetti Factory. Watch your email for detail.



Dick Verboort and Don Leach



Dick and Kathy Sylvester



Pat Smith, Bunny Leuthold, and Terry Mitchell



Eldena VanderZanden and Leland Saele



Joe Sahlfeld and Gary Formanek



Lunch crashed Frank Anderson, and Jack Kanalz

PENNSYLVANIA

Bill Bowers, ARSCE Representative

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and Timothy Murphy, vindemurph@verizon.net

Two pillars of conservation for many years retired at the end of 2018: **Tom Sierzega**, Supervisory District Conservationist, Greensburg; and **David Schaffer**, Supervisory District Conservationist, Perkasio. Tom had over 42 years of service, and Dave had over 41 years of service. Congratulations to both of you and welcome to the world of retirement!

I have been getting some questions on the Senior Conservationist recognition by the ARCSE. You need to have reached 83 years of age and complete the questionnaire on the ARCSE website (or I can email it to you). Hope to see more Pennsylvania folks who have reached this milestone receive this recognition!

Fred Bubb's request for stories about those who were the first WUC's or had a hand in getting Conservation Districts started, has generated several great responses. Thanks for dusting off some of the cobwebs and telling your story and accomplishments. Let's hear some more stories of successful or at least humorous activities from the "good old days."

Don't forget to put **September 15th–16th, 2019** on your calendar for our meeting in the **Hershey** area. The highlight will be a tour of the **Antique Automobile Club of America Museum** just north of Hershey.

I hope 2019 has been good for all so far, and remember spring will be here before we know it.

Jim Cropper reports that he and **Maria** have moved to a new home about a half mile from the old home in Greensboro, NC. Their new address is 4203 Tallwood Drive, Greensboro, NC 27410-4523. We liked the old neighborhood, but disliked going up and down stairs. Nicely landscaped as most lots are in Greensboro, but easier for Jim to maintain.

Don and **Shirley Lindsey** "are still chugging along. Busy as usual and enjoying life! Since Punxy Phil has forecast an early spring, we are sure he is right. That was Saturday and today is Monday and the high has been ~58 degrees F here on the MD border. Our birds didn't get the message, though. They are still emptying the feeder at record speed!"

Dave Schaffer, newly retired, says "I've seen a few old newsletters, and it's nice to see some familiar names from the past. Only this group would understand what a great career we were blessed with."

Harold Wingard says he and **Marie** are watching the winter progress by keeping five bird feeders filled and attending their two granddaughters' basketball games. "Back in November I accompanied five other hunters to Walter's Run in Clinton County for opening day of bear season. My son Gary was lucky enough to harvest a bear by 8am the first morning. It was his third PA black bear, all taken in the same Walter's Run area.

At age 82 I found navigating the 10 inches of snowfall in the woods to be at a much slower pace than it would have been 30 years ago.

At dusk on two consecutive evenings, we were privileged to witness and photograph a herd of 46 elk coming down out of the woods to graze on a large flat open area just north of the Alvin R. Bush Dam in Kettle Creek State Park. We were within 150-200 yards of some of them. I never thought I would be able to see such a sight in Pennsylvania!"



Alan and Judy Wood on a round-the-world cruise



Iguazú Falls, Argentina



Alan and **Judy Wood** started a round-the-world cruise on January 3rd. On Alan's 70th Birthday they will be in the Falkland Islands, then on to the Pacific, Australia, Africa, and ending in London in May. While in Argentina they did a special trip to Iguazú falls.

We were blessed with a visit from our good friends from Massachusetts, **Jeff and Ann Perchak**. Jeff worked with SCS there many years ago and helped me get into bee keeping in 1979. It's great to have friends that are so easy to reconnect with.

Leigh continues her working career at FIS, and we spend some time together with her and **Matthew** at our cabin in Tioga County.

Don McCandless writes that he and **Shirley** still live on the 110-acre farm they purchased in 1960 while he was an Engineering Specialist working out of the Mercer field office. Their three children live in PA, NC and CA; and they have ten children and five grandchildren living in PA, CA, GA, NYC and VA. They enjoy spending time with their large scattered family, but due to Shirley's health issues they are not able to travel as much as they once did. So far six of their grandchildren have graduated college and two are currently in college.

Shirley is on her second heart defibrillator, has endured open heart surgery, kidney dialysis, and five cysts on her pancreas which were not cancerous. She continues to be active in church choir and ladies UMW.

Don has had excellent health all his life and still enjoys hunting, fishing and camping with a travel trailer. He did not get his buck this year but harvested a large fat doe. This was his 73rd year of deer hunting and says he has only missed opening day of rifle deer season about four times. Most of his hunting is on their farm or nearby.

Don has been retired for thirty years and gave up full time farming in 1997. One farm was rented out and the other one was in Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program for twenty years. Both farms are now rented out. The original farm he was born and raised on was sold in 2002.



Tim and Gina Murphy dogsledding in Yellowstone

Tim and Gina Murphy enjoyed a week in and around Yellowstone National Park, cross country skiing, touring the park on snow coaches, and dog sledding, which was the most unique part of the trip. The park roads are not plowed in winter, and vehicle access is limited to snow coaches and snowmobiles. It really is a winter wonderland with its geothermal features. The temperature was in the 20s and 30s there while PA was in the deep freeze. It was great to get away between AARP tax training and the start of tax season, to see the wonders of creation without the summer crowds.

Two issues ago, **Fred Bubb** asked to hear from anyone who was the first Work Unit Conservationist (WUC) in a new conservation district. **Merv Skiles'** response in the Fall 2018 PA Bugle prompted **Fred Scheutz** to write the following:

"In March of 1969 Merv Skiles and I were re-assigned to Southeastern Pennsylvania, he as District Conservationist for Bucks County and I as Project Engineer for the newly created Collegeville Project Office. During our house hunting adventures we shared a room at the Colonial Village Motel in Doylestown. The Neshaminy Creek Watershed had just become operational.

Hursh Boyd and **Ralph Matticks** thought this warranted their trip to the watershed to show us how to line up our ducks to make sure the program got off to a good start. It just so happened that our training session began in our motel room that had a large picture window overlooking a lawn on which was situated a pond. This pond attracted a lot of noisy ducks. As our lesson droned on, Hursh must have noticed my inattention as I looked out the window. When he asked what I was thinking, I quickly responded "I'm just lining up my ducks." Our classroom session ended.

We must have absorbed some of the instruction. Ten of the twelve projects (eight dams and two park facilities) were installed in Bucks County over a 14-year period." Sadly, we learned of Merv's passing in the November ARCSE newsletter.

Rollin Swank said "The comments in the last History Corner brought back many memories. I was one of those attending the intensive training session mentioned by **Phil Sheets**. I was in Schuylkill County being trained by **Jim Lesley**. Had only eight months experience in SCS when **Ivan McKeever** called me into the State Office. He told me I had been selected for the WUC position in Brookville, which included Jefferson County and Clearfield County. There was no applying for positions at that time. He expounded on the potential of this position. I answered that potential meant possibility but not reality. He just looked at me without speaking for five minutes. It seemed like five hours. I didn't get fired, but I didn't get promoted. I learned to get along more amicably with Ivan later in my career, mostly by keeping my mouth shut.

Soil Conservation Technician **Henry Deiner** and **Gus Dougherty** saved my butt and provided much needed training. I would have failed without their help and friendship. I was pleased to be part of the team that brought Clearfield County in as a Soil Conservation District. I am sure that present employees don't realize the struggles we had in getting districts established across PA. Thanks for bringing back these memories. It's good to remember the early days."

In response to **Dan Dostie's** query in the Fall 2018 PA Bugle about retirees' recollections of the 1965 SWCS National Convention in Philadelphia, **Nevin Ulery** offers the following:

"In the summer of 1965, I was a Soil Conservationist in West Chester where **Joe Sacco** was the WUC (DC). **Jesse Council** (retired DC at Beaver) was also a Soil Conservationist in West Chester. Jesse had just returned from a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Africa and had no previous experience with SCS. Although I had been a student trainee for three summers and a Soil Conservationist in the new District/Work Unit at Doylestown for one year, I had just returned to duty from a six-month "vacation" at Fort Jackson, SC. So Joe had his hands pretty full with two relatively greenhorns.

However, Joe did find adequate time to actively participate in the planning for the SWCS conference in Philadelphia. He and the part-time district clerk prepared stacks of letters, etc. for mailings prior to the meeting. Also just prior to and during the meeting Joe made quite a few trips to the hotel in Philadelphia. At this time Joe was very actively pursuing the status of Fellow in the SWCS, an honor which I believe he was awarded at the conference or shortly thereafter."

Tax Tip: Pennsylvania is finally giving federal retirees a break! If you are a CSRS retiree, you can get a break on qualifying for the Property Tax Rebate for those over age 65. The maximum qualifying total income for the rebate is \$35,000. For the 2018

tax year, you get to claim a reduction of \$8,231 in your CSRS income, which represents 50% of the average Social Security income. (Social Security income is cut in half in determining qualifying income.) Property Tax Rebates range from \$250 to \$650, depending on your qualifying income.

The AARP Tax Aide Program includes the preparation of the Property Tax Rebate application in its free income tax return service. There are Tax Aide centers throughout the state. Go to aarp.org and type "tax aide locations" in the search field.

TEXAS (NORTH)

Arnold King, ARCSE Representative

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The annual meeting at New Braunfels continues to be the main event for the Texas retirees. **Willeene King and Sharon Johnson** have taken over the newsletter and are currently struggling to get more folks to provide their e-mail addresses to eliminate the expense and work involved in hard copy newsletters. It took four of us working almost four hours to prepare the hard copy newsletters for snail mail. On the personal front, I am recovering from knee replacement surgery and after two weeks of therapy, I am on the road to recovery. We are looking forward to our regular spring activities including a trip to Destin, FL and the New Braunfels event. We plan to spend a couple of weeks in Colorado and during October head for Barcelona, Spain for a Mediterranean cruise ending up near Rome, Italy. We were saddened to learn that **Douglas Lowe** passed away on February 13th. Doug was a native Texan who spent part of his career in Missouri as the SRC then returned to the Ft. Worth Technical Center, heading up the ecological sciences staff. He retired to his little hometown of Headly where he worked for many more years in a community service capacity. He will be missed.

The following are comments from attendees at the January monthly meeting of the N. Texas chapter:

Dennis Gaster reported that he passed his stress test. Other tests are scheduled. Grandson **Jake**, the place kicker for the Frisco High School varsity football team, practices every Sunday afternoon with a kicking coach. The coach has already had an inquiry from a university for kickers available in 2021 which will be the year Jake will be available. Dennis told members about a really great presentation on funerals that was made to NARFE Chapter 1201 members. Dennis will see if he can get the gentleman to give that presentation to the club in the near future. SCS/NRCS members also discussed the need to have a few programs during the year to boost attendance at the monthly meetings. Dennis received a note from **Edith Ratcliff** reporting her move from Garland, TX to Palm Coast, FL where she will be living with her daughter. She said she looks forward to receiving the newsletter every month.

Tom Hodges reminded members to give their personal and financial information to their children or survivors so they will know how to handle your affairs upon your death. NARFE form F-100 "Be Prepared for Life's Events - What your Survivors Should Know" is a great place to start.

Bernie Owen said that he will be making a presentation on 2018 Income Taxes to NARFE Chapter 1201 in Arlington on February 11th. Bernie also said the new Kansas State football coach **Chris Klieman's** salary will be \$2.3 million. (My further research indicates the salary pool for Klieman's assistant coaches will be \$3.55 million.)

Clyde Goodman reported on what a great time they had on their Christmas cruise. Clyde is planning a Panama Canal cruise for next year with his daughter. **Dave Stockbridge** reported that their annual Christmas party was very enjoyable. He recently also had a great time trout fishing in Arkansas. **Doug Seibel** enjoyed a Christmas dinner with Chinese food.

Dennis Erinakes reported that he is very much alive. He is back home after spending a good amount of time living with his son. He is feeling much better. Dennis is back at work with the Groundwater District working on final rules and regulations. He is enjoying working with the people who train service dogs.

VIRGINIA

Kenneth Carter, ARCSE Representative

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The retirees of Virginia are saddened and extend sympathy to the following:

Wade Biddix, retired Watershed Planning Manager and SRC, in the sudden loss of his mother in early February.

Sam Linkenhoker, retired Area Conservationist and regional Grazing Specialist, in the sudden loss of his mother in late February.

WASHINGTON, DC, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

John Peterson, ARCSE Representative

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John Peterson attended the National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting Feb. 2nd-6th where he still serves on the NACD Board, only now after 12 years as VA's Board Member, he is now their Board Alternate. Then John and **Blanche** attended the International Erosion Control Meeting in Denver the week of Feb. 18th, and the Land Improvement Contractors Meeting in Tucson the week of Feb. 25th. After all those conservation meetings, John and Blanche traveled to Hilton Head Island and spent two weeks in the sun. They were joined by **Niles and Carolyn Glasgow**, and **Don and Jo Gohmert** for their annual get-together. While at HHI they always have lunch with **Art Holland**, who lives near HHI.

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

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After almost 40 years of employment with NRCS/SCS, Plant Material Specialist **John Vandevender** retired on January 3rd, 2019. Instead of taking care of the Alderson Plant Materials Center, he will focus on his certified organic raspberry and blueberry farm and his honeybees. He'll also continue his non-profit work with Appalachian Headwaters.

Raymond Newton Kile, age 70, of Petersburg, WV, passed away on Friday, February 8th, 2019, in Rig, WV. He was a former Engineering Assistant for the Soil Conservation Service. **Phyllis Katherine Ellifritz**, 78, of Keyser, WV, died April 3rd, 2018. Mrs. Ellifritz retired from the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Keyser. You can read their obituaries in the "In Memoriam" section of this newsletter.

Morgantown potholes claimed another victory. Looking out at the night sky while sitting in a car with a punctured and flat tire, **Peg Reese** was grateful for cell phones and AAA. Within an hour, the donut was on the car and she was on her way home.

WISCONSIN

James Enlow, ARCSE Representative

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The Wisconsin retirees participated in a regional area luncheon on Valentine's Day, February 14th, 2019. The luncheon was held at Aunt Mary's Cafe, Arena, WI. **Gene Hausner** was the host. Those in attendance included **Gene and Georgene Hausner**, **Jim and Lynnette Enlow**, **Keith and Dottie Behling**, **Barb Marshall**, **Betty Stibbe**, **Dan Cotter**, **Stanley and Marlene Dingle** and **Roman and Bea Statz**.



Everyone had a great time enjoying the fellowship and wonderful food. The next luncheon is scheduled for April 11th, 2019 at Grizzly's Wood Fired Grill in Eau Claire, WI.

We heard from **Jason Nemecek**, State Soil Scientist, that **Dave Hvizdak** passed away on Feb. 25, 2019.

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. Two to report this newsletter.

John Rodger Akers
Jesse Charles Bush

Everett, PA
Opelika, AL

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

by Marc Safley, Chronicler, Senior Conservationist

Senior Conservationist
William J. Melven

Senior Conservationist **William J. Melven (Bill)** was born October 29th, 1933, at Kennett, MO. Bill grew up in Carrier Mills, IL; Carrier Mills is in the very southern part of the state. He attended schools there and graduated from high school in 1951. He then entered Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale. There Bill majored in wildlife biology with a minor in

agriculture. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from SIU in 1955. During summers while at university he was hired by the Illinois Natural History Survey to sample pond habitats in southern Illinois; this was a challenging, but enjoyable job.

Following graduation from the university, Bill entered the U.S. Army and served for two years; this was followed by six years in the Army Reserves. It was during his enlistment that he married his wife of 62 years Shirley Ann. Following his honorable discharge in 1957, Bill held a few part-time jobs until one day he had the opportunity to meet the SCS Area Conservationist located at Champaign. That contact led Bill to apply for a SCS trainee position and he was hired and sent to the Harrisburg (IL) Field Office in 1958. From there he was sent to the Shelbyville (IL), again in a trainee position. When the position of State Biologist was created for Illinois Bill applied and was selected in 1963. He accepted the State Biologist position in West Virginia in 1966. In the early 1970s Bill moved to Nashville, Tennessee as the State Biologist there. He left Tennessee in 1976 to accept the State Biologist job for South Carolina. He retired from SCS in 1986 and remained in the Columbia, SC, area.

Following retirement from federal service, Bill was hired by the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District (SC). In 1994 he became District Manager and served in that capacity until 2018. Even after retirement, Bill has kept active in resource conservation as an associate member of the Lexington SWCD and by helping longtime contacts with pond management concerns. Bill's career in conservation has been a rich and varied one. He has focused on ensuring wildlife resources are a part of planning and implementation across the broad range of landscapes and ecosystems his jobs have covered. When National Environmental Policy Act mandates first were made part of SCS planning and application Bill began providing wildlife inputs that were needed and necessary to assessments and other documents under that law.

Bill and Shirley have a son and three grandchildren. His hobbies are fishing and hunting. Bill says that he has enjoyed his career and working with everyone. He says that his philosophy is always to treat others in the way he would want to be treated.

OBITUARY INFORMATION

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

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, Paul Benedict will be glad to do the search. Please send death notices and obituary information directly to Paul at soilwarden@verizon.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)

- Allen** **Donald W. "Don" Allen** (90) of Vevay, Indiana, passed away January 29, 2019. He was born on October 12, 1928, at the farm house on Plum Creek Road in Switzerland County, Indiana. He was the oldest son of the late, **Alva Clarence** and **Geraldine (Wiley) Allen**. Don was inducted into the United States Army on March 28, 1951, serving during the Korean War. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Private First Class on March 18, 1952. Don was united in marriage on February 26, 1956, at the Caledonia Parsonage in Moorefield, Indiana, to the late, **Thelma Jean Lowe**. Don was employed for the Madison Proving Ground in Madison, Indiana and for the Switzerland County Soil & Water District for several years. He is survived by his son, **Stephen D. Allen**; step-sons, **Marty Hankins** and **William "Bill" Hankins (Janet)**; son-in-law **Carl Siefert**. Don was very active and highly recognized in the Scottish Rite – an arm of the Masonic Lodge, a member of the Mt. Sterling Baptist Church and the Vevay American Legion Post #185.
- Baldwin** **Donald M. Baldwin** (73), of Enterprise passed away at his home on Dec. 1, 2000. Don was born July 11, 1927, in Portland, OR to **Melvin** and **Emma Baldwin**. He married **Dolores Jeanne McClymond** in Newberg, in 1950, and graduated in 1951 from Oregon State University. He also served in the US Army. Don worked for the Soil Conservation Service for 38 years, before retiring in 1988 as District Conservationist in Enterprise. He was preceded in death by his wife in 1990, and a son, **Scott**. Survivors include daughter **Kathy Strom**.
- Behner** **Donald Behner** (94) passed away on February 16, 2019 at Brookdale of Salem, Ohio. He was born August 13, 1924. Donald retired from the SCS about 1984. He is survived by the love of his life, **Edna (Thompson) Behner** whom he married December 1, 1952; daughters **Debra (Roger) Elder**, and **Donna (Darrell) Baker**; son **Gary Behner**; brothers **Dwight** and **Bruce Behner**; five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Preceded in death by brother **Harold**, sister **Dorothy** and daughter-in-law **Lynn**. Per request a private service will be held. In lieu of flowers family request donations be made to Goshen-Butler Township Community Fund, PO Box 33, Damascus, OH 44619. www.greatnonprofits.org
- Brune** Lifetime Member and Senior Conservationist **William John Brune**, (92) of Victoria, MN passed away on February 7, 2019. He worked for the Soil Conservation Service for 38 years, which included serving as the Deputy State Conservationist in Minnesota and the State Conservationist in Iowa, the position from which he retired in 1984. He received a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Minnesota in 1948. In addition, he was an honorably discharged veteran of the US Navy. Preceded in death by his parents, **August** and **Marie Brune**. Survived by wife of 69½ years, **Ruth E. Brune**; children, **Nancy Linn** and **Scott (Patti) Brune**; two grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation (<https://parkinson.org/>).
- Conner** **Clarence Thomas Conner** (71) of Knoxville, Tennessee passed away on November 13, 2018. He was born in Moscow, Tennessee. Clarence was a longtime member of Lennon-Seney United Methodist Church. He was employed as a soil scientist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for 40 years. He graduated from W.P. Ware Comprehensive High School (Fayette County, TN) in 1966 and from Tennessee State University in 1970. He was an avid fisherman, hunter and sports enthusiast and played baseball in high school and college. He is survived by his wife of almost 47 years, **Bernice**; four children, four siblings and six grandchildren. In lieu of flowers the family requests memorial donations be made to the Lennon-

Seney Men of Praise Gospel Choir, 2084 Dandridge Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37915.

- Cox** **Betty Jarman Cox** (80) of Edenton, North Carolina, passed away on February 14, 2019, in Three Rivers Health & Rehabilitation Center, Windsor. Betty was married to retired Area Conservationist **G. Samuel Cox** for 59 years. She was employed as an Administrative Secretary with the North Carolina Co-Operative Extension Service, where she retired after more than 30 years of service. She had a love for flowers and gardening, especially her roses. In addition to her husband, she is survived by sons **Graham (Samantha), John (Susan) and Andrew (Lisa)**; three sisters, two brothers and three granddaughters. Memorial contributions may be made to Edenton Baptist Church, 200 S. Granville Street, Edenton, NC 27932, or to the Jimmy V Foundation, in care of the V Foundation for Cancer Research online at jimmyv.org/donate.
- Deal** **Jack M. Deal** (84) passed away February 11, 2019. He was born August 16, 1934 in Marion, Indiana to the late Riley and Hannah Huntington Deal. Jack received a B.S. in Agriculture from Purdue University and was a Professional Certified Soil Scientist. He received Certificates of Recognition from the U.S. Senate in 1987, the Hoosier Chapter Endowment Fund, and the Putnam County Soil & Water Conservation for outstanding leadership and devotion toward resource conservation and development. Jack loved nature and the outdoors, gardening, traveling the world with his wife – especially Canada and Alaska. Jack was preceded in death by his parents; and siblings, **Tom and Nancy Deal**. Survivors include his wife of 20 years, **Lesley Jo Deal**; children, **Wendy Forsythe (John), Cindy Wuthrich (Ben), Mindy Coon (Jim), Brad Deal (Amy), and David Deal (Laurie)**; 10 grandchildren; 3 great grandchildren; step-children, **Jason Schulz, Brian Schulz (Kelli), and Thomas Schulz (Jacqueline)**; and 6 step grandchildren.
- Eacker** **Clark A. Eacker, Sr.** (82) of Blue Springs, MO passed away on February 5, 2019. He was born November 15, 1936 in Muskegon, MI. Clark grew up on a farm in Montague MI. Clark began his college career as a music major, playing saxophone in the marching and concert bands at Michigan State. After three years at Michigan State he entered the US Navy and served in the Navy as a guided missile technician on the USS Norton Sound and USS Lynde McCormick. After leaving the Navy, Clark completed a degree in agriculture and conservation at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI. He worked in Michigan and Missouri during his a 32-year career with the SCS/NRCS. He retired in 1996 as Area Conservationist in Warrensburg, MO overseeing 17 counties. After retirement from the NRCS, Clark began a second career as a job coach at The Rehabilitation Institute of Kansas City in their Warrensburg office. Clark is survived by **Ruth**, his wife of 58 years, son **Clark Eacker Jr.** of north Texas, daughter **Rhonda Becker (Steve)** of Blue Springs, two grandsons and two brothers **Dale (Faye) Eacker** of Tallahassee, FL and **Glen (Nancy) Eacker** of Spring Lake, MI. He was preceded in death by his father and mother, **Don and Eve Eacker** of Muskegon, MI.
- Edwards** **David Edwards** (87) of Baker City, Oregon passed away on December 19, 2018, at his home. There will be a private family memorial in the future, or as Dave would say, "when we get a round tuit." Dave was born at Douglas, Wyoming. He graduated from Centralia High School in Washington and from Washington State College. He worked as a civil engineer for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and retired in 1986 as the area engineer in Baker City. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, **Wilma Edwards**; his three daughters and three sons, 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. For those who would like to make a donation in memory of Dave, the family suggests a charity of one's choice through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences may be made at <https://www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com/>
- Ellifritz** **Phyllis Katherine Ellifritz** (78) of Keyser, WV, died April 3, 2018 at the Western Maryland Regional Medical Center, Cumberland, MD. She was born on October 8, 1939 at Junction, WV, the daughter of the late **John Jasper and Katherine Caroline (Southerly) Stickley**. She was preceded in death by a sister, **Helen Hartman** and two brothers, **Johnnie and Roger Stickley**. Phyllis retired from the SCS in Keyser. She was a member of the Duling United Methodist Church, Keyser and Chapter # 9, Women of the Moose, Keyser. Surviving is her husband of 56 years, **Harold Kenneth Ellifritz**; her daughter, **Tamara Kay Valdez (Kevin)** of Winchester, VA; two grandchildren, one great grandchild; two brothers; and three sisters. Also surviving are three sisters-in-law and numerous nieces and nephews.
- Gallup** Honorary Member and Senior Conservationist **Darrell Love Gallup** (93) of Boise, Idaho passed away on October 6, 2018. Darrell was born in LaBelle, Idaho. He grew up in LaBelle and graduated from Rigby High School. He then attended the University of Idaho before being drafted into the United States Army during World War II. During the War, he served as a surgical technician with the 1883rd Medical Detachment in El Paso, Texas. Following his discharge, he returned to the University of Idaho where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture in 1948. At a University dance, he met the love of his life, **Gladene Florence Brown**. They were blessed with three children, **Tamara (Rob) Williams, Darrell (Carolyn), and Michael (Brenda)**. During their 66 years of marriage, they lived in Idaho, Maryland, Colorado, Thailand, and Indonesia, and traveled extensively throughout the world. Initially, after graduation, Darrell taught agriculture classes at Grace, Idaho High School from 1948 to 1950. He then joined the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1950 as a soil scientist. He retired from the SCS in 1980 and then worked as a consultant for the United Nations in Indonesia and Egypt. He was a lifetime member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. He enjoyed building a cabin in Smith's Ferry, ID, being outdoors, and snowmobiling. He was proud of his "big" king salmon caught while on vacation in Alaska. During recent years he enjoyed participating with Cub Scout day camps. He was designated as an honorary range master. As a devoted member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he faithfully served in many capacities. He served 11 years as an ordinance worker in the Boise, Idaho Temple. He was meek and a true "gentle" man. Survivors include his children and spouses, 13 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren, and one brother. He was preceded in death by his wife, his parents; three sisters, and a brother.
- Hale** **Alan Randall "Randy" Hale** (69) of Troy, Alabama passed away February 1, 2019 at his home following a massive heart attack. Randy was an Eagle Scout, a graduate of Auburn University and an active Methodist in his local church. He is survived by his wife **Gail** and son **Matthew**, his mother **Seydell** and brother **Steve**. Randy retired from the USDA-NRCS after an outstanding career serving as District Conservationist in Pike County and before that in Walker County. He helped implement a land conversion program on highly erodible land in Pike County a couple of years before passage of the 1987 Farm Bill. Lessons learned in the Pike County program helped the Alabama staff with successfully implementing the Conservation Reserve Program.
- Hilpmann** **Doris Ann Hilpmann** (87) of Gering, Nebraska passed away on March 07, 2018 at the Regional West Medical Center in

Scottsbluff with her family at her side. Doris was born in Cody, Wyoming. She received her early education in Cody, including her high school diploma. She continued onto college in Powell, WY and received her degree in teaching. Doris worked as a Legal Secretary for George Sawyer in Torrington, WY for 17 years and at the Farmer's Home Administration in Torrington, WY for several years. She was a long time member of the First Presbyterian Church in Torrington, WY. She is survived by her husband of 67 years, **Heinz G. Hilpmann** of Gering, daughter **Jennifer Ann Hilpmann** of Gering, a sister and many nieces and nephews. Hienz Hilpmann was District Conservationist in Lingle for the Lingle/Fort Laramie Conservation District in the 1970's and retired from the Soil Conservation Service in 1980.

- Hvizdak** **David J. Hvizdak** (66) of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin passed away February 25th, 2019 after living with colon cancer for three years. And live he did. Dave enjoyed many adventures with his wife and children despite the brutal cancer treatments. Dave's career as a soil scientist with the SCS/NRCS began in 1978 in New York. He was then stationed in Wisconsin for 28 years, 21 of them in Spooner. In 2008, he was promoted to State Soil Scientist, and Regional Soil Survey Leader position at Amherst, Massachusetts. He retired to Chippewa Falls in 2012. Dave was passionate about the environment and continued to do volunteering and contract work for his former employer until his death. Dave is survived by **Jane**, his wife of 40 years; daughter, **Erin** of Idaho; sons, **Mark (Mary)** of Minneapolis, and **Michael** of Chippewa Falls. He is also survived by his mother, **Carol Hvizdak**; brothers, **Ron (Barb)** of Montana, **Tom (Don)** of Edgar, **Bob (Anne)** of Hawaii; and sister, **Cathy (Mark) Nevala** of Oregon. Dave was preceded in death by his father, **Andrew Hvizdak** in 2004. A memorial service will be held at 11am, Saturday, March 2nd at the English Lutheran Church of Bateman, town of Lafayette, Chippewa Falls with the **Rev. Rick Biedermann** officiating. Visitation with family will be held one hour prior to the service Saturday morning at the church. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to your favorite environmental organization.
- Jones** **Alvin (Butch) Jones** (69) of Meeker, Colorado passed away on November 18, 2018 among family and friends. A graduate of Colorado State University in range ecology, he spent his entire SCS/NRCS career in western Colorado, including many years as district conservationist at Meeker. An active member of the community, he was "well-known and respected by ranchers, farmers, water providers, and land owners for his expertise and the assistance he provided them." He continued to be active as a guide and teacher in several outdoor organizations and activities after retirement in 2006. He is survived by his wife **Linda** of 49 years, sons **Vaughn** and **Don** and their families.
- Kile** **Raymond Newton Kile** (70) of Petersburg, WV, passed away on Friday, February 8, 2019, in Rig, WV. He was born in Cumberland, MD. On June 23, 1973, Raymond married **Nancy (Kisamore) Kile**, who survives in Petersburg. He was a former Engineering Assistant with the SCS and had also worked at Pilgrim's Pride. Raymond was a Veteran of the US Navy, where he had served for 21 years and completed three tours in Vietnam on aircraft carriers. In addition to his wife, Raymond is survived by sons, **Matt B. Kile** of Charleston, WV, **Eric Kile (Amber)** of Pikeville, KY; 5 grandchildren; brother, **Andrew L. Kile (Brenda)**; and several nieces and nephews, whom he loved dearly.
- Kraut** Honorary Member and Senior Conservationist **Harold John "Boge" Kraut** (105) of Batchtown, Illinois passed away on January 14, 2019 at his home with family by his side. He was born in Gilead, Illinois. Boge married **Helen B. Staats** on Jan. 10, 1938 at St. Norbert's Catholic Church in Hardin, Illinois. Boge worked as a soil conservation tech for the Soil Conservation Service in Calhoun County Soil and Water District, retiring in 1975. He was instrumental in the creation and initiation of the soil and water conservation program in Calhoun County. He was responsible for the re-introduction of the wild turkey program in Calhoun County. Boge also farmed much of his life. He had an apple orchard, Christmas tree farm, horses, mules, donkeys, hogs, sheep and beef and dairy cattle. Boge was an avid traveler, wildlife viewer, conservationist, rock hound, and gardener and was well known for his ice skating abilities. He last laced up his skates at age 80 and skated with his great-grandchildren. He loved to four-wheel ride with his neighbors and friends and did so until he was 104 years old. He traveled to all 50 states, including Hawaii and driving twice to Alaska — the second time at the age of 80. He also traveled to Mexico and Canada. After World War II in 1946, he took charge of the Carrico Plummer Cemetery and loved spending time with family every Memorial Day, decorating every grave on the cemetery. He was a World War II Navy Veteran, the oldest living Veteran in Calhoun and a member of the American Legion Post 632 in Batchtown for 72 years, a trustee of St. Barbara's Catholic Church for many years, member of Calhoun County Soil and Water District Board, and served as a board member of the Calhoun Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He received the Illinois State Farmer's award in 1954 at the Illinois State Fair. His life story is memorialized at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois. He is survived by daughters, **Linda Butler**, **Sue Sweetman**, **June Bizaillion** and **Debbie (Ben) Heimann** and sons **Jim (Diane) Kraut**, **Mike (Anita) Kraut** and **John Kraut**; 18 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren, and 12 great-great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his wife, **Helen "Staats" Kraut**; three siblings, two sons-in-law, and three grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Calhoun Ambulance or Family Choice. Online condolences and guest book can be found at www.gresskallalschaaf.com.
- McElwain** **Clara V. McElwain** (81) of Indianapolis transitioned from labor to reward on February 14, 2019. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, and friend. Clara lived a full life and the memory of her life, loves and laughter and her sudden departure will be missed by all those whose lives she touched. Clara was a member of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church. She worked for 36 years for the SCS/NRCS in the Indiana State Office. She retired in 1994.
- Medley** **William R. (Bill) Medley** (95) of Algood, Tennessee passed away on November 1, 2018 at his home. He was born in Buffalo Valley, TN. Bill served in War World II as a radio operator on a B-29 aircraft. He was stationed on Tinian Island in the South Pacific. Bill was a retired soil conservationist with the Soil Conservation Service who earned his degree from Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (TTU) on the GI Bill. He served from Dyersburg to Gainesboro, TN. He was an avid gardener and planted an abundance of his favorite plants. Needless to say, he had plenty of fresh vegetables to share with everyone! It wasn't uncommon for him and his wife, Gertha, to "Can" 300 quarts of green beans a season! He worked with 4-H and other youth groups teaching them about the land. Bill and son, **Gene**, also raised and showed Shorthorn Cattle and traveled the state to compete. After retirement, he and his wife enjoyed many trips within the United States to attend as many shows, plays, and music events as possible. He was a member of the Algood Methodist Church, where he served on many committees. He is survived by his wife of 30 years, **Gertha Breeding Roberson Medley**; daughter-in-law, **Maura Little Medley** of Livingston; two grandchildren, a sister, and three precious great-granddaughters. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his first wife of 42 years, **Bonnie Herndon Medley** of Madison, TN; his only child, **Eugene (Gene) Medley** of Livingston, TN; and one sister. Memorial contributions may be made to the Algood United Methodist Church, 135 W Main St, Cookeville, TN 38506 or the charity of your choice.

- Pate** **Hubert Jerome (Jerry) Pate Jr.** (72) of China Grove, North Carolina passed away January 30, 2019. Jerry retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Civil Engineering Technician in the Salisbury Area Office.
- Potter** When Senior Conservationist and Honorary Member **Harry E. Potter** (91) of Watertown, New York passed away on December 21, 2018, the world lost a gentle giant. Harry was born in Caribou, Maine. He received a degree in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Maine at Orono in 1954. Before attending college, he served as he would say proudly for two years, ten months and eight days in the Army Air Corps (Now U.S. Air Force). Upon graduation from college, he worked as a soil conservationist in Genesee County (Batavia, NY) where he met his wife, **Sharon J. Gassman**, who was working in an office across the hall. In 1956 he was transferred to Berlin, NY to work as a project engineer on the Little Hoosick Watershed. In 1958 he was appointed District Conservationist in Rensselaer County (Troy, NY). He came to Jefferson County as District Conservationist in 1967 where he continued working until his retirement in September 1982. Harry is survived by his beloved wife of 62 years, Sharon, who he always referred to as his "first wife!"; a son, **Jeffrey** and wife, **Lynne**, of Aurora, IL; a son, **Jonathan** and partner, **Nancy**, of Wheatland, WY; a daughter, **Ellen** and her husband, **Edwin** of Effingham, NH; eight grandchildren and three great grandsons. He was pre-deceased by his parents, two brothers and a sister. Harry was very active in the Brownville United Methodist Church, holding several offices and being Lay Member to Annual Conference for several years. He belonged to Masonic Lodge #53 in Sidney, ME, but attended Masonic Lodge #53 in Brownville, NY. He was secretary and chairman of the Town of Pamela Planning Board for many years, chairman of Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District Directors and served on several agricultural boards. Harry kept a small flock of sheep. He enjoyed a large collection of Marilyn Monroe photos. Always a very active person, he tobogganed down the family's back hill until he was 88. Known as the "Original Harry Potter" after the Harry Potter books came out, he had much fun sharing the same name. In lieu of flowers memorial gifts may be given to Hospice of Jefferson County, 1398 Gotham Street, Watertown, NY 13601. Online condolences may be made to dexterfuneralhome.com.
- Rau** **Nancy Jo Rau** (74) of Liberty Lake, Washington lost her battle with stage IV pancreatic cancer and passed away on December 23, 2018 with her husband **Tom**, daughter **Crystal** and son **Tracy** at her bedside. Nancy was born in Whitehall, Montana and attended school in Twin Bridges graduating in June, 1962. While attending business school in Great Falls, Montana, she met her soulmate and partner for life Tom and they were married in Lauren, Montana, on April 20, 1963. She started her federal service career 1964 with Federal Highways in Vancouver and worked almost 35 years, retiring in 2006 in Spokane with administrative staff of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Hospice of Spokane.
- Simonsen** **Clarence Simonsen** (85) passed away on April 24, 2017 in Minneota, Minnesota. Clarence was Area Engineer with the Soil Conservation Service in Marshall, MN. He graduated from South Dakota State University in Brookings, South Dakota, with a BS in agricultural engineering. Clarence retired in 1986 and thereafter did consulting work and surveying in the ag engineering field and provided technical assistance to local farmers, contractors and landowners. Survivors include his wife **Evangeline**, stepdaughter **Carol Turner** and stepson **Michael Hoffmeister**.
- Sisk** **Fred C. Sisk** (95) of Indianapolis passed away February 9, 2019. Born January 21, 1924 in Cynthiana, Indiana, he was the son of **Carl and Etna (Smith) Sisk**. Fred was an U.S. Army veteran and attended the Bethel United Methodist Church. He worked for the Soil Conservation Service for 30 years, retiring in 1982. He was a member of the Pike Township Lions Club. Survivors include his loving wife of 42 years, **Elizabeth (Betsy) Dison Sisk**; son, **Doug Sisk (Wendy)**; four grandchildren; stepchildren **William R. Dison (Jeanne)**, **Ronald L. Dison (Linda)**, and **Nancy Dison**; and three step grandchildren. He is predeceased by his parents, brother, two sisters and his stepson, **Dr. Dwight L. Dison**.
- Taylor** **Troy Lee Taylor** (65) passed away on October 28, 2018 at his home in Memphis, Tennessee. He was a graduate of Tennessee State University and a retired employee of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. He was a member and an usher at World Overcomers Outreach Ministries Church. He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife, **Phyllis Taylor**; four daughters; five grandchildren; and four sisters.
- Unger** Lifetime Member and Senior Conservationist **David Unger** (86) passed away on January 17, 2019 in Castine, Maine. He was born in Romulus, Michigan and as a young man worked at the John Deere dealership that his father owned. He received an undergraduate degree in Natural Resources at Antioch College, a master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He retired in 1998 as Associate Chief and Acting Chief of the USDA Forest Service. Before joining the Forest Service, he was the Associate Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. He was married to **Renee Satz** from 1958 to 1983 and **Carolyn Jensen** from 1984 until she preceded him in death in 2009. After retirement David and his wife Carolyn moved to Castine, Maine. David was elected a Castine Town Selectman and served for 12 years until 2017. He became known locally as the "Music Man" for his support of local musical events and his musical talents on the trumpet, cornet and Flugelhorn. He is survived by two sons, **David**, of Brooklyn, New York, and **Christopher**, of Hermon, Maine.
- Wagner** NRCS Soil Conservation Technician **Robert "Bob" J. Wagner** (67) of Montrose, PA, passed away unexpectedly on February 13, 2019 at the Regional Hospital in Scranton, PA. He was born in Geneva, PA. He is survived by his wife of almost 43 years, **Teri J. (Frisbie) Wagner**. Bob was a U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran and a graduate of Lock Haven University. He worked for over 40 years as a soil conservation technician. A Celebration of Life will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, March 2, 2019 at the Bridgewater Church on Rt. 167 in Montrose, PA.
- Zweiacker** **Loran L. Zweiacker** (71) of Stillwater, Oklahoma passed away on January 21, 2019, surrounded by family at his home. Loran was born in Walters, Oklahoma. After attending the University of Cameron for two years, he graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1969 with a bachelor's in agricultural education. He went on to receive his master's in the same field from OSU in 1971. Loran married **Suzanne Logsdon Zweiacker** on August 12, 1973. Loran worked for the SCS/NRCS for 37 years including 33 years as the district conservationist for Pawnee county and surrounding areas. He retired in 2009. He is survived by his wife Suzanne and their children **Jeremy (Jessica)**, **Jennifer (CJ)** and **Jillianne (Tanner)**, seven grandchildren, sisters **Trudie Kinder**, **Martha Ann Ely (Don)**, and **Treva James (Vic)**, and his brother **Paul**. He is preceded in death by his parents, **Leo** and **Anna Zweiacker**.