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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired Conservation Service Employees

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NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

Doug Lawrence and Patty Lawrence

It's an understatement to say that over the past two months the spread of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and its impact on human health, the global economy, and politics has dominated the news. When we wrote the February "Notes from the Potomac" column, there had been 80,400 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 2,700 deaths worldwide. As we go to press here, the total number of confirmed cases is nearly 3,000,000, and there have been over 206,000 confirmed deaths. During that same period, the US has jumped from 53 confirmed cases to over 963,400 cases, and from zero deaths to nearly 55,000 deaths. In this edition of the Notes from the Potomac we will focus on COVID-19 and how it's impacting life in the US. We hope that you and those close to you are well and that everyone is able to continue practicing social distancing.

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Deaths – Figure 1 shows that the total number of confirmed deaths in the US continues to rise at a steady rate, which is reflected in the roughly constant number of daily confirmed deaths. Although highly transmissible, the Case Fatality Rate (number of deaths per case of COVID-19) appears to be lower than that of SARS (9.5%) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (34.4%), but higher than that of influenza (0.1%).

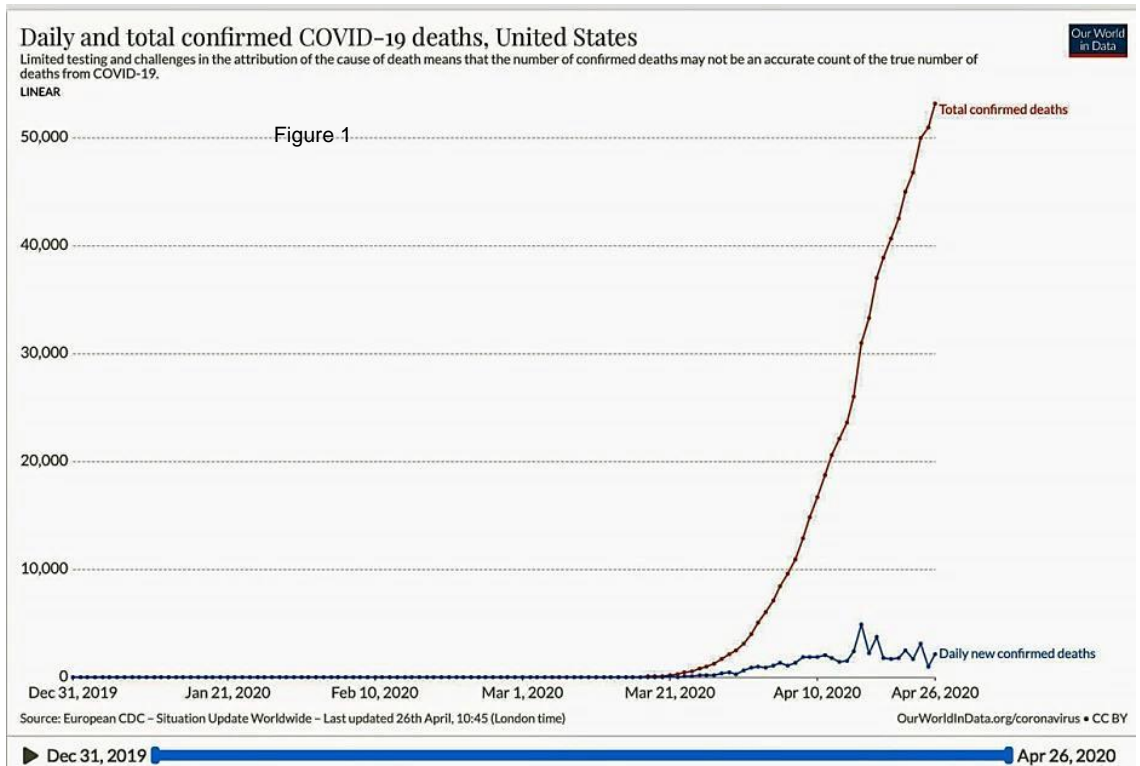
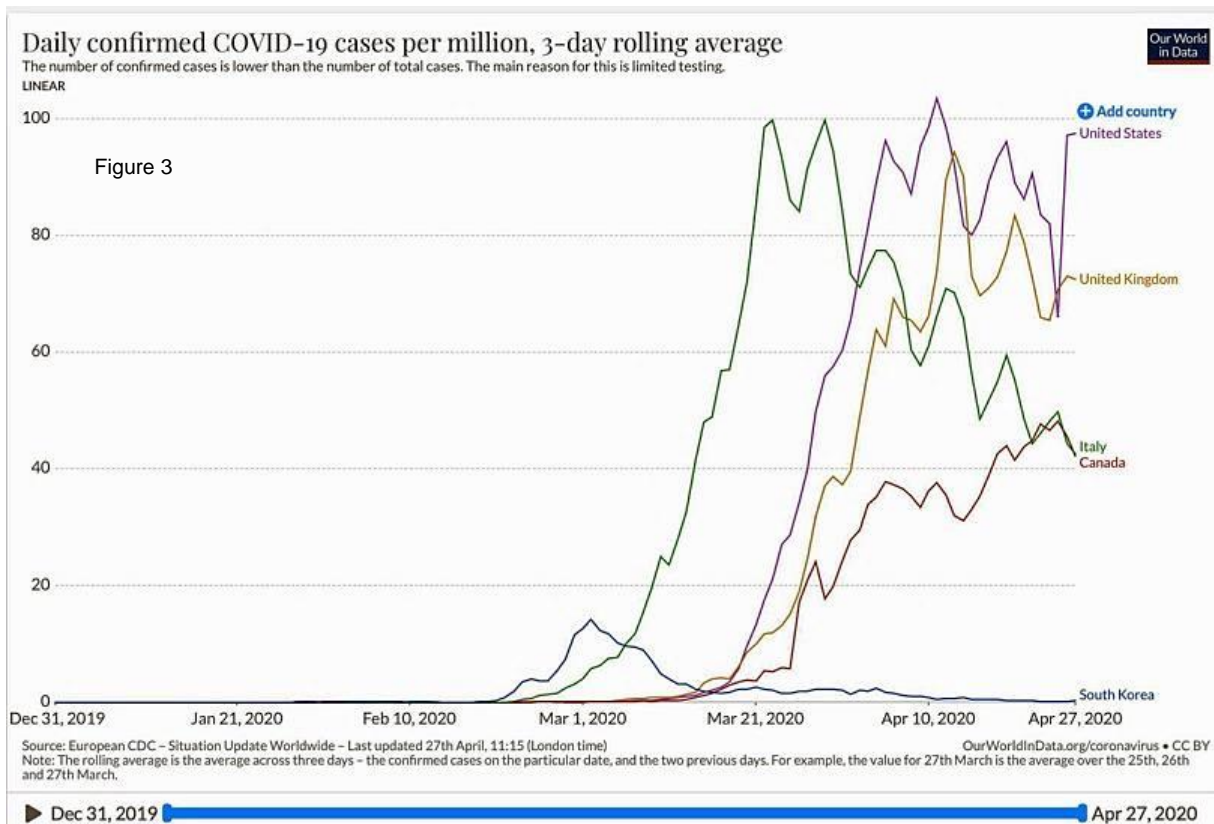
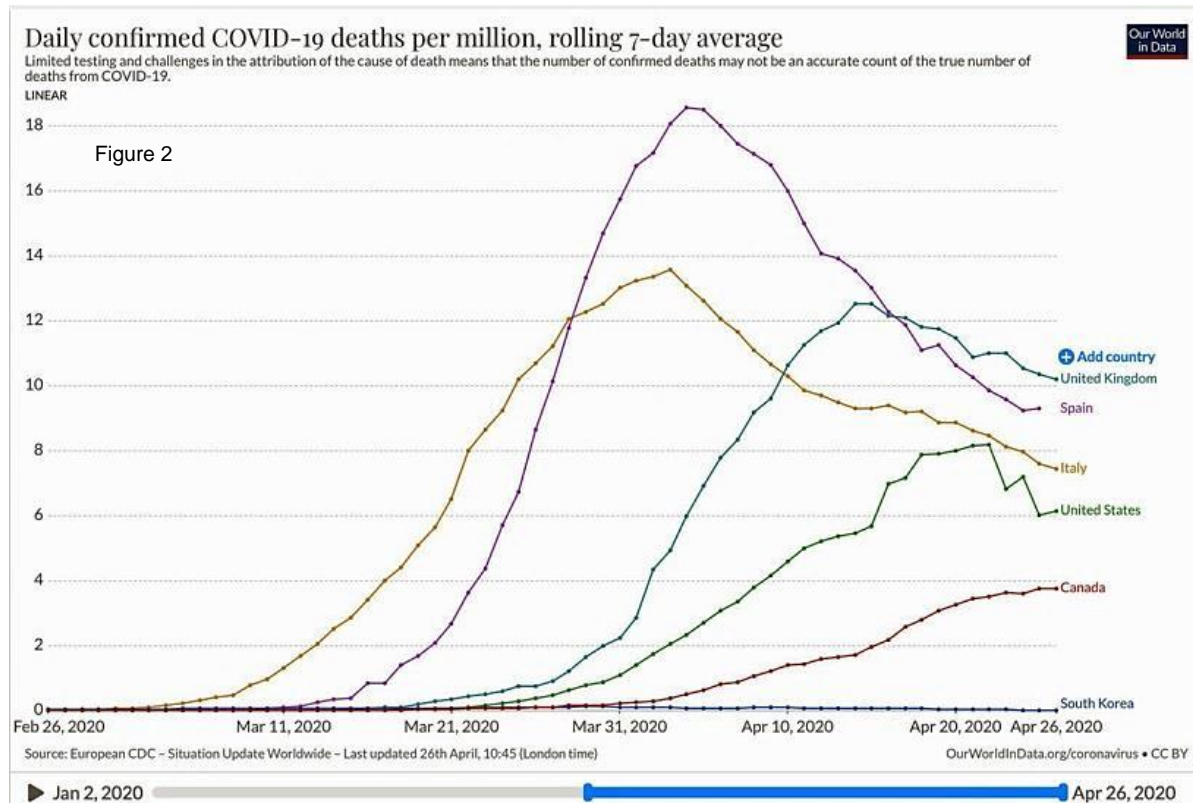


Figure 2 on the next page displays the moving average of the number of confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million persons in several countries, including the US. Epidemiologists believe that the number of confirmed cases significantly understates the actual number, because some people have exhibited mild or no symptoms and because of inadequate COVID-19 testing capacity. It appears that the death rate per million in the US is falling, but that may be due to improvements in the availability of coronavirus tests.

Figure 3 on the next page compares the moving average of the number of COVID-19 cases per million people in five countries. It should be noted that the lack of testing capacity has significantly understated the actual number of COVID-19 cases.

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES

The Epidemiological Goal – One of the problems with the current coronavirus (officially labeled SARS-CoV-2) and the resulting disease it causes (COVID-19) is that it is new, hence the term “novel coronavirus.” And because this is a new coronavirus, medicine lacks the tools to manage the spread and mortality of the resulting disease, COVID-19.



When most of a population is immune to an infectious disease, this provides indirect protection—or “**herd immunity**”—to those who are not immune to the disease. For example, if 80% of a population is immune to a virus, four out of every five people who encounter someone with the disease won’t get sick (and won’t spread the disease any further). In this way, the spread of

infectious diseases is kept under control. Depending on how contagious an infection is, usually 70% to 90% of a population needs immunity to achieve herd immunity. For the US, scientists have estimated that about 70% of the population would need to have SARS-CoV-2 antibodies, either because they have recovered from COVID-19 or they have been vaccinated. It should be noted that reaching the herd immunity threshold will not stop people from contracting COVID-19.

Doctors need three things to help them in reaching the goal of herd immunity, while minimizing mortality and a wide range of social and medical costs. They need testing capacity to determine whether or not someone has been infected by SARS-CoV-2. They also need medicines that can target the COVID-19 disease. Currently, severe cases are treated with corticosteroids. They also need a vaccine to slow the spread of COVID-19 and help reach and expand beyond the herd immunity threshold. SARS-CoV-2 testing has recently expanded, and daily testing has grown to 250,000—300,000 persons per day over the weekend. Finally, tests for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies is needed to identify people who are potentially immune to the virus.

One note of caution is warranted, because if SARS-CoV-2 is like other coronaviruses that currently infect humans, scientists expect that people who get infected will be immune for months to years, but probably not their entire lives.

Impact on the Economy – In 2019, Bloomberg Economics developed a model to estimate the odds of a recession in the US, and by September 2019 the model indicated that there was a rising probability of a recession over the following 12 months. In short, the US economy appeared to be weakening, and it was becoming increasingly vulnerable to a “black swan” event like the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In April 2020, the Bloomberg economic model estimated that there was a 100% chance of a recession in the US in the next 12 months. We don’t know if we are formally in a recession yet, but there are ominous clouds on the horizon.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published a report on April 24th that provides their current projections of output, employment, interest rates, and Federal deficits. The CBO is projecting that the economy will experience a sharp contraction in the second quarter of 2020 (which includes April, May, and June).

Inflation-adjusted gross domestic product (real GDP) is expected to decline by about 12% in the second quarter, which is equivalent to a decline at an annual rate of 40%. The unemployment rate is expected to average close to 14% during the second quarter. Interest rates on 3-month Treasury bills and 10-year Treasury notes are expected to average 0.1 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively.

For fiscal year 2020, CBO projects the Federal budget **deficit** to be \$3.7 trillion, which is nearly four times the Federal budget deficit in 2019. Moreover, the Federal **debt** held by the public is projected to be 101 percent of GDP by the end of the fiscal year. The growth in the federal deficit is partly due to increased expenditures by the Federal government associated with the stimulus packages and partly due to lower revenues.

Although CBO expects the third quarter and fourth quarter to see the economy rebound, real GDP for 2020 is expected to fall by 5.6%.

CBO's Economic Projections for 2020 and 2021

	2020				Annual	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2020	2021
Real GDP (Percentage change from preceding quarter) ^a	-0.9	-11.8	5.4	2.5	n.a.	n.a.
Real GDP (Percentage change, annual rate) ^a	-3.5	-39.6	23.5	10.5	-5.6 ^b	2.8 ^b
GDP (Trillions of dollars)	21.6	19.1	20.1	20.7	20.4	21.3
Unemployment Rate (Percent)	3.8	14.0	16.0	11.7	11.4	10.1
Interest Rate on Three-Month Treasury Bills (Percent)	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1
Interest Rate on Ten-Year Treasury Notes (Percent)	1.4	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7

GDP = gross domestic product; n.a. = not applicable.

a. Real values are nominal values that have been adjusted to remove the effects of changes in prices.

b. Data are shown on a fourth-quarter-to-fourth-quarter basis.

In response to the concerns about an economic downturn, Congress has passed, and the President has signed, four coronavirus stimulus laws since March 2nd, 2020, and a fifth is under development. Depending on the funding level in the fifth

phase of economic stimulation, the total cost of the stimulus bills could reach nearly \$5.0 trillion. This is an unprecedented sum and is much higher than the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008, which totaled \$158 billion, or the Troubled Asset Relief Program of 2008 which may have cost about \$500 billion, depending on how one computes its cost. Here's a summary of the five phases of the coronavirus economic stimulus packages:

Stimulus Phase 1—\$8.3 billion: Extra funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Food and Drug Administration, National Institutes of Health, the State Department, the Small Business Administration, and the United States Agency for International Development.

Includes \$4 billion to make more coronavirus tests available, and \$1 billion in loan subsidies for small businesses.

Stimulus Phase 2—\$100 billion: Free coronavirus testing including for the uninsured.

- Two weeks of paid sick and family leave.
- Increased funds for Medicaid and food security programs, like SNAP.
- Increased unemployment insurance benefits.

Stimulus Phase 3—\$2.2 trillion: This phase offers significant relief for workers, small businesses, and corporations that have been affected by social distancing measures put in place to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

The legislation guarantees direct payment to most adults, as well as expanded unemployment insurance for workers who have been laid off.

Stimulus Phase 3.5—\$500 billion: The law provides nearly \$500 billion to small businesses, hospitals and virus testing.

Stimulus Phase 4: Under development, could cost \$2.0 trillion: Phase 4 is being negotiated. Its content could vary from support for small businesses, to support for cash-strapped employer-sponsored pension programs, to support for state and local governments, among other proposals.

Impact on Unemployment: CBO projects that unemployment will be a drag on the economy through 2021, at rates above 10%. The actual impact of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on the unemployment rate will be masked by an expected drop in the labor force participation rate—that is, the percentage of people in the civilian noninstitutionalized population who are at least 16 years old and who are either working or seeking work. The labor force participation rate is projected to decline from 63.2% in the first quarter of this year to 59.8% in the third quarter.

Impact on State and Local Government —To get a sense of what what's happening to state budgets, we can look at what happened during the Great Recession in 2008-2009, when state tax revenues declined by 9%. If one adds the additional costs faced by states associated with increased outlays for unemployment insurance and Medicaid, as well as the direct costs related to fighting COVID-19, it's possible that we may see a shortfall of \$500 to \$700 billion dollars at the state level, even after cuts to programs and public service jobs. Federal funding for state governments will be one of the big issues in the Phase 4 stimulus package currently under consideration by Congress.

What's Next —The known unknowns and the unknown unknowns dominate what will happen over the next 18 months. However, what appears to be clear is that the Federal budget could be significantly impacted, which could have serious ramifications for NRCS funding and even the baseline for the next Farm Bill.

NRCS Offices in the Pandemic: Since the end of March (26th), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field offices have been only open by phone appointment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. NRCS staff are working with customers by phone, mail, and online communications. Some field work may continue with appropriate social distancing. NRCS' Conservation Client Gateway allows customers to track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents online at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cgate/>.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSSEPRD1563417>

Farm Bill Programs and Related News

Conservation Program Awards: Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) awards were announced on March 11th, 2020. Almost \$49 million will be provided to 27 recipients in 27 states to help state and tribal governments encourage private landowners to allow public access to their land for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent recreation. You can see the list of recipients here:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSSEPRD1555052>

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) awards were announced on April 16th, 2020. NRCS will award \$206 million in 48 conservation projects in 29 states. Partners will bring another \$300 million in contributions. You can see the entire list of projects selected for this round of funding at:

<https://nrcs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Shortlist/index.html?appid=ab6aa86f9aea48e2af92ed165450d110>

Current Opportunities

The Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) **On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials (On-Farm Trials)** were announced on March 12th, 2020. NRCS will award up to \$25 million to projects that support adoption and evaluation of innovative conservation approaches on agricultural land. Proposals are due by May 29th, 2020 (extended) and must address at least one of four priorities: Irrigation Management Technologies, Precision Agriculture Technologies and Strategies, Management Technologies and Strategies, and Soil Health Demonstrations.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSSEPRD1555070>

The **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands** signup began on March 16th and runs through May 15th. Through CRP Grasslands, farmers and ranchers can protect grasslands, rangelands and pastures, while maintaining the land as

working grazing land. Timing of some activities, such as haying and mowing, may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds. The 2018 Farm Bill set aside 2 million acres for CRP Grassland enrollment.

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/news-releases/2020/usda-to-open-signup-march-16-for-conservation-reserve-program-grasslands>.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program's (RCPP) Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFA) opportunities were announced on March 17th, 2020. Up to \$50 million in fiscal year 2020 will be available to fund up to 15 projects where partners will be given greater liberty to manage the project and associated relationships with participating producers and landowners. Proposals are due on May 29th, 2020 (extended).

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1556838>

Announcements and Federal Register Notices

On March 16th, 2020, USDA announced a new team to coordinate nationwide efforts and increase access and participation of **beginning farmers and ranchers** in USDA programs. The department-wide team of state coordinators includes members from the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Risk Management Agency, and Rural Development.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1556820>

The comment period for the **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)** interim rule was extended from April 13th, 2020 to May 12th, 2020. An updated rule was published on March 17th, 2020 to include additional information. You can see the updated rule at:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/03/17/2020-05157/regional-conservation-partnership-program-correction>

On March 24th, NRCS published proposed revisions to 49 Conservation Practice Standards in the Federal Register for public comment. Improvements include expanding and updating scope to incorporate new technology and increase flexibility, enhancing water conservation practices such as irrigation and addressing wildlife issues. The comment period closed on April 23rd, but you can see the proposed revisions through <http://regulations.gov> under docket number NRCS-2020-0001.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1564014>

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Cheryl Simmons



Cheryl Simmons and Donna Beggs model homemade University of Idaho Vandals face masks.

Greetings from our home near Moscow Idaho! We appreciate you all and enjoy staying in touch. Please feel free to contact any of the ARCSE officers and representatives to offer ideas or say Hello!

It is a crazy time and we have been keeping busy learning to make face masks, Zoom and video chat using smartphones, laptops or tablets. If you have a hearing challenge, there are some apps to make sounds louder and more direct. Now may also be a good time to go through and organize old photos and memorabilia and enjoy the stories and happy memories they inspire. Cooking a favorite family recipe or sharing favorite songs or movies with people in the household or on-line is also good. And for cooking, nothing is better than fresh produce from your garden. This year we are trying microgreens! Sprouts and microgreens are healthy additions to salads and sandwiches and are easy to grow.

Following is just one of many links to pages describing how to make your own face masks:

<http://www.notionssewingstudio.com/blog-1/facemaskwithpocket-sewinginstructions-trmth>.

I and Secretary **Jack Carlson** are communicating with SWCS about this summer's meeting, and we would love to hear your thoughts. Now it seems impossible for members to travel to a group meeting as soon as July, but I'm keeping an open mind. Let us know what you think. And, please hang in there as we all go through this together; and stay connected!

Hope is the Thing with Feathers

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words*

And never stops at all,

*And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.*

*I've heard it in the chilliest land
And on the strangest sea,
Yet never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.*

–Emily Dickinson

ARCSE Annual Meeting Update

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Secretary

As reported in the last few newsletters, ARCSE and SWCS have been planning a special annual meeting/luncheon event for the 75th anniversary of the Society in Des Moines, Iowa in late July. With Covid-19 uncertainty, we have adjusted plans and preparations over the next few months. SWCS continues to prepare but has established a June 19th decision point whether to cancel or postpone the Conference due to on-going health risks and public safety constraints. The ARCSE Board also has not yet decided whether to proceed with the special event, which involves a short bus ride to and tour of SWCS headquarters and grounds, lunch, and historical presentations, including Hugh Hammond Bennett artifacts. With the current uncertainty, this newsletter edition does not include an annual meeting luncheon reservation form as in previous years. In the meantime, we will alert membership via email when plans become more definitive. Those not using or having access to email should feel free to call or write me (address/phone number in the Directory accompanying this newsletter) for an update. If the Conference and our special event proceeds as originally scheduled, the luncheon reservation form will be included with the next newsletter in late June. Stay tuned.

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.

Please submit Dues to ARCSE at P.O. Box 8965 Moscow, ID 83843

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

New Member

Gregory J Westfall – Allentown, New Jersey

New Life Member

Leonard Jolley – Napa, California

These are unusual and scary times for all Americans with the Coronavirus pandemic so prevalent. Many of our ARCSE members are in the age group most seriously affected by this virus, plus many have underlying conditions that put them more at risk. We must take precautions. All of us have been impacted by social distancing, stay-at-home orders, closed businesses, cancelling of meetings and social events. It is important during this time to stay active and in touch with others, even if just for our own mental health.

Most of us have a back yard where we can get some fresh air and get out of the house. But in the last couple of weeks I have talked to a couple of our ARCSE members who live in assisted living facilities, who have not been able leave their apartments for weeks. Their food is brought to them, no more dinner with friends, no more movie nights or card games with friends, no outings of any kind. Even family is not allowed to visit. About all some people can do is stay in their apartment and watch TV with no live Major League Baseball games (the thing I hate most), read a book, use a computer if they have one, or talk on the phone. This can get depressing. I encourage you to skim through your new **ARCSE 2020 Directory** and see who is living where. Perhaps you will be inspired to call an old colleague or friend from the past and give them a word of encouragement, especially if they are in assisted living.

Also, if you find out about a retired SCS/NRCS employee or current NRCS employee who has passed away, please let me know so we can put an obituary in the next ARCSE newsletter. If you have a weblink to an obituary, that is great, but if not, I will look for it. Just email me at soilwarden@verizon.net.

ARCSE Complimentary membership. When you have retiree social functions or any other time that you see new retirees from NRCS, be sure to remind them that they are eligible for a one-year complimentary membership in ARCSE, if they have not previously been a member. All that is required is that they submit a membership application. This one-year complimentary membership includes receiving the bimonthly electronic newsletter. Membership applications and the ARCSE brochure may be printed at: <http://www.arcse.org/nFORMS.htm>.

ALABAMA

Earl Norton, ARCSE Representative

Email: earl.norton@charter.net

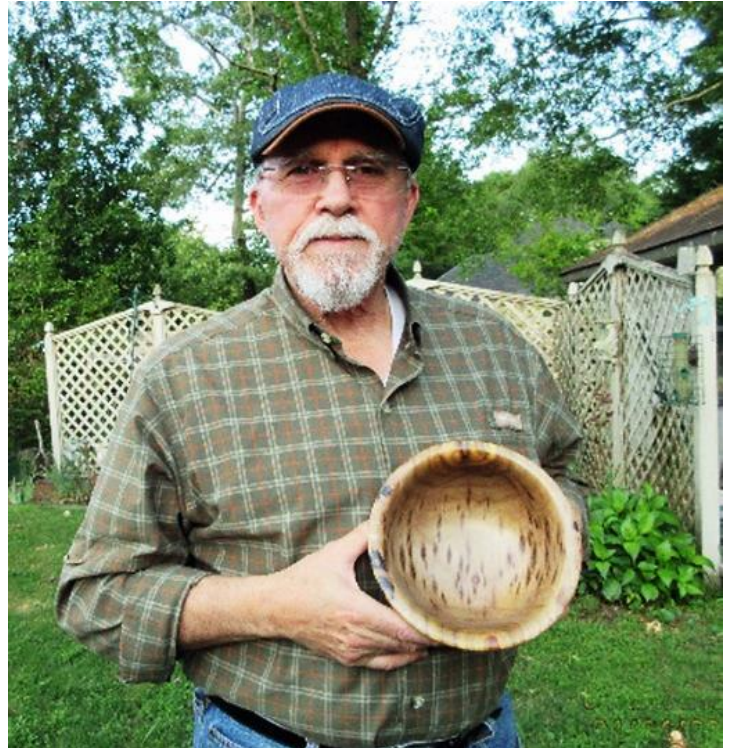
The Alabama retirees that meet monthly for breakfast in Auburn met on March 2nd. Attendance was rather small. The COVID-19 virus was the main topic of importance, although several members discussed their aches and pains in detail.

In keeping with our intent to feature the activities of one of our Alabama retirees in each newsletter, we are featuring **Mac Nelson** this newsletter. Mac worked as a Civil Engineer with SCS/NRCS, AL from 1970-2007 and continues to work as a professional engineer in Alabama to contribute to the betterment of mankind and our environment.

Soon after retiring, Mac began working part time as an engineering consultant. One of his main clients was The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of Alabama. He designed and oversaw construction of numerous stream restoration and streambank stabilization projects for TNC. Most of the projects were on Paint Rock River and its tributaries in northeast Alabama. The Paint Rock is one of the most diverse and scenic rivers in the nation. Mac said he began his career channelizing streams and ended his career putting them back the way they were originally. In 2011, Mac returned to NRCS as a civil engineer under the ACES program. He currently works two days per week in the Alabama State Office Engineering Section and provides some of the last "institutional memory" regarding the watershed program in Alabama.

Mac is a veteran of the Vietnam Conflict, where he lost the lower part of his left leg. After retiring in 2007, he helped a friend, who is a double below-knee amputee, to establish a support group for amputees in the Auburn area. They provide encouragement for new amputees and organize activities for amputees. They have held walk-run-or-roll events, water ski events, gone fishing and bowling, rock wall climbing and have enjoyed several other activities together.

Of his many hobbies, woodworking is the one he devotes the most time to. He has a workshop in his back yard where he spends much of his time. His interests include carving, bowl



Mac Nelson will be 75 years old in May and says "If the good Lord is willing, I will work for NRCS another year or two and continue woodworking as long as health permits."

turning, all types of wood crafts, and repair and restoration of antique clock cases. His next-door neighbor owns a clock shop and antique clock museum. Mac has become his go-to guy for the more difficult clock case repairs. Some of the cases he works on are as old as 200 years.

ARIZONA

ARCSE Representative

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Rod Alt Report: Sally and I traveled to Luxembourg on December 14th to visit **Christine** and **Lance Altizer** for the Holidays. After picking us up at the airport, they took us to a Christmas mart in SPA, Belgium. It was a mart where all the animals were made out of chocolate. It was like a chocolate zoo. The grandchildren, **Lance Jr.** and **Morgan**, joined us on December 19th.

On December 21st, we drove to Voren-Veurs, Belgium, where we stayed in an AB&B farmhouse for Christmas. While we were there, we visited the Christmas marts in Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

On December 26th, we traveled back to Luxembourg where we attended the Christmas marts there.

On January 1st, we traveled to London and came back to Luxembourg on January 3rd. We visited the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square, Buckingham Palace, walked across the Tower Bridge, Big Ben, Parliament Square, Harrods, and took a boat ride on the Thames River. On January 6th, we flew back home to the good and great old USA.

ARKANSAS

Ralph Mashburn, ARCSE Representative

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The Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame inducted **Albert Eugene "Gene" Sullivan** on March 6th, 2020 at the Embassy Suites hotel in Little Rock. Attending the ceremony were numerous family members and co-worker friends. (**Ralph Mashburn** says, "We all felt very honored to be invited by **Mike Sullivan**, his son, and me especially since Gene was best man at my wedding in 1956.")

Gene Sullivan spent a very impressive career creating and implementing soil and water management, conservation impacted farmers and ranchers. He served as Deputy State Conservationist in California and State Conservationist in Nebraska, Mississippi and Arkansas. A native of Lonoke, Sullivan earned a degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Arkansas, and immediately went to work for the USDA Soil Conservation Service. During his tenure, he also served as a member of the Missouri Basin Interagency Committee, the Tennessee Tom Bigbee Interagency Committee, the Arkansas Governor's Water Resource Task Force, and he chaired the Arkansas Red and White River Basin Interagency Commission. He also served on the United States Water Resources Team in Haiti and Hungary.

and reclamation projects that Sullivan was a graduate of the United States Senior Executive Development Program, a past president of the Arkansas Society of Agricultural Engineers, a member of the University of Arkansas Academy of Biological and Agricultural Engineers, was inducted to the Arkansas Association of Conservation District's Hall of Fame and received numerous state and national conservation, wildlife, and equal opportunity employment awards.

He was a registered licensed professional engineer and land surveyor. Upon retirement from USDA, he began an engineering consulting business, Sullivan & Associates. He actively managed various water resource projects, including the White River and Bayou Meto Regional Irrigation Water Districts. He provided consulting services on water issues in Argentina and Bolivia.

Gene Sullivan passed away on Sept. 4th, 2017. His son, **Mike Sullivan**, now works as his Dad did, for USDA as Arkansas State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Attending the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame induction at one of the Gene Sullivan tables were: L to R - **Mrs. and Mr. Dennis Carman, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Mashburn, Mr. and Mrs Ben Tomlinson and Mrs. and Mr. Tom Fortner. Dennis. Ralph and Tom are NRCS Retirees and worked together in Arkansas.**



**Gene Sullivan – (deceased
9/4/2017)
Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame**

Bob Price and Nancy recently went on a three week Panama Canal cruise from LA to Miami. They made four stops in Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama Canal, and Columbia. Bob especially wanted to see the engineering of the new Canal. He reports that the gates are massive and roll out from the walls as well as having water-saving devices that recirculate the water at least three times. While in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, Bob took a UTV ride in the Baja. One word: Awesome. Bob, our Arkansas ARCSE president, is busy arranging for our annual meeting for the later part of September or early October. We all hope the COVID-19 threat will be over by then.



CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

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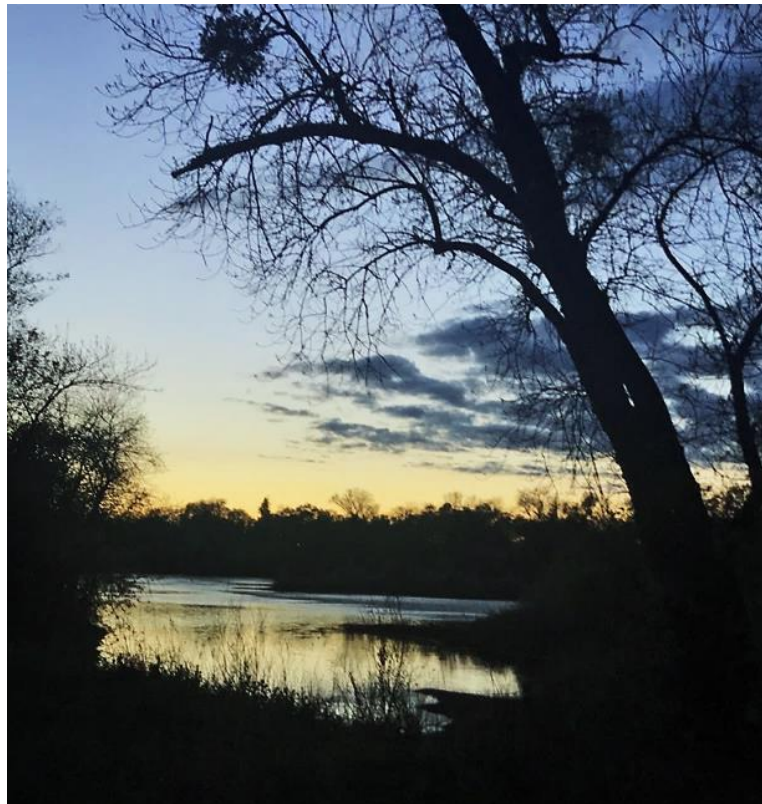
Greetings from California. It is not easy to be positive or share good news these days, but one thing all of us can be very thankful for is we are blessed to be retired with a paycheck that still comes to us every month. Another piece of good news from California is that I am not aware of any California retirees who have tested positive for the Corona Virus.

My, how life has changed drastically for all of us with this Virus! Here is an example my wife, **Dana** and I experienced this Easter. Dana and I dropped off "Easter Baskets" at the homes of two of our kids and our grand kids. Then we homes of two of our kids and our grandkids. Then we "face-timed" them with our phones to watch them open stuff and see what they had gotten. It is very difficult not to get to enjoy hugs and kisses like normal.



Bill, fly fishing while social distancing!

I fished the American River near my house recently and was able to enjoy time on the water catching a few fish and enjoying nature's beauty that fly fishing generally always offers.



The Beauty that fly fishing can provide

I suspect we have all gotten back into hobbies we can enjoy at home. For me, spending more time playing music and trying to expand my musical horizons was a natural fit. My other primary hobby, fly fishing, provides me an outlet and escape from our house, as "social distancing" is pretty easy out on the water.

My wife Dana is the real photographer in our family, and she recently got this great shot of the moon when the moon's position relative to earth provides the best opportunity to capture what has been referred to as the "pink moon" during these time periods.

I missed the opportunity to share about Gary Bullard's passing on December 31st, 2019, in the recent newsletter. Gary had extensive experience in both California and Oklahoma. His obituary is included in the In Memoriam section of the newsletter.

I checked in with his wife, **Linda** recently and she said she is doing ok but misses him terribly. She had planned to have a celebration of life event for Gary on their anniversary, May 10th but due to the Corona Virus that will not happen now. Linda says she is spending time with her son, daughter in-law, and grandson and is very grateful they are close by.



Dana captures the "Pink Moon" on April 7, 2020

Chester Bush shared with me the very sad news that his home in Cookeville, TN had been destroyed in a recent tornado in early March. Chester had a long (38-year) career, with time in Florida and Tennessee, including stints as a Soil Scientist, Technician, and District Conservationist. Chester moved out to California sometime in 2017 and resides in Fresno, CA with his wife Janet. Chester has strong ties to Tennessee with family back there, and until recently, a home. When Chester got the news, he made a trip back to Tennessee. He said everything was essentially destroyed or gone. Here is a short excerpt from what he shared with me, beginning when he got back to Tennessee.

"The next 26 days were a nightmare as I searched thru debris finding family effects. Eight people lost their lives that lived on our street to include children. The tornado was an F4 with 175 mph winds. My house which we purchased new in Aug 2016 was in the center of the tornado. Some of the family photos were found 85 miles away. I salvaged what I could and left these items in a storage building. My 2008 Titan truck which was in mint condition was also totaled. It is still unbelievable that I no longer have a home in TN and much of my personal effects are gone. Please keep the tornado victims in your prayers."

I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet Chester and his wife, **Janet** recently at California's all-employees meeting in February. It was very sad to hear this news from Chester and the stark reminder to all of us that our lives can change in a heartbeat.

Facebook is pretty busy with lots of folks having extra time on their hands. In the midst of all that is going on with the Virus situation, some good humor that can be found there. I thought I would share some of that here for the benefit of retirees who do not "partake" in Facebook.

Just some humor for the times

"To go to the grocery store, they said a mask and gloves were enough. They lied. Everybody else had clothes on."

"I promised myself I'd do things differently today, so I'm sitting at the other end of the couch."

"I just did the math for all the gigs I lost, and it looks like I actually saved \$214."

—As the leader of a small local band I can really relate to this one! (Bill Ward)

As my good friend and fellow retiree **Harold Honeyfield** and I lamented on the phone recently, we do not expect to be able to gather for our monthly retiree lunches for some time yet. We sure look forward to when we can do this again safely.

Wishing all retirees the best and to be safe!

COLORADO

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No reports, to this point, of adverse COVID-19 effects on our membership here in Colorado. The state goes from Stay-at-Home to Safer-at-Home status on April 26th, with golf courses and other outdoor venues opening where social distancing is possible.

When last checked, **Steve Park's** and **Allen and Kathy Green's** golf scrambles were still on for late June and July, respectively. On the home front we have grown accustomed to using Instacart to avoid the crowds at grocery store(s), GrubHub, and DoorDash to help keep favorite restaurants cooking. Big, big shout out and appreciation to those doing the shopping and delivery, as well as all others in the essential workforce.

Microsoft Teams is proving to be a workhorse for teleworking by our environmental modeling group at CSU, hands down on several projects: Missouri River Recovery Program on-line information management system for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on-going modeling support to the Field-to-Market Fieldprint Platform for sustainability assessments, cropland erosion map for a new Farm Service Agency CRP Ranking process, Colorado Food Systems resiliency studies, and continued model and data service support to NRCS applications, including the new Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART).

IOWA

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Earlier this year, **Lyle and Charlotte Asell** flew to Arizona to visit family in Casa Grande. From there they drove to Lake Elsinore, CA, to visit Lyle's cousins. After getting back to Des Moines, Charlotte headed to the Twin Cities to babysit their grandson while his parents were out of town. They got back home just in time to self-isolate. Lyle said that's pretty easy to do in Lucas County! There's always something to do on the farm or in the shop, and Charlotte has switched from quilting to making masks. One of Lyle's projects was to make a plant stand/bench. He used ash wood that came from an ash tree that his uncle planted in the 1930s trying to stabilize a gully on their century farm in southwest Iowa.

Lyle had another interesting story on something that I've never seen. The Union Pacific Railroad from Minneapolis to Kansas City runs adjacent to their farm. In early April, a helicopter dangling a monster "chain saw" was clearing trees along the track.



Flower stand made by Lyle Asell

The head was 10 circular saw blades totaling about 25 feet long attached to the chopper by a 100-foot long tube. It would go through a 12-inch branch with no problem. That's not something that you see every day!



"Saw" used to trim brush along the RR tracks

Probably everyone reading this newsletter has either seen a picture taken by **Lynn Betts** and/or read an article written by him. After Lynn retired as one of the best (okay, I know I'm a little biased) Public Affairs Specialists in the country, he has continued freelance work in photography and writing news stories about conservation. One of Lynn's contributions at the national level was helping to develop the NRCS National Photo Gallery. Another project of his was the origination of the national project called Backyard Conservation. Lynn's list of accomplishments, projects, awards, news articles and pictures is way too long to go into here. However, he recently received another honor that is certainly worthy of mentioning. The Iowa Master Farmers selected Lynn to receive their Exceptional Service to Iowa Agriculture Award. I was hoping to include a picture of Lynn receiving the award; however, the meeting where the awards were to be presented was postponed due to the coronavirus. It is now scheduled for September. Hopefully that happens. Congratulations Lynn!

Thanks to **Lee White** for providing the following update on their activities: "Prior to any knowledge (or maybe concern) for COVID-19, **Lee and Alice White** journeyed south to escape our normal Iowa winter. We spent two weeks in Florida visiting friends near Orlando, The Villages, Port Charlotte, and Naples. Lee enjoyed getting out on some golf courses, though several golf balls were left behind – probably because he was being stalked by an alligator on one of the courses! We flew from Florida to Cancun, Mexico to help our daughter and family celebrate a special birthday. I think we were invited to help provide childcare. Our twin grandchildren were nine months old at the time. We did manage to sneak away from the resort and ocean views to visit Tulum, a Maya ruin."



Alice and Lee White with twins Alice and Pattison at Cancun

Eldon and Jeannie Weber celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary on Palm Sunday, April 5th. They were married 62 years ago in a Methodist Church in El Paso, TX, while Eldon was in officer's basic training (Army anti-aircraft defense) for Nike missiles. While reminiscing, Eldon was thinking about what they have to show for it. Conclusion: he has much less hair - but it's still red! And, they are pretty proud of three sons and seven grandkids.



Dale Bruce, Bill Dayton, and Duane Miller do a snowshoe walk at Tennessee Pass.



Kim Muehlberg watching Bob Dayton break snow trails on the Mesa-Cortina Trail.

Thanks to Jody Christiansen for filling us in on their annual ski trip to Colorado: "Once again, the retired and currently employed NRCS friends met in Silverthorne, CO for a week in January. The group included retirees **Duane Miller, Bob Dayton, Jody Christiansen, Rick Knutson, and Jim Schneider**; current employees **Dale and Joanne Bruce**; former employee **Craig Muehlberg and his wife Kim**; and friends **Chris Davis, Rick Rubenstein and Bill Dayton**. We stayed in a new house this year since the one we have been staying in for years was sold. We didn't realize how nice we had it. However, our fox search was easier this year as it came to us, up the deck and looked at us in the kitchen. Obviously, people have been feeding them. Not much skiing but did some awesome snowshoeing. Lots of snow! Hope to return there next year."

For almost 50 years, a group of employees, retirees, and friends have been meeting up after work on Thursdays at a local pub for a few refreshments. This event has been known as Team Building for at least the last few decades. The regular Team Building participants include **Tom O'Connor, Bob Dayton, Dale and Joanne Bruce, Duane Miller, and Jody Christiansen**. Semi-regulars include **Rick Knutson, Laurel Foreman, Lee White, Herb Wilson, Dennis Pate, and Jim Phillips**. During these times of social distancing and staying at home, the group has been doing a teleconference around 4pm on Thursday and then playing virtual card games of 500 later in the evening.

Thanks to **Jerry Muff** for the following: "Since retirement from NRCS, my wife **Chris** and I have moved to our farm just west of Elkader. Our weekend cabin was expanded and made into our permanent home since 2010. Chris left her work with Farm Credit in 2014. Our two daughters are both married and have two sons each. Emily lives in Denver, CO, and Hannah lives in Marion, IA. Our son **Ben** resides in California and occasionally comes back to Iowa, sort of like a snowbird but without a solid migration plan. All are doing well, for which we are very thankful. I still hunt, fish, and exterminate excavating woodchucks for enjoyment and overall well-being. I cut and split wood for our primary source of heat. Recently I've taken up chainsaw carving and send out pictures to friends to have them guess what it looks like. Long story short, we really enjoy our country (and retired) lives."

Thanks to **Jim Ayen** for the following update: "**Jim and Doris Ayen** made their yearly trip to Florida in February and March. We stopped in Belleview, FL, to see some old friends from Jim's Prairie du Chien, WI, SCS days. Then went to Venice, FL, and spent two weeks with Doris's sister and enjoyed some great sun and pool time. The beaches along on the Gulf side are really nice. We then went to Jupiter, FL, to visit Doris's relatives and experienced the Atlantic beaches—much colder! We came back through Nashville the morning after the big tornado had hit there. It was great to get back home before The Virus hit! I've been busy with wood projects both with flat stock and CNC projects. I'm president of the Dunlap Park foundation. Dunlap Park is behind our house, and we did a controlled burn this spring. Here are a few pictures, a new jewelry armoire for Doris, a unique graduation gift for 2020 graduates, and FIRE!"



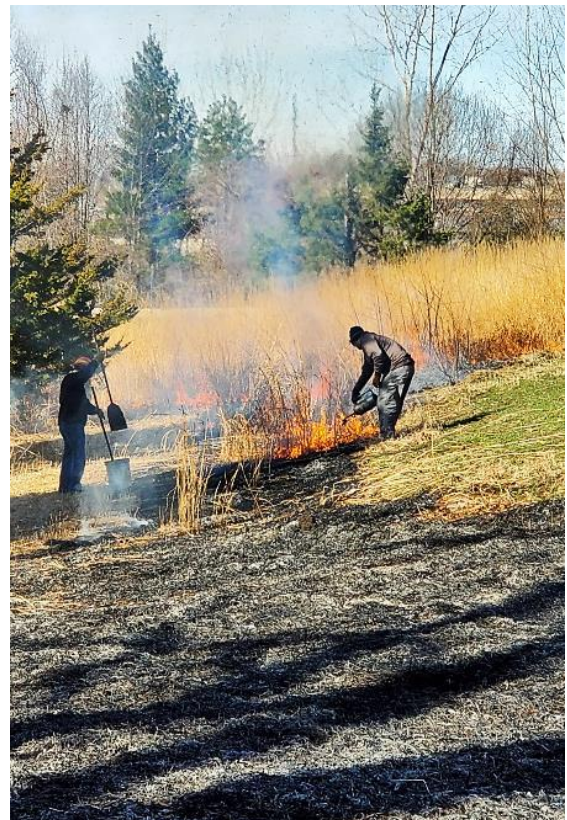
Dennis and Cheryl Pate along with granddaughters Meara and Keelin are all decked out for a St. Patrick's Day parade or party; but with all the cancellations, there's no place to go!



Jewelry armoire made by Jim Ayen



2020 graduation gift plaque made by Jim Ayen



Controlled burn in Park behind Jim Ayen's house

During the past few months, we have welcomed the following folks into our retiree community: **Greg Marek**, District Conservationist in Orange City; **Craig Foster**, Soil Conservation Technician in Centerville; and **Jim Allen**, Soil Conservationist in Iowa Falls.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative

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What an unusual spring! In mid-April when I sat down to write news from Kansas, the ground was covered with snow! The state continues in a lockdown mode, with all travel, events, and gatherings cancelled. So what is there to write about? We only leave our house to get groceries, keep a doctor's appointment, and take a ride each day to mail letters and ride around town.

Our only granddaughter's wedding was held on March 21st without her grandparents present. After weeks of being concerned about having good enough weather to travel, one would have never guessed that we would not be able to be there because of a virus. We would have had to travel in three different states to a lodge, and with my husband scheduled for cataract surgery the week after the wedding, the family felt we should not take the chance of contacting the virus. The lodge actually closed the day of her wedding; however, they honored her service and the dinner planned afterward served by the restaurant manager, a chef, and one waiter. What memories she will have.

Easter morning was spent in front of the computer watching our church service in our jeans while Easter outfits hung in the closet. The day was made special when we visited with our family members by Zoom. Throughout the lockdown we have been able to gather by technology for several meetings and keeping in touch with friends.

Retiree **Jon Ungerer** of Marysville, KS, has announced his candidacy for the Kansas House. His political interests focus on maintaining agriculture and rural communities in Kansas and veteran's affairs. His last position for the NRCS was the Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative Coordinator which dealt with voluntary conservation to address a proposed Endangered Species Act listing. Since retirement in 2017 he has been the Executive Director for the Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association (LICA). He serves as secretary for the Pony Express Museum Board of Directors and secretary for the Blackhawks Motorcycle Club. He also is an RSVP volunteer and delivers Meals on Wheels.

There is only one retirement to report: **Rodney D. Frack**, District Conservationist, retired February 28, 2020, from the Minneapolis office in the Abilene Management Unit with 33 years of service.

Three retirees are deceased. **Almus "Al" Richard Gantz** passed away on March 5th, 2020. He retired in 1982 as the District Conservationist in the Marion Field Office. His spouse, **Ruth**, preceded him in death on February 6th, 2020.

Duane Rolland Miller departed on March 11th, 2020. **Duane** retired in 1979 as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Stockton Field Office with 30 years of service. His wife of 71 years, **Vera**, survives.

John W. Reh passed on April 6th, 2020. He retired as the Assistant State Conservationist (Water Resources) in 1992 with 35 years of service. He then started Reh and Associates, a consulting engineering service, extending his career for another 15 years. His wife, **Judy**, preceded him in death in 2013. For a number of years **John** was my supervisor when he served as the Water Resources Planning Staff Leader. He became a very special friend, and I visited him often when Parkinson's disease limited his ability to be out and about. I will really miss him.

One spouse has also passed away: **Ruth Marie Davidson**, spouse of **Granville Davidson**, passed away on February 20th, 2020. **Granville** preceded her in death in 2016. He retired in 1986 as a Conservation Agronomist in the Topeka, KS, Area Office.

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

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Ron Musick: My life is so boring, haven't noticed anything different with the stay-at-home order.

Dennis Shirk: Hi, like everyone else we're staying home as much as possible. We are very fortunate that our senior center is fixing lunches each day and offers a drive-thru. It gives us a break from home and our own cooking, a nice break each day. We're doing our shopping every other week in our local store that is open from 6 to 7 each morning for senior citizens, and several people are taking advantage of that. Our kids are still working. Keep safe and see ya down the trail.

Liz Cook: Kia Ora! Retiree **Liz Cook** and her husband, **Gene Gardner**, retiree of the Missouri Department of Conservation, spent the month of March in New Zealand. What a gorgeous country with such friendly people! Highlights of our trip included hiking in several national parks, including the crown jewel, Fiordland National Park, touring wineries, eating lots of local seafood and spectacular wildlife viewing. We saw sperm whales and three species of dolphins and fur seals. But the birdlife was most amazing, from the endangered endemics such as flightless birds (kiwi, takahe, and weka), and kea (alpine parrot)—to marine birds including several species of albatross, white heron, royal spoonbills, and penguins. The scenery was beyond my expectations, especially the Southern Alps and Milford Sound with all the waterfalls.



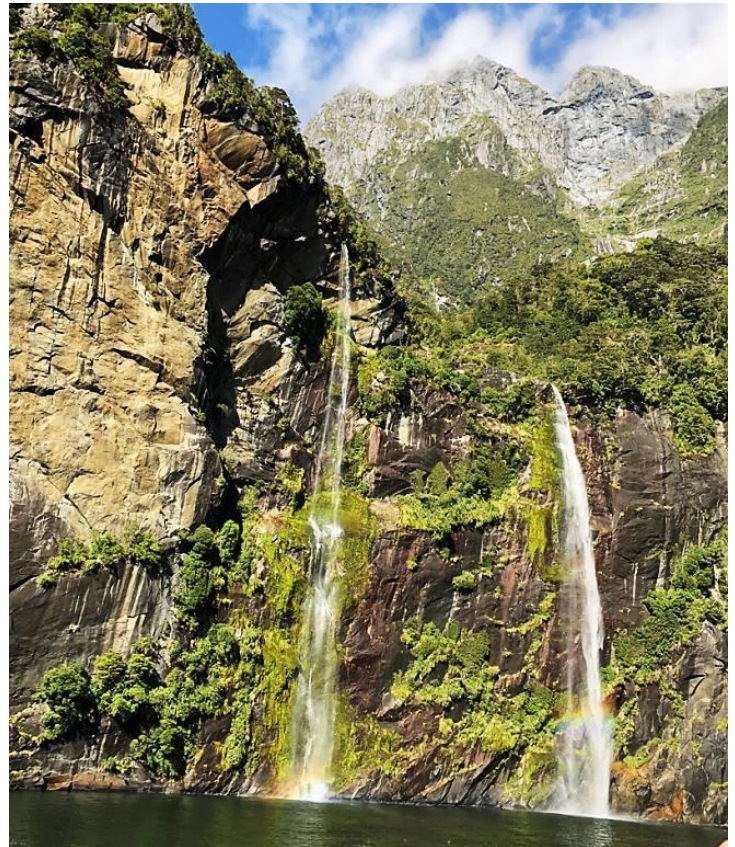
Left to right: Gene Gardner, Liz Cook, and friends in New Zealand.

On the day we were to return, March 25th, New Zealand was going to Level 4 security and basically closing the country due to coronavirus. We left two hours before Level 4 went into effect. The flight from Auckland to Houston was packed (they had cancelled many flights and consolidated them), but our US domestic flights and airports were empty. We self-quarantined from having been out-of-country; but just when that was ending, Missouri went on stay-at-home. It's been weird ordering groceries on Instacart and not leaving the house for days at a time! I am going to get out next week to turkey hunt in North Missouri.

Richard Koenig: We have some sad news. Our oldest son **Larry** was in a bad motorcycle accident and passed away on April 2nd. He was 57 years old with two children and four grandchildren. We are doing ok considering the situation. His funeral and burial was in Fayette, MO. **Marjorie** and I are staying close to home because of the pandemic.

Bill Pauls: Everything here at the Lake of the Ozarks is probably more copacetic than most places, as far as the "virus" goes. Come on down and we'll hash it all out over a beer or two. Haven't heard so much about "flattening the curve" since Maidenform came out with the sports bra. My next two scheduled marathons in KC this month and Denver next month are postponed. Still up and operating at the Pregnancy Help Center, and we have a burial at our church cemetery tomorrow (where I'm on the cemetery board/oversee the burials). Family (all healthy) were here for Easter. Our annual Easter Egg decorating contest was won by one of the grandkids for the 3rd year in a row. Also had a fun Easter egg hunt. One grandson is very much into mountain biking. He is building a trail out on our property—pretty cool. Also three different winners on three evening games of "Clue" (the old original) version.

Also, a little bit of "pool hall" style shuffleboard down in the game room. Grandson and his Mom beat Gram and I, two out of three for the championship. Also did a little what we call "lake driving," always interesting things to see around the lake. Lake cabin and garage improvements, boat repair, dock rebuild, shorefront/seawall management all ongoing. Dogwoods and the redbuds are just starting to be beautiful, and all the other trees are beginning to "green" up. Hoping some of our other regular



New Zealand Waterfalls

activities, church, and local haunts will open again soon. Life is short, let's get back to partying! Stay happy and healthy, all of our former colleagues and friends.

Gena Michalson: My daughter-in-law is expecting a girl in August! We're excited because they have two boys. Their family is doing well working from home. My daughter is still assisting with surgeries here in Columbia, and they didn't have enough protective gear for a while, but I think they are OK now. And we got a new puppy about three weeks ago. She's a mini-Aussie about six months old and a rescue. She is joyful and mischievous and keeps life interesting. And we just sold a yearling colt to a neighbor, so we will still get to see how he develops. And we occasionally order takeout from Tellers. Can't complain.

Alton Taylor: I have been staying put. My spring trip to Arizona was stopped, so I won't get to see the desert bloom this year. It has done it before without me. So here I am having the easiest life a person could have. It's often mid-afternoon before I have to make a decision. Decisions have dominated our lives from the get-go. All is well with the family. No one has missed a day of work even though at home part of the time. Hope that is sunshine at the end of this tunnel!

Paula Price: To be productive during the isolation of Sheltering at Home I have handwritten close to 300 thank-you notes for the Volunteer and Auxiliary Services at Mosaic Life Care in St. Joseph, as a volunteer myself and auxiliary board member. The notes were a part of the 4,000 hand-written by volunteers sent to employees working during this pandemic. Also, Second Harvest Food Bank holds a Letter Carriers Food Drive every May, and they needed their plastic door hanger bags stuffed with their donor envelopes. I have turned in 2,000 completed bags and have another 1,000 in process. Both of these were completed in the comfort of my family room. I encourage everyone as you are able to think outside the box and lend yourselves to volunteering, if you don't already. There are many ways your time can be used in positive and productive ways all the time and certainly right now. God bless each of you. May you stay healthy, be thankful for the roof over your heads and the food on your tables, and stay coronavirus free.

Bob Harryman: Like everyone else, because of the COVID-19, I am staying away from people and wearing a mask when I go shopping. I'm planning to plant some garden; but this week the hardware store is closed, so I can't buy seed or onion sets, and Walmart is out too. This social distancing has caused me to learn about Zoom video conferencing, which is a good way to visit with family when you can't get together in person. These are historic times and I feel for the young people whose lives are in turmoil because of this pandemic. We enjoyed a few days on Sanibel Island in January but came home to winter in Missouri. We hope to get down to the farm on Elk River in McDonald County, MO this summer and have a river float and cook out with the family. From Bethany, MO where SCS sent me, Doris and I are sending our best wishes to you. Be safe and healthy and enjoy your family.



Mike Blaine: Hello all. It certainly has been an interesting two months to say the least. We up here in northern rural MO don't face the same challenges as the larger cities with the Corona virus, but it has affected life nonetheless. I feel so sorry for the small businesses in the smaller towns. The restaurants in Memphis and Baring are doing take-out only. No inside dining is allowed. At least one of the Memphis cafes is doing meal delivery to try to stay open through this trying time. Other small businesses are not as busy as they normally are. The farmers are still hard at work trying to get a crop in. There are some constraints even for farm businesses. I needed a part the second week of April and went to my local farm shop. I could not go in and pick up my part as normal. I got one step inside the door and faced a table that prevented further entry. I had to tell the person behind the table what I wanted. They went and got it for me, and I paid there at the door.

Pam and I are keeping busy at home doing those little things that never seemed to get done before. We also make at least one trip to Memphis every week to video record a song at church that is posted on our church Facebook page, hopefully as an encouragement for those that see it. I also post a Sunday School lesson to be read on that page as well. Our Youth Pastor and Senior Pastor do live studies online on Wednesday and Thursday nights. We also record a sermon to be viewed on Sunday morning. We will be very glad when this is all over. But, as I said earlier, the biggest concern is for the small businesses and service workers that are struggling to get by financially. We pray God will bring this difficult time to a close very soon. Best wishes to all. I hope you are doing well (as well as possible right now!).

Hugh Curry: Stroke Update—A big "thank you" to all those who sent me notes, emails or contacted me by phone wishing me well. I enjoyed hearing from or talking to every one of you. The good news is my wheel chair, walker, and cane have been "parked," and I am now walking without aid inside and out. Have to be careful as balance is still suspect and stamina limited. It is especially difficult to stand in one place without becoming light headed. The left side numbness has not gone away, but the medics are still optimistic it will become more normal. All medical appointments and physical therapy are video visits. This staying at home gives me plenty of time to do physical therapy exercises. Weather permitting, I am making good use of my recumbent trike, putting on quite a few miles in the neighborhood and on the Columbia trail system. **Sharon** is giving me wonderful care and leading the effort to eat more veggies, chicken and fish. Greatly reduced pizza and ice cream. Darn! Hope everyone is following the stay-at-home orders and getting along okay

MONTANA

Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative

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Montana Big Sky Report

Gordon Decker report: We got the sad news that Daniel "Dan" L. McLean passed away on April 6th, 2020. Dan was a Soil Scientist, mapped soils in several locations in Montana, was on the Montana State Soils Staff and was instrumental in getting

our soil interpretation information current and ready for the Food Security Act (FSA) implementation in the early 1990s. You can view Dan's obituary and share online condolences at www.franzen-davis.com.

We did travel to Arizona in March to watch some SF Giants Spring Training Baseball; but when we landed at Mesa/Phoenix Airport and took our phones off of airplane mode, there was a message "All spring training games have been cancelled." We flew to AZ with our son and daughter-in-law, and **Kathy's** sister and husband were driving from CA. We all decided to stay and play tourist. We visited Old Town Scottsdale, the World of Butterflies, the Botanical Gardens, and the Zoo. Also, a road trip to Sedona and Red Rocks Park. We returned home on March 18th and quarantined ourselves. I have not left the house (age and asthma concerns), and Kathy has gone to town a couple times for meds and groceries during special hours for seniors. We're enjoying staying home. No future trips planned as of April 16th.

Phyllis Phillips Report: I haven't been doing anything worth mentioning during this lovely quarantine. Thousands of snow geese stopped by to spend a few days in our field next to the house that was hailed out. Skyping all the kids and grandkids. Getting a new puppy in a few weeks. Building a house in Delaware and trying to do everything virtually which is great fun. Having a virtual happy hour and will play trivia tonight. You know just the usual stuff. Hope all is well and everyone is safe and healthy!

Gooby Ranch Report: **Mary Ann** has been saving the coins she gets back from the cashiers at the stores in a piggy bank for the past four years. She wanted the savings so we could attend the Billings, MT, rodeo and stock show. The rodeo and stock show lasts four days. Once Mary Ann figured out she had enough funds for us to attend, she got real busy doing the items on her to-do list for those four days. She has them all completed.

Because of the Coronavirus issue they had to cancel the rodeo and stock show which was scheduled four months from now. What a bummer. Now Mary Ann has nothing scheduled to do for those four days since she had already completed the to-do list items. I had to spend five days developing a new to-do list for her for those four days. We had been talking about building some wildlife-friendly fence. That way more deer and antelope could get onto our place, and I would be able to provide Mary Ann with more deer and antelope for her freezer.

We took all the money Mary Ann had saved in her piggy bank for the Billings rodeo and were able to buy enough fence posts and wire to build a 140 feet of wildlife-friendly fence. Mary Ann spent a week in her spare time studying where the deer and antelope preferred to cross the fence to get onto our place. That is the area Mary Ann will build the new fence. I would have helped her with the study, but our pickup does not have a TV.

Mary Ann was not happy that the rodeo was cancelled, but she is happy with the new to-do list I made for her for those four days.

If things go well and Mary Ann gets enough coins saved, maybe we will be able to attend the Billings rodeo four years from now.

NEBRASKA

Norm Kempf, Jim Culver, ARCSE Representatives

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The Nebraska group has canceled their morning breakfast for the past two months due to stay-at-home directions from our mayor and governor. It has been a good move because when we compare our number to other states, we are doing well. We are not aware of any retirees or their families that tested positive for the virus. The last count as of April 18th shows that the state has had 1,216 cases and 24 deaths. Our home county has had 63 cases and one death. We consider ourselves fortunate and most people are staying close to home.

We have one death to report: **Dorothy Argabright** who was the wife of **Scott Argabright**. She passed away on February 20th, 2020.

Jim Culver has been doing some research on the history of our breakfast club. He discovered this history that was used to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the club. This history was compiled by **Bev Smith** who was the Financial Manager on the Administrative Staff at the Nebraska State Office for many years.

Arthur R. Marquardt, Assistant State Conservationist, retired on April 9th, 1971. He thought it would be a good idea to establish a club for retired SCS employees who reside in Lincoln in order to maintain some association and social contact with former fellow workers. At his retirement dinner, he announced that, on the following Wednesday morning, there would be a breakfast at Scotts Pancake House (now Kay's Restaurant) and all SCS retirees were invited to attend.

Eleven retirees came to that first breakfast: **Art Marquardt, John Hall, Russ Batie, E.G. Jones, Lee Smedley, Lloyd Mitchell, Leonard Johnston, Jim Bickle, D.E. Hutchinson, M.S. McMurtry, and A.D. Stoesz**. There were 32 retirees in Lincoln at that time. The largest number attending the breakfast that year was 19. Of the 32 charter members, **Ken Good** is the only remaining active member.

In 1976, Art Marquardt suggested that female retirees be invited to participate in the club activities. A vote was taken and the majority voted in favor of this. There were 11 retired SCS women in Lincoln at that time. **Lucy Paulsen** is the only one of the original group of women still on the active list.

The first annual cook-out breakfast was held on July 18th, 1973, at Van Dorn City Park, with a total of 48 retirees and spouses attending. This event was moved to October the following year. It was held at Van Dorn Park until 1977, Antelope Park from

1978 to 1985, and Bethany Park from 1986 to 1993. In the early days, it was actually a "cook-out" over grills and open fires. In 1994, the breakfast moved to St. Mark's Methodist Church. Spouses and wives of deceased SCS retirees are always invited to this event.

The first annual dinner (at that time, known as the Sweetheart Dinner) was held in February, 1976 at the Knolls. This event was held annually at the Knolls until 1984 and at the Cotner Center since that time. The February Sweetheart Dinner changed to an April Spring Dinner in 1989. As with the October breakfast, spouses and wives of deceased retirees are invited.

The Lincoln Club was the first such club in the United States although many states have one now. —Art Marquardt

Subsequent chairmen were **Ingram Hermanson, Dick Jackson, Bob Corcoran, Elwin Butler, Pete Jensen, Harry Bell, Axel Boilesen, Evelyn vonBergen, Nerine Newsham, Don Broberg, Rod Harner, Frances King, Keith Myers, Bob Lamb, Bob MacLauchlan**, and our current chairman, **Clinton Johnson**. The first by-laws were adopted in 1982 and, apparently, the first official election of officers took place in 1983. The gavel used at meetings was made by **Dick Hogue** in 1990 and presented to the club. Our present active membership is at 84, and we usually have between 35-40 members at the regular monthly meetings.



SCS Retirees, Antelope Park, October 1975

Back Row, L to R: Lloyd Mitchell, Dick TenHulzen, Ed Fitzgerald, Dick Jackson, Ingram Hermanson, Ralph Smith (guest of Jacksons), Kenneth Good, Dr. A. D. Stoesz, Mrs. Sylvester Gussman, Sylvester Gussman, Oliver Scherer, Elwin Butler, Mrs. Dave Vallicott, D. R. Vallicott, Herb Kollmorgen.

Second Row, L to R: Mrs. Lee Smedley, Mrs. Dick TenHulzen, Mrs. Ed Fitzgerald, Mrs. Ralph Smith (guest of Jacksons), Mrs. D. E. Hutchinson, Mrs. A. D. Stoesz, Mrs. Oliver Scherer, Mrs. Ross Greenawalt, Mrs. Elwin Butler, Mrs. Herb Kollmorgen.

Third Row, L to R: Chet Rork, Mrs. Chet Rork, Mrs. Dick Jackson, Mrs. Art Ferber, Mrs. Lloyd Mitchell, Mrs. Ingram Hermanson, Mrs. Art Marquardt, Mrs. Russell Batie, Mrs. Jim Bickle, Mrs. Dexter Haws, Mrs. Emrys Jones, Mrs. John Hall.

Kneeling, L to R: Art Ferber, Glen Railsback, D. E. Hutchinson, Dwight McVicker, Lee Smedley, Art Marquardt, Russell Batie, Jim Bickle, Dexter Haws, Emrys Jones, John Hall.

NEW YORK

Nancy Lee, ARCSE Representative

Email: mlee0006@rochester.rr.com

We are hunkered down here in Upstate New York from the coronavirus, maintaining our social distancing, washing our hands, and going crazy not being able to go out and see our friends and relatives, and not being able to shop and go to church. We are five hours and 300 miles from New York City and Long Island, but we still have to follow the restrictions. The hardest part is going from seeing the grandsons every day to not being able to hug and kiss them for almost six weeks.

My house is the cleanest it has been for many years. The only problem is no one but my husband and I are the only ones who see it! We are waiting for the weather to break and get warmer. Our winter was not too cold and snowy, but March and April have been the opposite. When we have a warm day (in the 50's and 60's) we head to Seneca Lake to walk and enjoy the sunshine.

NORTH DAKOTA

Robert "Bob" Bird, ARCSE Representative

Email: Rajmbird@aol.com

Like the rest of the country most North Dakotans are staying at home or keeping our distance from other people if we have to go out. We recently lost **Neal McClure**, a long-time State Representative for ARCSE in North Dakota. I helped Neal toward the end of his tenure as State Representative until he told me to take over. They were having annual retiree reunions and I continued doing that. Neal was a true gentleman all his life. He exemplified kindness, patience, thoughtfulness, and a strong Christian faith. He was one of the nicest persons you would ever want to know.

Another of our regular retiree reunion attendees, **Abner Lee** also died recently. Abner was also one of the nicest guys you'd ever want to meet. These two individuals will be missed from our retiree group. The new retirees do not seem to participate in retiree events.

I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this pandemic.

Lisa M. Rixen, 55, Richardton, ND, after a 15-year battle with breast cancer, passed away Dec. 26th, 2019. She enjoyed a 16-year career with SCS in Dickinson, ND. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

OHIO

Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative

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We are very sad to report that **Mike Patterson** passed away April 8th from a long battle with cancer. Mike was the Wetland Team Leader for Area 2 and past RC&D Coordinator for the Erie Basin RC&D. Mike's obituary can be viewed at: <https://everloved.com/life-of/michael-d-patterson/obituary/>. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

OKLAHOMA

Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative

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Due to COVID-19, the Oklahoma SCS/NRCS retirees cancelled their meeting scheduled for April 24th and instead opted for an exchange of information via the internet. Following are a few comments from members about what is going on in their lives during the pandemic.

Greetings Members of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. The Society appreciates your being a member of our organization in 2019. We have accomplished much in our first two years of operation. We hope you will support our organization in 2020 by continuing or joining as a new member. Thanks for your support of our organization as we work to collect, preserve, and share Oklahoma's rich conservation history with Oklahomans. **-Ben Pollard**, President OCHS

Following are a few responses to the cancellation of our April Meeting.

Thanks for the notice. In the current situation I believe it is the prudent thing to do since we are all in vulnerable groups. Hope you all are doing well. We are doing well here, trying to get garden area constructed (new raised beds made from Oklahoma Red Cedar) and garden in, but rain is currently hampering. Take care!

Dan and Sharon Runnels: This is **Carolyn Webb** at Bristow. Please know that we are praying for all of you and wishing the very best for each of you! You are my extended family.

Thanks for the notice. I still like to know what's happening, even if I never am able to take part. Take care. **Geri Cutler**

We were notified that **Peggy Hays** passed away on October 30th. Peggy was the wife of retired technician, **Larry Hays**. Larry retired over 20+ years ago from Shawnee. **Peggy** also worked for the USDA. Her obituary can be found at <https://www.cooperfuneral.com/listings>. The services were held at Cooper Funeral Home in Tecumseh, OK.

Bob Wingo passed away on December 1st, 2019. He retired as an Inspector from the Davis Watershed Office in the 1980's. Funeral services for **Bobby Glenn "Bob" Wingo** were held December 5th, 2019 at the Hennepin Baptist Church in Hennepin. Interment followed at the Hennepin Cemetery.

Ladonna Petermann passed away February 1st. She was the wife of **Bill Petermann** who served in several roles for SCS. Services were held February 6th, 2020 at Dighton-Marler Funeral Home Chapel in Stillwater.

John Beard, former Area Conservationist at Hugo, Oklahoma, passed away February 2nd. He was 94 years old and lived the past many years in Paris, TX. Many of our retirees will remember John for his dedication to soil conservation and his caring for many who passed through his area in the 1970's and 80's. He was a fine gentleman with many friends and co-workers. His services were held Friday, February 7th at First Christian Church in Paris, TX.

R. C. Brinlee, 88, of Wilburton, passed away February 7th, 2020 in McAlester, OK. His funeral service was held February 11th, 2020 at the Salt of the Earth Church in Wilburton. **R. C.** served in the U.S. Army and received an honorable discharge in 1953. **R. C.** then attended Eastern A&M where he played baseball. He then moved on to Oklahoma State University in Stillwater where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology in 1959. As part of his employment with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), he authored soil profiles and maps for several counties in Oklahoma. He retired from the SCS in 1988.

Ruby Frey, mother of **Larry Frey** (CET for West Zone– North), passed away on Monday, February 10th. Her memorial service was held at the Zion Lutheran Church in Lahoma.

Retiree **Eugene Spurlock** passed away on Friday, February 21st. **Gene** retired from SCS as a Technician and then went to work for OCC as an inspector in the AML department for several years. **Gene's** services were February 25th at the First Baptist Church in Chelsea, OK.

Retiree **Carolyn Jameson** passed away on March 25th, 2020 in Stillwater. **Carolyn** was the Budget Officer at the State Office from 1977 until she retired in 2001. Carolyn served as a budget officer and made trips around the U.S., training other budget officers in DC, Denver, Fort Worth, Jacksonville, and New Orleans. A private service was held at Pryor Cemetery in Stuart on March 30th, 2020.

We are super excited and also very saddened to announce that **Sharon Kaiser** retired August 30th, 2019 from NRCS. **Sharon** worked in the Water Resources section at the State office for 20 years as the Administrative Assistant. She worked for the federal government (SCS/NRCS/OGC) for 33 years and seven months. If you have had your Lincpass updated at the State Office in the past 8+ years, you might have met **Sharon** then. **Sharon** is so very excited about retirement and spending more time with her friends and especially her grandson, **Gabriel**.

After 30+ years of service to SCS/NRCS, **Robert Dotson** retired November 30th, 2019. A reception was held on November 25th by the Alfalfa County Conservation District to honor his services.

Kim Walker, Resource Conservationist in Chickasha, retired on December 31st, 2019 with 33 years of service. A reception honoring **Kim** was held on December 10th at the Chickasha Field Office. We wish **Kim** the very best in his retirement! **Greg D. Allen** from the Idabel Field Office retired on December 31st, 2019. We wish him well in his retirement years in Southeast Oklahoma. **Harold Wheeler**, SCT from Holdenville also retired on December 31st, 2019. Following are a few observations **Harold** has made over the years and with his NRCS friends.

My life's observation: If there is a beginning, there is a middle and an end. My life has been Blessed more than I deserve and more than I can count. I do, however count a blessing that I cherish, that is the coworkers and producers I have worked with over the years who became my friends. This has not been an easy decision, so I hope you can understand "Good Bye" becomes very emotionally difficult as I get older. That is why I have kept my retirement to myself until now. Stop by or call anytime. I'll still be milking my cows every morning and setting on my ***[Mule] whenever I can. —**Harold Wheeler**, (405) 712-0603, pyramidranch@gmail.com

David Hungerford retired from NRCS on January 3rd, 2020 with 45+ years of service. He began his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service on May 24th, 1974 as a Soil Conservationist in Buffalo, OK. He is a graduate of Texas Tech University with a bachelor's degree in Range and Wildlife Management. His career took him to Buffalo, Jay, back to Buffalo, Stillwater Field Office, then to the Oklahoma State Office where he retired as the ASTC (FO) for the western one-third of Oklahoma. A retirement party honoring **David** was held on January 17th in Stillwater.

J. R. Flores, SC, Missouri, retired January 3rd with 37½ yrs service. His last position held in Oklahoma was Area Conservationist at Clinton.

After 31½ years of service, **Troy Collier**, Resource Soil Scientist at the Woodward TSO retired on February 28th, 2020. **Troy** started his career on the Perry Soil Survey team mapping Noble County in 1988. He was transferred to Buffalo in the summer of 1992 as the Project Leader for the Harper County Soil Survey. Upon completion, the Beaver and Lipscomb County Texas Soil Surveys were started and approximately 1/3 done when he was selected to the Resource Soil Scientist position at Woodward TSO in 2002. **Troy** put his roots in the Woodward TSO and has been there for nearly 18 years. We wish **Troy** the very best in retirement!

Helen Cole, wife of retiree **Everett Cole** (soil scientist), spent several weeks in the hospital and has now returned home with hospice care. The family asks that if you want to see her to please call before coming. Cards can be sent to the house at: **Helen Cole**, 523 E Highview Ave., Stillwater, OK 74075.

Congratulations and goodbye to **Chad Kacir**, ASTC FO East Zone, as he leaves Oklahoma and his duties as an Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations to become the "big dog" as the State Conservationist in Louisiana. **Chad** started in Alexandria, LA on December 8th.

We heard recently that **Clifford Williams** resides in Sayre, OK. He served as an agronomist and was an SRC when he retired. He worked part of his career in Texas. He retired in 1986. He and his wife were both originally from the Sayre area.

Harry Fritzler has agreed to serve as the Oklahoma Retirees' President again for the next year. **Steve Chessmore** will again be the Vice-President, and the "reliable" **Sandra Hough** will again serve as Secretary/ Treasurer. We all thank you for keeping us in line. You know, retirees can be pretty rowdy!

As for your editor, **Bonnie** and I are staying home as advised and catching up on home projects. Bet the thrift stores are going to be overrun when the pandemic is over, with people donating many of the "treasures" we have accumulated over the years. I do a little gardening, play with my wildlife camera, help out with NARFE and other retiree organizations, and watch a little TV. If you haven't found MeTV or AntennaeTV on your cable connections, you are missing out. There is Highway Patrol (with Broderick Crawford), Dragnet, Father Knows Best, My Three Sons, and a host of other "quality" entertainment for all to see. Watch one of those, then go to bed and you will sleep like a baby! —**Randy Freeland**

And this just in from **Harry Fritzler** concerning **Joy Pewther's** stroke: I visited by phone with **John Pewthers**, retired DC at Waurika, on April 6th. **John** reports that **Joy** (his wife) was released from the hospital and is at a rehab center in Duncan. She is in very good spirits and feisty, as always. She's telling the staff whether they are doing a good job or not. The progress she has made in the past week has been tremendous, but the road ahead is still long. They ask that we pray for them as they journey down the road ahead. **John** is in good spirits as well. Please folks, send your prayers for **Joy** and **John**.

Members are reminded to look at the information presented on the website www.joepad.com. If you happen to miss our meetings, the website provides pictures, list of attendees, etc.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 23rd, 2020 at the Golden Corral in Oklahoma City. More details will follow, but go ahead and put it on your calendar. No reservations are needed, and we welcome out-of-state guests as well.

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

Email: don.stettler@comcast.net

It seems that most of the retiree news I have been receiving has been the sad news about those who have passed away. **Linda Kamna** (1940—2020), a draftsperson on the Oregon engineering staff when she retired in May 2003, passed away on March 4th. Her first experience with the agency was at the West National Technical Center (WNTC). After a hiatus while raising her two daughters, she returned to Oregon staff in 1984. For a time, she did her drafting much like when she had at WNTC with a T-square, triangles, and a Leroy lettering set. And then, with what must have been a huge challenge, she mastered computer aided drafting.

Gene Wright who retired as an engineering technician at Hood River, Oregon passed away on January 19th. The Hood River Valley is one of the most scenic places in Oregon situated between Mt. Hood and the Columbia River. It is noted for its many apple, pear, and cherry orchards. In November 1977, Gordon Stroup (1927-2002), the WNTC drainage engineer, and I were assigned to resolve an engineering inspection agree-to-item by investigating the practice that Gene promoted of blinding plastic corrugated drainage tubing with woodchips. This was common practice when clay tile was used because it facilitated inflow to the drainage line. The

concern was that plastic tubing required rigid lateral support to keep it from squashing down. For two days Gene, Gordon, and I went from orchard to orchard digging up drainage lines and testing for deflection. This was accomplished using circular wooden plugs turned to various diameters pushed up the drain line with a flat sewer snake. It was found that the plastic corrugated drainage tubing did in fact deflect. Because it did, blinding with woodchips was not to be recommended for plastic drainage tubing. For me spending two beautiful fall days in the Hood River Valley was a very pleasant experience. A bonus was finding some very juicy unpicked apples.



Hood River Valley orchard

On a happier note, **Leland Hardy** was recently was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by Marion Soil and Water Conservation District. He was recognized for his twenty-three years of volunteering his expertise to the district. This included developing engineering plans, training, grant application technical review, and serving on the board.



Leland Hardy and Meredith Hoffman, Marion County SWCD staff member and Maurice Jernstedt's daughter

PENNSYLVANIA

Bill Bowers, Tim Murhpy; ARCSE Representatives

Emails: wbowers@comcast.net, vindemurph@verizon.net

From Carl DuPolt, Watershed 101 Workshop: Darby Creek Valley Association, April 2020. This is a webinar created on April 11th.

TEXAS

Arnold King, ARCSE Representative

Email: arnolddking@hotmail.com

The North Texas Chapter, for obvious reasons, canceled our monthly meetings until things loosen up here in Texas. The Governor is in the process of executing a plan to phase-in a return to semi-normalcy, based on medical advice and available data. I think most folks here in Texas believe he is doing the right thing. So, I don't have much to report. Hopefully we will soon begin having our monthly meetings.

My wife, daughter and granddaughter had a cruise scheduled during early January and decided to go ahead with the planned girl-only trip. Luckily, they returned on schedule. The cruise line did an excellent job of reducing the risk of infection by adjusting normal methods of foodservice and mandatory use of hand sanitizers. Again, they were lucky because **Willeene** got a message from Carnival that one of the travelers was diagnosed with the virus.

The Texas Retirees Association had plans finalized for the 2020 annual meeting at New Braunfels, TX. We were all set to meet, all reservations were made, and we were all looking forward to another great reunion during April 16-17. But it became obvious toward the end of February that the meeting had to be canceled, so the planning group made that difficult decision. One downside of the canceled meeting, besides the social issues, is that we did not raise the normal \$2,500 to fund our scholarship program. We are proud of the program because we sponsor 2-4 young people who show interest in conservation and need financial aid to attend one of several conservation/wildlife workshops scheduled in Texas. We raise the funds by a silent auction that everyone generously enjoys.

WASHINGTON

Ken Kaul, ARCSE Representative

Email: kenkaul@msn.com

COVID-19, social distancing, stay home, no fishing, no hunting, no barbers (I heard that there is a run on violins), very difficult to get together for lunch when the doors to the buffet are locked, earthquakes and drought. Life in the state of Washington. Probably not too much different than in the other Washington.

Stefan Fecher report: Not a lot happening. We made the trek north the second week of April. We took our travel trailer to Arizona last fall and visited Zion NP. Plans to visit Bryce NP were thwarted by weather. The forecast high was 40° F. Not conducive to using the shuttle and doing a few short hikes. Spring travel plans included Canyonlands and related parks. Even without the cold snowy weather that was out due to COVID-19.

The best part of heading home was Costco grocery delivery and using the trailer instead of motels. All we had to do outside was fuel, night check-in process for campgrounds, and hooking up to power. We're a week into spring at home. The yard is already looking good. Costco and Fred Meyer deliveries have us in good shape.

Ken Kaul is healing well from double hernia surgery. It'll be better next year.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

We are still looking for a replacement for John Peterson as the ARCSE Representative.

John and Blanche Peterson embarked on their annual Florida Nats Spring Training–Hilton Head Island trip just before the virus pandemic hit. They spent some time in Kissimmee before heading to Palm Beach for baseball. They did get to see the Nats play the Tigers and Astros and were at the Yankees game when it was announced that Major League Baseball was suspending spring training because of the virus. Their game with the Mariners was cancelled.

They left Palm Beach for Hilton Head Island (HHI), SC on March 14th. In recent years on their HHI leg they have been joined by **Niles and Carolyn Glasgow** and **Don and Jo Gohmert**. And while they have been at HHI, all of them have enjoyed an annual luncheon with **Art Holland**. This year, because of the virus and other ailments, the **Gohmerts** and **Glasgows** decided not to travel, and **Art** decided to avoid driving to the lunch. So, **John and Blanche** enjoyed beautiful weather and the ocean by themselves.

On March 16th and 17th, the restaurants were still open, so they enjoyed the seafood at some of their favorite HHI restaurants. They also managed to get to the grocery store. But on Wednesday, all the restaurants and many other businesses closed because of the virus. Then on Friday the HHI mayor closed all public beaches. So they became self-quarantined at HHI starting on March 18th. But what a beautiful place to be while quarantined. They have a lagoon running right past their deck into the ocean. And they could read, enjoy the weather and wildlife. They left for home on March 21st, and like most of us, have remained at home ever since.

John is also part of a Knights of Columbus church group in Fairfax County that picks up food about to be dated from local Giant stores and delivers it to Food for Others, a local food pantry. With the virus, the food pickup team has been kept away from the stores. It has really hurt the food pantry, as much food is needed now, and some is not getting delivered.

Carl Bouchard update: You may remember our adventures with travelling. In 2018, we were scheduled to do the Viking Grand European journey from Budapest to Amsterdam but our plane never left Philadelphia and could not get us to our boat until 5 days later. So we cancelled and collected on the insurance. We were able to reschedule for June 2019 and had a great trip. We were scheduled to return to Hawaii in September but in August, I got a terrible back pain that turned out to be metastatic Stage 4 Prostate cancer had returned and a tumor was in my number 10 vertebrae affecting numbers 8 through 12. So it was an emergency surgery followed by radiation again. That meant we had to postpone our Hawaii trip until this summer but in the meantime we booked a Viking trip on the waterways of the Czars from St. Petersburg to Moscow for June. Well, due to the CoronaVirus, Viking cancelled the trip and we are now hanging waiting to rebook. So that is three trips in three years that we have had cancelled. Guess we were meant to stay home, and I just now feel strong enough to travel. But as a neighbor who has since passed told me, I'm under house arrest with no end in sight. Oh yes, my legs and muscles were very weak which I blamed on the chemo. It turned out to be Rhabdomyolysis created by the statins I have been taking for the past 45 years. I could not even walk up two steps. I am off all statins from now on and also off blood pressure medication, feeling better and getting stronger every day. Thank God.

From **Paul Benedict**: How I'm handling the Coronavirus Pandemic. If anybody has ever owned a German Shepherd you know they are smart, loyal and protective to its family. They will follow their human anywhere. With Coronavirus keeping us at home, I've been spending 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with our 5-year old Lobo, often less than 6 feet away. He does not understand the concept of social distancing. In this picture he is closely supervising me make a turkey stew for dinner. Normally my wife and I would go out to dinner at a favorite restaurant on a Friday night, but not with Coronavirus keeping us home.



NEW SENIOR CONSERVATIONISTS

Prepared by Marc Safley, Senior Conservationist Chronicler

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.

Glen Evan Kelley
Lloyd A. Tyndall

Lexington, KY
Wilmington, NC

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist

August (Gus) Dornbusch

Senior Conservationist August (Gus) Dornbusch was born August 18, 1936, in Wamego, Kansas. Wamego is a city in Pottawatomie County on the Kansas River about 16 miles east of Manhattan. Gus was raised on his family's farm and attended local schools. Upon graduation he attended Kansas State University in Manhattan. Gus graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering in January 1959.

Gus began his career with the Soil Conservation Service in June of 1960 as an engineer at Hiawatha, KS. He was there for a year, when in June 1961 he was selected to be the Watershed Engineer at Atchison, KS. In January 1965 he was named Project Engineer at Cedar Vale, KS, and served in that capacity until February 1967. Gus then moved to Frankfort, KY, as Project Engineer. In August 1970 Gus was selected to be Assistant State Engineer at Champaign, IL. He served there for two years when he was named State Conservation Engineer for Georgia at Athens in August 1972. While still located in Athens Gus was given a detail assignment to the EPA Region IV Office in Atlanta to work on nonpoint pollution control strategies. That assignment lasted from February 1977 until August 1978 when he took the position of Assistant State Conservationist for Programs at Scottsdale, AZ. Gus was there until June 1981 when he was named Deputy State Conservationist at Champaign, IL. In June 1984 Gus became State Conservationist at Bismarck, ND, and served that state until January 1988. He was then selected to be the Director of the National Technical Center at Lincoln, NE. Gus retired from the Director position in January of 1995.

Gus has received many awards and honors during his life and career. He was a recipient of the Bronze Star medal for valor during his service in Viet Nam in 1969. During his agency career he received many performance awards. He led a national team that created the plan for SCS's updated national computer capability. He also played a significant role in SCS's international exchanges. In 1980 Gus hosted the first technical delegation from the People's Republic of China for a month as they examined conservation practices in the lower 48 states. He was a member of a technical team to the PRC in 1981. And, he led a team to Denmark in 1983.

Post-retirement, Gus has been active in civic and community activities as well as in ARCSE. His participation in Kiwanis International includes many leadership positions including that of Governor of the Nebraska-Iowa Region. He has been active in the Tom and Nancy Osborne Team Mates Mentoring Program since 1997. He has received the Carmen and Tony Messineo Community Award in 2011 and 2016 for his effective support of the Team Mates Program.

Gus and his wife **Donna** are active in Saint Mark's United Methodist Church in Lincoln. Gus mentors school children and enjoys golf, gardening and world travel. Their list of destinations includes China, Iceland, Russia, France, Sweden, Norway, Scotland, Switzerland, Ireland, Mexico, and Israel.

—Prepared by Marc Safley, Senior Conservationist Chronicler

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	Year	<i>In-Memoriam</i> (Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see www.arcse.org)
Argabright	2020	Dorothy Ann (Dirks) Argabright (89) passed away February 20, 2020 at Homestead of Topeka Assisted Living Center in Topeka, Kansas. Dorothy was the spouse of Senior Conservationist Melvin (Scott) Argabright who passed away in 2011. Scott retired as National Technology Center Agronomist in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1992. Dorothy continued to live in Lincoln following Scott's death until 2014 when she moved to an assisted living facility in Topeka. She and Scott were married on August 24, 1949 at her family home near Martin South Dakota. In addition to being a full-time homemaker and mother of four she also worked as a part-time waitress. She was an active member of the United Methodist Church.
Buchta	2020	Senior Conservationist and ARCSE Life Member Hilbert "Glen" Buchta (95) of Broken Bow, Nebraska passed away January 17, 2020, at the Jennie M. Melham Memorial Medical Center in Broken Bow. Glen was born Dec. 31, 1924, to Hilbert and Grace (Deeter) Buchta in Polk County, Nebraska. His college education was interrupted in 1943 when he was drafted into the US Army. After serving his country, Glen returned to the University of Nebraska in 1946, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural engineering in January 1949. Right out of college Glen went to work for the USDA Soil Conservation Service as an engineer. He was married to Opal Steinhause on May 20, 1949, in Lincoln, Nebraska. The family lived in McCook, Nebraska from 1949 to 1972. Glen's career took him to Vietnam, Tunisia and Somalia to work on various conservation projects. In 1976 they moved to Grand Island, Nebraska. Glen retired in 1980. Glen and Opal celebrated their 70th anniversary on May 20, 2019. Glen is survived by his wife, Opal, of Broken Bow; three sons and two daughters-in-law, Greg of Grand Island, Karl and Sandra of Chappell, Nebraska and Greg and Susan of Spring, Texas and a daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Marty Bredthauer of Broken Bow.
Bullard	2019	Gary Bullard (77) of Sacramento, California passed away December 26, 2019. Gary was born July 9, 1942 in Weatherford, Texas to George and Millie Bullard . He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Gary served nearly three years in the US Army and several years in the Army Reserves and holds Captain's rank. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service for over 30 years serving in various positions in two different states and on ten different staffs including leadership positions in resource conservation planning at the farm and ranch level, watershed and river basin planning, water quality projects and environmental planning and has worked in every county in California. In 1976, he

received the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year award in Oklahoma presented by the Oklahoma Wildlife Federation and the Governor. After retiring Gary taught school for the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps from September 2001 through September 2002. He then wrote grants for the California Dairy Campaign for ten years. Gary's survivors include his loving wife of 34-1/2 years, **Linda Bullard**, his four children **Derek**, **DeDe**, **Deborah** and **Kris**; 7 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

- Davidson** **2020 Ruth Marie Davidson** (90) of Topeka, Kansas passed away February 20, 2020 at McCrite Health Center. She was the spouse of USDA-Soil Conservation Service conservation agronomist **Granville "Dave" Davidson** who passed away in 2016. Ruth met Dave while attending Oklahoma State University. They were married January 29, 1949, in Oklahoma City. Dave's work took them throughout Kansas. Ruth was a devoted wife and mother who managed a household while working as an insurance secretary, and then a file clerk in the Topeka Statehouse.
- Fasig** **2020 Joe Allen Fasig** (88) of Marion, Illinois passed away on February 29, 2020 at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. Joe was born on March 6, 1931 in Charleston, Illinois the son of **Fred A.** and **Julia H. (Parker) Fasig**. Joe honorably served our country in the United States Army Infantry and Signal Corps from 1948 until 1952. Joe spent his career working for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service starting as a soil conservationist and retiring as a Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator (Shawnee RC&D). Throughout the years, Joe was a ham radio operator, skilled woodworker, and remarkable hunter. In 1950, he was featured in the Chicago Tribune for the first legal deer kill in Illinois. He traveled to Okeene, OK for twenty-five years and hunted rattlesnakes. He married **Nancy A. Woolford** on August 28, 1954 in Charleston, Illinois and had a loving marriage for sixty-one years. She preceded him in death on April 13, 2016. Joe is survived by five children: **Fred A. Fasig** of Charleston, Illinois, **Jim M. Fasig (Becky)** of Charleston, Illinois, **Kathleen M. Mullen (Jeff)** of Ballwin, Missouri, **Lisa A. Hudgens (Kerry)** of Marion, Illinois, **Susan L. Mackin** of Bellville, Illinois; eleven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.
- Flanders** **2020 Senior Conservationist James Maxwell Flanders** (96) of Lyons, Georgia passed away February 24, 2020, under Hospice care at Green Acres Health and Rehabilitation in Milledgeville, Georgia. He was born April 11, 1923, in Adrian, Georgia to **William Arch** and **Betty May Flanders**. He served one year with the Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah and then joined the United States Navy. He was called to active duty a year later after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was one of four brothers, who served in World War II and was honorably discharged in 1946. Maxwell graduated from the University of Georgia in 1949 with a degree in Natural Science and Agriculture with a major in Agronomy. He worked with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in various locations in Georgia until his retirement as an area conservationist in 1980. He retired in Lyons and enjoyed his farms for forty years. Maxwell was a member of First United Methodist Church of Lyons. He was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, **Doris Simmons Flanders** in 2013. Maxwell is survived by his daughters; **Ellen Rivenbark (Kirk)**, **Susan Wiley (Tom)**, **Jeanie Beverly (Albert)**; his son, **James Maxwell Flanders, Jr.**; his grandchildren, **Will Rivenbark (Valerie)**, **Eric Rivenbark (Allison)**, **John Wiley**, **Drew Wiley**, **Taylor Fields**, **Caroline Fields**; and four great grandchildren.
- Gantz** **2020 Almus "Al" Richard Gantz** (95) of Marion, Kansas passed away March 5, 2020. Al's life began on January 13, 1925, the son of **Albert** and **Vercy (Mauck) Gantz** in Anthony, Kansas. He served his country during WWII in the US Navy from 1943-1946. He married **Ruth Louise Peters** on August 9, 1947, in Oaklawn, Illinois. Al had a lifetime career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service and retired as District Conservationist in Marion in 1982. He enjoyed nature photography, gardening, and antique clocks. He worked on and repaired clocks and was a member of the National Clock Association. He was preceded in death by his wife Ruth who passed away a month earlier on February 6, 2020. Survivors include his daughters, **Barbara Doyle** of Richardson, Texas, **Alice Martin (Tom Holtgrew)** of Bonner Springs, Kansas; son, **Howard Gantz (Donna)** of Kingman, Kansas; six grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.
- Gardner** **2020 Miriam Bailey Gardner** (68) of Cary, North Carolina and Monticello, Kentucky passed away March 6, 2020, at her home in Cary. She was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's in 2007. Her husband, **William "Bill" Gardner** was her caregiver during her 13-year illness. Miriam was born February 6, 1952, in Rowan County, North Carolina the daughter of the late **Marguerite Bain Bailey** and **William Douglas Bailey**. Miriam received her bachelor's degree in conservation from the College of Natural Resources at North Carolina State in 1974 and earned a Master's in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 1989. She was employed by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service for 33 years, Miriam was the first woman district conservationist in North Carolina, and one of the first five in the nation. She concluded her career in the North Carolina NRCS state office as a resource conservationist. She became a pilot at age 17 with an interest in aerospace engineering. Miriam attempted to join the Air Force flight program while at North Carolina State but found it was open only to men. Miriam was a talented musician who played the piano, organ, cornet, and French horn. Miriam is survived by her husband of 32 years, Bill; a son, **Dylan Vance Gardner** of Clayton, North Carolina, a step-son, **Chad Gardner** of Raleigh, North Carolina; a step-daughter, **Lora Gardner (Mike) Rowe** of Apex, North Carolina; and two step-grandchildren.
- Gibson** **2020 Harry J. Gibson, Sr.** (82) of Cary, North Carolina passed away March 26, 2020. Harry was born on January 20, 1938 to **Onan Edward Gibson** and **Marjorie Jackson Gibson** in Gibson, North Carolina. He graduated from North Carolina State University in January 1962 majoring in engineering. After graduation, Harry accepted employment with the USDA Soil Conservation Service. He served the agency in various capacities for over 42 years, culminating as the State Conservation Engineer in North Carolina. He was proud to be a licensed Professional Engineer and licensed Professional Land Surveyor. He is survived by the love of his life, **Elaine C. Gibson**; his daughter, **Martha Anderson (Bryan)** of Apex, North Carolina; his son **H. J. "Jay" Gibson, Jr. (Jill)** of Apex, North Carolina; and five grandsons.
- Gordon** **2020 Doretha Gordon** (93) of Durant, Oklahoma passed away April 21, 2020. Doretha was employed at the Foundry and Woolworth in Durant after high school. She went to California one summer and worked in the fields. She worked for the Department of Agriculture from 1963 to 1970. Then from 1971 to 2003 she worked in Bryan County for USDA-Soil Conservation Service (until 1989) and Bryan Conservation District (until 2003) as a Secretary and District Clerk. She enjoyed traveling to different cities for the yearly State Conventions with co-workers who became lifelong friends. She was a big sports fan of the Oklahoma City Thunder, Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers. She loved gardening and yard work, cooking and sewing. Doretha was active in First Presbyterian Church in Durant serving as a Sunday School

- teacher for over 40 years and as a deacon for several years. Doretha married **Clifford McDaniel Gordon** on October 3, 1953. He preceded her in death. She is survived by her children **Daniel (Sherri) Gordon**, **Gregory Gordon**, and **Scott Gordon** all of Durant, and one grandson.
- Griffin** 2020 **Donald "Donnie" L. Griffin** (81) of Shelbyville, Kentucky passed away March 25, 2020 at his Shelby County home. Donnie was born November 24, 1938 in Flemingsburg, Kentucky and graduated from the University of Kentucky. A farmer and civil engineer, he served in federal government for 31 years with the Soil Conservation Service and US Army Corps of Engineers, retiring in 1994. He later worked more than a decade for Ellis Farms. He was a member of Centenary United Methodist Church. He was the husband of long time Shelby County Conservation District Clerk **Ann Griffin**. In addition to Ann, his wife of 53 years, Donnie is survived by four sons **Blakemore** of Shelby County; **Tod (Ashley)** of Owenton, Kentucky; **Mark (Dawn)** of Lawrenceburg, Kentucky; and **Brad (Missy)** of Pasadena, California; and seven grandchildren. The family held a private burial at Grove Hill Cemetery in Shelbyville. Donations in memory of Don may be made to the Kentucky Spinal Cord Injury Research Center, 132 Gray Street, Louisville, KY 40202.
- Handler** 2020 Member **John F. Handler** (69) passed away suddenly at his home in Welch, Minnesota, on February 22, 2020 from a heart attack. John was born March 14, 1950 to **Frank** and **Clara (Cashdollar) Handler** of West Homestead, Pennsylvania. He was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. After marrying **Priscilla K Jenkins** in 1974, the couple moved to New Hampshire, where their two children were born. In 1990 the family moved to Welch, Minnesota, where John lived ever since. He enjoyed a life-long job as a soil scientist with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service culminating with multi-state regional responsibilities as a soil data quality specialist on the regional soil survey staff in St. Paul, Minnesota. He retired in 2010. He maintained an active retirement volunteering for the Goodhue County Historical Society and Habitat for Humanity and took part in various model railroading and other clubs. He was preceded in death by his wife of 44 years, Priscilla, in May 2019. He is survived by his son **Sam**, daughter **Emily** and son-in-law **Tamás**, and grandson **Ben**.
- Handler** 2019 **Priscilla Kate (Jenkins) Handler** (69) passed away peacefully at her home in Welch, Minnesota on May 9, 2019 from Alzheimer's disease. Priscilla was married to ARCSE member and retired USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service soil scientist **John Handler** who passed away 9 months later in February 2020.
- Hays** 2019 **Peggy Hays** (81) of Tecumseh, Oklahoma passed away October 30, 2019 in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Peggy was the wife of retired USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service technician, **Larry Hays** for 63 years. Larry retired over 20 years ago from Shawnee. Peggy worked for the USDA and Oklahoma Well Sample Service for many years. She is survived by her husband Larry, two sons and six grandchildren.
- Jakel** 2020 Senior Conservationist and ARCSE Member **Dale Ernest Jakel** (89) of Adams, Wisconsin passed away on Good Friday, April 10, 2020 at his home. He was the 7th of 9 children born to **Anna Theresa (Wasmuth)** and **Charles Jakel**. In 1951, Dale enlisted in the Navy Seabees and proudly served in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Cuba, and Guam. He received an honorable discharge in 1955. In 1952, Dale met the love of his life on a blind date. Dale and **Rita (Hirt)** exchanged eternal vows in 1956 at Holy Rosary Church in Medford, Wisconsin. Dale graduated from University of Wisconsin Stevens Point in 1959 with a degree in Conservation. After graduation, he worked for the National Park Service. In 1963, Dale obtained his dream job as a Soil Scientist for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Before retiring in 1993, he moved his family 15 times due to transfers with his job. Dale is survived by his wife Rita, four children, **John Jakel** of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, **Ann (Peggy) Jakel Stormoen** of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, **Karen (Lance) Hover** of Friendship, Wisconsin, **Laura (Amy) Pascoe** of Sheboygan, Wisconsin; granddaughters **Mary Parker**, **Christine Wathke**, **Dr. Leah Hover-Preiss** and **Dayle Rhinehart**; and 5 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his daughter-in-law **Mavis** (John's wife).
- Jameson** 2020 **Carolyn Jameson** (79) of Stillwater, Oklahoma passed away peacefully on March 25, 2020 at home surrounded by four generations of her family. Carolyn was the youngest daughter of **Otto** and **Thelma Daniels** of Stuart, Oklahoma. Her father was an original Choctaw enrollee. Carolyn was proud of her Choctaw roots and was a voting member of Choctaw tribe. She married **Jimmie Wayne Jameson** on May 29, 1970 in McAlester, Oklahoma. She earned an Associate of Arts degree in Computer Science in 1971 from Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton, Oklahoma. Carolyn began her career in 1965 as a U.S. Navy civilian employee at the McAlester Naval Ammunition Depot producing bombs, rockets, and gun ammunition in support of the Vietnam War. Later she worked at McCoy Engineering and McAlester Oldsmobile Cadillac as office manager. In 1975 Carolyn opened a Dollar General Store on Main Street and managed the store until 1977 when she returned to civil service with USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Carolyn served as a budget officer and made trips around the country training other budget officers. She retired in 2001. Carolyn is survived by her husband, Jimmie Wayne Jameson; daughters, **Vicki Jameson** and **Trudy Simank** of Stillwater, Oklahoma; son, **John Jameson (Marina)** and daughters **Kimberly Young** and **Pamela Silverthorn** of Houston, Texas; step-son, **Dennis Jameson (LaDawna)** of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; 5 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.
- Johnson** 2019 Member **Robert W. (Bob) Johnson** (88) of Gainesville, Florida passed away April 11, 2019 in Gainesville. Bob, son of **Margaret** and **Ted Johnson**, was born in Michigan in 1931. He attended Michigan State University and received his degree in Resource Development. After graduation he went to work for the USDA Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservationist, doing field engineering work in northwest Michigan. In 1953 he was called to serve in the Military during the Korean War. After discharge, he resumed his work with the Soil Conservation Service. Bob's work took the family from Lower Michigan, to the Upper Peninsula where they enjoyed the area's beauty and outdoor environment. They moved to East Lansing in 1968 where Bob was given the responsibility for the Soil Survey program for the entire state and was appointed to the position of Adjunct Professor in the Soil Science Department at Michigan State University. While in East Lansing, he earned his Master's degree in Soil Science. In 1971, the family moved to Gainesville, Florida, where Bob was responsible for the Soil Survey Program in Florida and later assumed a management role for the SCS. In addition to his duties with the USDA he was appointed to serve as Adjunct Professor in the Soil Science Department at the University of Florida. Bob retired from SCS after 30 years and worked as a consulting Soil Scientist for a period of time before fully retiring to the things he loved best: golfing, fishing and family. He was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years, **Ardith Erhardt Johnson**. Bob will be lovingly remembered by his

- children, **Dennis (Andi), Patricia Rosenlund (John Sigrist), and Barbara (Bill) Rocktoff**, as well as his grandchildren, **Zachary, Rachel, Emily and Sarah**.
- Jones** 2020 **Charles "Bill" William Jones** (91) of Amboy, Illinois passed away peacefully March 2, 2020, at Franklin Grove Living and Rehabilitation Center, Franklin Grove, Illinois. He was born, January 2, 1929, in Paw Paw, Illinois, the son of and **Clyde** and **Beatrice (Marlow) Jones**. He married his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, **Ila M. Meyer** on March 18, 1950. She preceded him in death on November 4, 2016. In the beginning of his career, Bill worked 23 years as a Soil Conservation Technician with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. He is survived by one son, **Kenneth (Peggy) Jones**; two daughters, **Linda (Curtis) Harrison, Laurie (Craig) Walter** all of Amboy; six grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. In addition to his wife Ila, he was preceded in death by son **Bernard Jones**.
- Kerrigan** 2020 Life Member **Ronald Joseph Kerrigan** (82) of Greenfield, Indiana passed away January 23, 2020 at Greenfield Healthcare. He was born November 16, 1937 in Muncie, Indiana to **Harold J. and Thelma M. (Osborn) (Kerrigan) Busby**. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Maryland. Ron continued his education at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis and Ball State University. Ron joined the U.S. Air Force in May 1955 and served his country for over 40 years retiring as Chief Master Sergeant, E-9 as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Deputy Commanding General of the District of Columbia Air National Guard in 1996. He was a true company man and was highly decorated for his dedication to the Air Force. Throughout his career he served in several different capacities including the Department of Agriculture, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the U. S. Department of Treasury all in Washington, DC. He was also a member of the Indiana Historical Society, Landmarks of Indiana Preservation and Western Wayne Heritage, Inc. In his spare time, he enjoyed researching and genealogy. He is survived by his wife **Betty (Brunner) Kerrigan**; his children and several grandchildren. Entombment with Military Rites was provided by the U.S. Air Force and the Greenfield Veterans Honor Guard at Crown Hill Cemetery Field of Valor in Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Koenig** 2020 **Larry K. Koenig** (57) of Fayette, Missouri passed away after a motorcycle accident on April 2, 2020. Larry was the son of retired USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service engineer and State Office Design Section Leader Richard Koenig and Marjorie Koenig. On March 30, 2020 Larry was traveling on his motorcycle on Missouri Highway 5 when he went off the right side of the roadway, returned to the roadway, overturned, and was thrown from the motorcycle. He was flown by MU Air Care helicopter to University Hospital in Columbia, Missouri, but died a few days later. In addition to his parents, Larry is survived by two children and four grandchildren.
- Lee** 2020 **Abner Amos Lee** (91) of Minot, North Dakota passed away January 7, 2020 in a Minot Hospital. Abner was united in marriage to **Lorraine Sanda** on February 19, 1952. He served in Korea in the US Army. Abner attended North Dakota State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture in 1959. He started with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Jamestown, North Dakota in 1959 and worked in various communities throughout North Dakota until retiring as the Area Conservationist in Minot in 1987. He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years, **Lorraine**, of Minot; children **Sherry (Jerry) Wheeling**, of Minot and **Mark Lee**, of Plymouth, Minnesota; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.
- McClure** 2020 Senior Conservationist, Honorary Member and ARCSE Life Member **Neal A. McClure** (103) passed away April 11, 2020 at Bethany Nursing Home in Fargo, North Dakota. He was born near Grand Rapids, North Dakota, (a small remote North Dakota town between Bismarck and Fargo) November 21, 1916, the eldest child of **Charles and Lena (Muske) McClure**. Neal was raised on a farm near Bowbells, North Dakota that had been homesteaded by his grandfather, **Peter**, in 1898. In 1939 he graduated from North Dakota Agricultural College (NDAC) now known as North Dakota State University. While in college, he played on the NDAC football team. On June 14, 1941, he married **Luella "Lue" Larson** of Fargo. During WWII, he was a US Navy non-commissioned officer training new recruits in Idaho and later stationed in San Diego, California. He also spent time overseas during the Korean War as an engineering officer, 3rd Infantry Division in the US Army. He served with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Cavalier, Devils Lake, and Grand Forks, North Dakota. In 1967 he became the Assistant State Conservationist in Bismarck until he retired in 1976. He then worked as Executive Director of Rural Water ND and later, the Burleigh County Water Board. In each city, Neal and Lue formed many lasting, meaningful friendships with many people they truly cherished. They were always involved with the Lutheran Church. Neal was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Luella, who died in 2012. He is survived by two sons, **Brian (Dorothy), Ron (Pat)**, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. **Robert "Bob" Bird**, who took over from Neal the ARCSE North Dakota State Representative role says about Neil, "He was one of the nicest persons you would ever want to know."
- McLean** 2020 **Daniel Lyle McLean** (72) peacefully passed away April 6, 2020, at the Spring Creek Inn Memory Care Community in Bozeman, Montana. Dan had battled Parkinson's disease for over 25 years. Dan was born April 3, 1948, in Great Falls, Montana. He was the son of **Johnnie and Betty McLean**. Dan served in the Montana Air National for 6 years during his college studies and received his master's degree with honors from Montana State University in Soil Science. On June 22, 1968, Dan was married to **Jueleen "Juelie" Torske** in Conrad, Montana. They shared almost 52 years of marriage together. Dan was employed as a Soil Scientist with the USDA/ NRCS. He mapped soils in several locations in Montana, was on the Montana State Soils Staff and instrumental in getting soil interpretation information current and ready for the Food Security Act (FSA) implementation in the early 1990's. He retired after 30 years of service. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, skiing, fly fishing and antiques. Dan is survived by his wife **Juelie**, and sons **Luke and Matthew**.
- Miller** 2020 **Duane Rolland Miller** (99) of Stockton, Kansas passed away March 11, 2020. Duane served in the Army Air Force during WWII, serving from October 1942 thru December 1945. Duane retired in 1979 from the USDA Soil Conservation Service. He was a Soil Conservation Technician in the Stockton Field Office with 30 years of service. He was preceded in death by his daughter **Pam McCormick** and his son-in-law **DeWayne McCormick**. He is survived by his wife **Veda Miller (Orr)**; his children, **Kathy Smith (Greg)** of Fort Worth, Texas, and **Danny Miller (Thui)** of Topeka, Kansas; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.
- Patterson** 2020 **Michael D Patterson** (61) of Norwalk, Ohio passed away April 8, 2020 at Hospice of Central Ohio in Columbus, Ohio

after a long battle with cancer. He was born July 30, 1958, in Columbus. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin. Mike worked 32 years for the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. He was the Wetland Team Leader for Ohio's Area 2 and past Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator for the Erie Basin RC&D. He served in ministry to children and their families at St. Vincent Medical Center in Toledo, Ohio as the clown, Dr. IC Giggles, as well as in his home church, New London Alliance. In retirement he enjoyed working with the Erie Basin Resource Conservation and Development Council. He is survived by his loving wife of nearly 31 years, **Victoria (Alexander) Patterson**. Other survivors include his daughters **Angela (Todd) Hester-Gundrum** of Sylvania, Ohio and **Michelle (Dan) Tiffany** and **Casie (Clint) Troxel** both of San Diego California; sons **Richard Patterson** and **David Patterson** both of Norwalk, his mother **Roberta Rideout** of Marion Ohio; and four grandchildren.

- Perez** 2019 **Oscar Perez Jr.**, (89) of Miramar Beach, Florida passed away January 13, 2019. He was born on March 18, 1929, in New York, New York to **Oscar Perez Sr.** and **Ernestina Soler Perez**. Oscar was a resident of Miramar Beach, Florida for the past 12 years moving here from Millsboro, Delaware. He worked for 30 years as a Civil Engineer for the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, retiring in 1988. He also worked and retired from the Sussex County Council as a Civil Engineer. He was Roman Catholic by faith and a member of Resurrection Catholic Church. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather. Oscar is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, **Wilhelmina C. Perez**; two sons, **Oscar Perez III (Sue)** and **Emmanuel J. Perez** (Stephanie); five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.
- Petermann** 2020 **Viola Ladonna Petermann** (77) of Stillwater, Oklahoma passed away February 1, 2020. Ladonna was married to retired USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service engineer **Bill Petermann**. She graduated college at Panhandle State University in 1964 and became a teacher at Rosston, Oklahoma. She and Bill were married July 4, 1965. In addition to Bill, Ladonna leaves behind three daughters, one granddaughter and one great-granddaughter.
- Rahe** 2020 Life member **David Bustamante Rahe** (64) of Hillsboro, Illinois (formerly of Valmeyer, Illinois) died suddenly on April 2, 2020, at his family's home farm in rural Valmeyer. He was struck down while he and his brother **Daniel Rahe** were spring burning a dead cover crop off a field. Dave was born August 19, 1955, in Red Bud, Illinois. He attended the University of Illinois graduating in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in Agronomy. After college Dave went to work for the USDA Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service as a soil scientist and later soil conservationist. He also worked on loan to the St. Louis District, US Army Corps of Engineers and after retirement served as a contract worker for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; worked for Soil-Right Consulting Services, Inc.; and then founded his own soil testing company, RPM LLC. This job took Dave all over the states of Illinois and Missouri. During his travels Dave photographed every county courthouse in Illinois, completed in 2018. Dave's survivors include his wife **Maribeth, nee Nabers, Rahe**; sons **Nathan Rahe (Courtney)** and **Zachary Rahe (Rebecca)**; granddaughters **Eleanor** and **Rhiannon Rahe**; and parents **Henry** and **Elizabeth "Belle" Rahe**.
- Reh** 2020 Senior Conservationist **John W. Reh** (84) of Salina, Kansas passed away April 6, 2020. He was born July 2, 1935 in rural Saline County Kansas to **Leslie** and **Vera (Snyder) Reh**. John graduated from Kansas State University. He married **Judith A. Kirkland** on June 1, 1957 in Minneapolis, Kansas. John took great pride in the work he did during his 35 plus years with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). He retired in 1992 as the Assistant State Conservationist (Water Resources). After retiring from SCS he did 15 years of consulting engineering service through his own company, REH and Associates, Inc. His body of work was recognized when he was awarded the NSPE Award by the National Society of Professional Engineers at their annual meeting in Chicago in 1992. John enjoyed playing golf. After retirement he joined the Salina Municipal Senior Men's Golf Association and continued to play until a broken hip and complications from Parkinson's Disease forced him to quit. He was preceded in death by his wife Judy in 2013 and by a granddaughter. Survivors include his daughter **Elaine (Jay) Edwards** of Salina, two sons **Jeffrey (Vickie) Reh** of Arlington, Virginia, and **Kirk (Teresa) Reh** of Overland Park, Kansas; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.
- Rixen** 2019 **Lisa M. Rixen** (55) of Richardton, North Dakota passed away December 26, 2019 after a 15-year battle with breast cancer. Prior to moving to New Hampshire in 1999, she enjoyed a 16-year career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Dickinson, North Dakota. Lisa studied at Dickinson State College and the University of New Hampshire, completing her Master's Degree in Environmental Science and Policy. She also spent 18 years volunteering as a consultant for the Non Profit Resource Conservation and Development District. She is survived by nine siblings, her step-mother **Peggy Rixen-Kuntz**, and special friend **Carl Carlson**, Bristol, New Hampshire.
- Smith** 2020 **James "Smitty" Smith** (89) of Lexington, Kentucky passed away March 24, 2020. He was born in Indian Fields, Kentucky to **William S.** and **Eva Miller Smith**. After moving to Lexington in the middle 1950's he became a faithful member of First African Baptist Church. He became well known as "Smitty" as he worked in his many jobs, i.e. bartending, serving parties, throughout his life with his infectious smile and "gift of gab". Smitty retired as a supply clerk for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service Lexington state office. He also worked as a Maitre'd at Columbia Steakhouse and Deputy Sheriff at the Fayette County Sheriff Department. Smitty was a legendary figure of Lexington. Television station ABC 37 -WTVQ had a story on Smitty's passing on March 26, 2020: <https://www.wtvq.com/2020/03/26/legendary-lexington-figure-james-smitty-smith-dies/> Smitty's survivors include his son, **Goria Cunningham**, daughter, **Joyce Smith**, 3 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.
- Williams** 2020 **Bobbie Vernell Williams** (85) of Sayre, Oklahoma passed away January 19, 2020. She was married to ARCSE Life Member **Clifford Lee Williams** for just a few days short of 67 years. Vernell was a faithful wife and mother, and always supported Clifford's transfers and the families' moves to different states. She was active in the Sayre Church of Christ. Two of the highlights in her life were serving as a volunteer in the Scott & White Hospital in Temple, Texas and being allowed the privilege of serving as president of the Auxiliary.
- Wright** 2020 **Eugene F. Wright** (87) of Hood River, Oregon passed away on Jan. 19, 2020 with his wife of 64 years by his side, as well as his daughter and granddaughter. He was born in Lone, Washington on August 2, 1932. After high school Gene

served with the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1954 during the Korean conflict. He married **Bonnie Brown** in 1955, and they had three children, **Michael**, **Julia** and **Brian**. He discovered in 2017 through DNA testing that he had another daughter born in 1953, **Pam Gilbert**. Gene retired from the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, after working in Oregon and Washington as an engineering technician. Gene was very active in the Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum in Hood River, Oregon, which contributed to his enjoyment in retirement. Gene was preceded in death by his son Michael in 2000. He is survived by his wife Bonnie and their children Julia and Brian, his daughter Pam, six grandchildren and many great-grandchildren. The Hospice of the Gorge in Hood River and Hood River Nazarene Church were a special blessing to him and Bonnie for the last six months.

Yankey **2020 Richard Lynn Yankey (72)**, of Meridian, Idaho (Formerly of Twin Falls, Idaho), passed away peacefully March 10, 2020. Rich was born to **Lester** and **Mildred Yankey** on December 16, 1947 in Weiser, Idaho. He graduated from the University of Idaho with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and was an active member of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity. After graduation, Rich joined the National Guard and continued his military service for 6 years. He was proud of the time and energy he spent in support of his country. Rich secured a position with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Within a short period of time, he became the youngest person in Idaho to achieve a district conservationist position. He had many accomplishments along the way and retired in 2003. Rich married **Donna Bower** in 1969 and was married for 14 years. Together they raised two children, **Lyndi** and **Justin Yankey**. During that time, Rich constructed a log cabin in Star Valley Ranch Wyoming. It was an extraordinary effort in which he harvested and hand hewed the logs himself. Rich married **Linda (Lynn) Martens** in 1990 and together they enjoyed many years of outdoor adventures and traveling the country before Lynn passed away peacefully in 2017. Rich and Lynn were both very active at their church, Peace Lutheran in Filer, Idaho. Rich is survived by daughter **Lyndi Yankey** of Redondo Beach, California, son **Justin (Rhia) Yankey** and two grandchildren **Maya** and **Julian** of Meridian, Idaho, and two stepsons **Jared (Lisa) Martens** of Star, Idaho, and **Dane Martens** of Pasadena, California.

**DEADLINE FOR JULY/AUGUST 2020
NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS
JUNE 25TH, 2020**

