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# NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired SCS and NRCS Employees

Vol. 43, No. 6 Nov/Dec, 2016

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

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

## NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

### **John Stierna**

**Congress**—After being in session during much of September, Congress is now adjourned until after the November election. The House and Senate are scheduled to be in session about four weeks before the end of the year. During this time, they will need to deal with a great number of issues, but FY 2017 appropriations will be a priority in order to keep the Federal government running.

Appropriators are working to resolve differences between the House and Senate bills, including agricultural conservation funding. (The dollar amounts for the House and Senate bills were reported in the ARCSE newsletters for May/June and July/August, respectively.) Conservation constituencies have sent a letter to appropriators urging them to refrain from re-opening the farm bill that provided mandatory funding for most conservation programs. The concern is that mandatory funding levels for EQIP and CSP (via acres) will again be capped, and thus undercut the agreed-on funding specified in the 2014 Farm Bill. They also urge that USDA's discretionary funding request for Conservation Technical Assistance be satisfied.

Late in September the House passed a \$5 billion multi-year water infrastructure bill that will likely lead to a final House and Senate compromise bill that will be considered during the final weeks of 2016. The bill covers primarily waterway and port projects, but it also includes funding to address drinking water problems in Flint, Michigan.

**Secretary Vilsack** testified before the Senate Agriculture Committee on September 21<sup>st</sup> in what is likely his last hearing as Secretary. He was praised by **Chairman Pat Roberts** and **Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow** and other members of the committee for what USDA has accomplished. In his prepared testimony, Vilsack said that the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) has allowed USDA to leverage \$800 million to support 115 high-impact conservation projects across the nation that will improve water quality, support wildlife habitat, and enhance the environment. He also stressed what USDA is doing to help farmers address climate change. While his testimony covers all of USDA, readers may wish to take a look at his comments on conservation and natural resources.  
[http://www.agriculture.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony\\_Vilsack%2009.21.161.pdf](http://www.agriculture.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony_Vilsack%2009.21.161.pdf)

Michigan **Senator Debbie Stabenow** introduced a bill that would make urban farms of all types eligible for USDA programs. It would also establish an office of urban agriculture within USDA. She said that urban agriculture is steadily growing in cities and towns across the country, and the bill will help create new economic opportunities and increase access to healthy food for families. The bill is likely to be one of the items considered by the Senate Agriculture Committee during development of the 2018 Farm Bill.

Some early speculation is occurring concerning who could be selected to serve as Secretary of Agriculture. Names that have been mentioned in the event of a Clinton administration include:

- **Karen Ross**—Secretary of Agriculture for California and former Chief of Staff at USDA
- **Steve Beshear**—Former Governor of Kentucky
- **Kathleen Merrigan**—Former Deputy Secretary of USDA
- **Blanch Lincoln**—Former Senator from Arkansas
- **John Hickenlooper**—Governor of Colorado

It remains to be seen if one of these prospects for Clinton would be selected, or who might take the helm of USDA under a Trump administration.

**NRCS**—A new seven-part video series about soils has been released by NRCS. Take a look by clicking on chapter 1 at the bottom of the release page provided by this link:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/soils/health/?cid=nrcseprd766006>

NRCS also released a new report on agricultural lands as being a key to a healthy Chesapeake Bay. Take a look.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/initiatives/?cid=STELPRDB1047323>

**ACEP**—NRCS has published the final rule for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) in the October 18<sup>th</sup> Federal Register. ACEP was created in the 2014 Farm Bill as a consolidation of the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Grassland Reserve Program, and the Farm and Ranch Land Protection

**See Page 3 for Instructions Concerning 2017 Dues and Additional Fees for Hard Copy of the Newsletter.**

Program. Under the final rule, NRCS expects to enroll about 746,000 acres in the program during the 2014-2018 period covered by the Farm Bill. This is almost a million acres less than enrolled in the earlier programs during 2009-2013.

**Conservation spending**—The Environmental Working Group has released an online data base displaying conservation spending by state and county for four conservation programs—Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program. The data base provides the multi-year total of conservation spending by program over the time frame each program was operating. It does not show farm-by-farm data, but it shows the number of recipients as well as the total dollars by county.

EWG uses the data base to argue that conservation spending has not solved farm-related environmental problems and that the government should have stricter conservation compliance for farmers receiving subsidies. The data base can be found at <https://conservation.ewg.org/>

In the month prior to the EWG release, the House Agriculture Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee held a hearing highlighting the accomplishments of voluntary conservation in the Chesapeake Bay. **Chief Jason Weller** testified that signs of a healthier Bay are evident across the watershed.

**Secretary Vilsack** also commented on success of voluntary conservation in the Bay as being phenomenal. He said that nearly all cropland in the Bay area has a conservation contract, and he cited the widespread use of cover crops.

**2018 Farm Bill**—Constituency groups are preparing for the 2018 Farm Bill. It takes some time to develop and generate support for USDA program revisions. While commodity programs tend to garner most attention in the media, conservation remains an important part of the overall bill. An added issue that will be a key part of the debate is whether or not to separate the nutrition title from the overall farm bill. Stay tuned.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Cecil Currin

On rare occasions I receive something special and memorable in the mail. A few days ago, an ARCSE life member from Illinois sent me a handwritten letter which included kind words about the ARCSE leadership, asked for information about the age of members, included a stamped, addressed envelope, joked about his penmanship and included a recent photograph. This member is 103 years old! His name is **Harold Kraut**.

The newsletter is so important to him that he enclosed the stamped envelope so that I could send him a bill for the printed newsletter. He wanted to be sure he did not miss an edition of the newsletter, and he said that computers were of no use to him. Harold wondered if he might be the oldest member, and it turns out he isn't. We have a member in Florida born in the same year, four months earlier. I hope the two of them will get together some way to talk about "old times." Referring to his handwriting, He suggested that I may need to take the letter to a Chinese restaurant for "decoding." His writing was quite legible and was better than my typing before spellcheck.

The photograph shows Harold with his son in a T-Model Ford pickup in the 2016 Labor Day parade. A sign on the side said American Legion member for 77 years. He joined the legion before World War II. Remarkable! Harold's letter confirms that we have fascinating people in ARCSE, and it shows how important the newsletter is to our members. It also shows that we need to keep the option of a printed newsletter because some folks need it and are willing to pay for it.



The second oldest ARCSE member at 103, Mr. Harold Kraut rides a T-Model Ford in the Labor Day Parade on 9/10/16. He is celebrating 77 years as a member of the American Legion.

## A BIT OF HISTORY

*Douglas Helms, Historian*

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

### Pine Trees: A Case of Our Changing Conservation Climate

Recently I took note of the Short-Leaf Pine Initiative. The saga of growing pines in the South over the past century reminds me, as have other developments, that we often take current conditions to be the natural order of things. Passage of time often reveals how short these eras can be.

The Soil Conservation Service played a critical role in assisting landowners to establish pines on eroded cropland, often land better suited to forest or pasture rather than annual crops. I recall being told by an SCS staffer who worked on a demonstration project in Alabama how the Service convinced farmers to give slash pine a try. SCS nurseries, as well as ones owned by conservation districts, provided thousands of seedlings. Thus SCS contributed to planting the third pine forest in the South as enumerated by foresters. The first was the forest encountered by the Europeans and the second was a forest mostly naturally regenerated. The latter was the appropriately named "old field pine" that followed clearing and cropland abandonment. The advocates for a New South in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries wondered how Southern pines might be utilized to diversify the economy. The problem was that resin in the pines rendered them generally unsuitable for newsprint and white paper. I heard about this in a Southern history class, and the teacher, **George Tindall**, was much impressed by the contribution of **Charles Herty**, a chemistry professor. One could say Herty was dedicated to better Southern living through chemistry, to use a latter-day commercial jingle. Herty was not the sole developer of the solutions to the resin problem, but he led the charge in developing methods to make quality white paper and newsprint from Southern pines.

With the resin problem largely solved, the paper companies built billion-dollar plants and accumulated large land holdings to supply the pine. In the 1990s stock holders demanded greater financial returns, paper companies divested their lands or created REITs. The early 21<sup>st</sup> century housing boom and bust buffeted the timber market. Overall the Internet impacted use of quality white papers as well as newsprint. Even kraft paper took a hit with the adoption of plastic grocery bags.

This skeletal history demonstrates that those trying to influence pine planting, such as the Short-Leaf Pine Initiative, operate in an economic climate that changes more rapidly than we often expect.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

*Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer*

### New Members

Biebl, Joseph	WI
Brent, Lew	IA
Heard, Robin	TN
Rose, mark	MD
Smith, Gary	PA
Yasumiishi, Kristi	WA

### New Honorary Members

The following 18 members of ARCSE have celebrated or will be celebrating their 91<sup>st</sup> birthdays by the end of 2016. With this milestone, each of these members becomes an Honorary Member. As an Honorary Member, no dues are required for calendar year 2017 and thereafter. However, those honorary members who wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter are required to pay a \$12 fee (see enclosed dues notice). The ARCSE currently has 69 Honorary Members.



**Shortleaf pine-bluestem demonstration plot on Pushmataha Wildlife Management Area, Pushmataha County, Oklahoma (photo from OK Forestry Services).**

First Name	Last Name	State
Verne M	Bathurst	AZ
I W "Bill"	Fobair	AZ
Clarence U	Finch	CA
Paul M	Howard	FL
William E	Austin	FL
Amos I	Garrison	ID
Darrell L	Gallup	ID
William B	Sorensen	KS
Lennie	Losh	OH

First Name	Last Name	State
Alfonso F	Geiger	MD
John A	Ferwerda	ME
Richard L	Phillips	NC
Tony	Vrana	NE
Oran F	Bailey	NM
Loren J	Spencer	NV
Charles	Haenisch	TX
Martin E	Vavra	TX
V. Lennie	Husa	WA

## Dues and Additional Hard Copy Fees for 2017

*By Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer*

**2017 Dues Notice to Members receiving the newsletter by hard copy.** A dues notice is included with the hard copy newsletter (**green page insert**). Please follow the instructions on the notice concerning the address label information to determine if your dues are due.

**2017 Additional Fee for Hard Copy:** All members (both life members and those who pay annual dues) who desire a hardcopy of the newsletter must pay an additional fee of \$12.00 per year. Please follow the instructions on the dues notice concerning the address label information to determine if you must pay the additional fee.

This \$12.00 will help offset ARCSE annual costs of nearly \$20.00 per member to print and distribute the hard copy newsletter.

**2017 Dues Notice to Members receiving the electronic newsletter:** A dues notice is not included with the electronic newsletter. Members receiving the electronic newsletter whose dues are due will receive a separate email from ARCSE with a dues notice attached (**WATCH FOR IT**). Life Members and members who have already paid their 2016 dues will receive an email assuring you that your membership dues are paid.

## ARIZONA

**Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative**

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

**Karl Klingelhofer report.** My only activity of note was a long weekend trip (Oct. 6-11) to Maine to be with family. Weather-wise, it was one good day, one bad, and three marginal. I will take our Tucson weather.

**Ron Moreland report.** We have returned to Tucson after summer at our Montana home. One of the hikes we enjoyed was a trek into the seldom explored Anaconda Wilderness to an isolated lake where we caught and released big cutthroat trout on a caddis dry fly. Near the end of Sept. we took our traditional hiking trip to the Many Glacier area in GNP where we always hope to see grizzlies. On the iconic hike to Iceberg Lake, grizzlies were present, and one appeared just after we had hiked through an area. We make noise (hey bear, hey bear) and carry three cans of bear spray.

**Glen Johnson report.** Time has come to close up things in ND, pack up the motorhome and head back to AZ for the winter. It has been a good summer here, having accomplished much on the "farmstead," cleaning out dead trees and planting new, building a deck, etc. It's also been an interesting summer in ND as low oil prices and low farm commodity prices have brought drilling to a standstill, and with it the construction industry, and slowed down the whole economy. As a result I believe there have been more people leave ND this past year than any time in the 30s.

## ARKANSAS

**Reporter – Ralph Mashburn**

Arkansas retirees had their annual ARCSE meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the 4H Center in Fernwood near Little Rock. The meeting, followed by a luncheon, had 20 attending. See the group picture.



**AR Annual Retirees' Meeting.** *Left to Right –Front row seated: Carol Johnson, Rose Webb, Terri Fisher, Marilyn Marshall, Dru Cantrell, George Dahlke. Back Row: Ralph Mashburn, John Henry, Ford Thomas, Lewis Mayfield, Tony Stevenson, Bill Garner, Marion Mathis, Bob Price, Mike Sullivan (STC), Larry Ward, Pat Clinton, Randy Busbea, Anderson Neal, Robert Cantrell.*

**Robert Cantrell**, former Assistant State Conservationist, announced that since he had served two years, it was time that he rotates off as our president. All expressed their appreciation for his and **Dru's** excellent service for us.

**Bob Price** was elected as our new president, **Marilyn Marshall** as secretary, and **Ralph Mashburn** as Reporter.

**Robert Cantrell** opened the meeting by leading us in a Pledge of Allegiance. After the elections of new officers, **Mike Sullivan**, State Conservationist, gave an interesting talk about current NRCS operations in Arkansas. Appropriations are good for Arkansas this year, and new employees are being hired. From when he became STC, employee numbers have increased from about 220 to almost 300. Most of these are assigned to field offices. Many offices have the much-needed technicians they were without for so many years. This will increase on-the-ground service to farmers with more emphasis on conservation planning and technical assistance. Sullivan challenged the retirees to work as volunteers to bring our experience back to help maintain a highly skilled workforce.

The next meeting is planned for Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Central Arkansas Library Thompson Branch off Rahling Road in West Little Rock. We are planning to have another interesting program for next year, in addition to our good time visiting. Meanwhile, a number of the retirees have lunch get-togethers during the year at various locations around central Arkansas and at Ft. Smith.

After a delicious lunch, **Bob Price** gave the group an extremely interesting Power Point presentation on "Ride to the Divide" and many other escapades of these adventurous Arkansas retirees who rode ATVs from the hills of Tennessee, through the canyons of Utah, to the coast of Oregon, and to above the Arctic circle among the caribou on another trip. They haven't yet decided on their destination for next year.

**The Adventurous Retirees – Larry Ward, Tony Stevenson, and Bob Price.** Presentation on AR retirees who road ATVs in TN, in UT, to the OR coast, and above the Arctic Circle.



**Bill Garner** has a soils consulting business, primarily working in septic system design. He has served as chairman of the South Logan County Public Water Board since its inception in 1992 and has been president of his Rural Fire Department since it began in 1986. He is also serving his second term as president of the Arkansas Valley Antique Tractor Club. His brand of choice is Farmall.



**Larry Ward, George Dahlke and Bill Garner**



**Marion Mathis and Bob Price**



**Rose Webb, Carol Johnson and Terri Fisher having a fun visit.**

**Rose Webb** is a volunteer tutor with AR Kids Read at Booker Elementary School in Little Rock. She also volunteers with the Adult Literacy Program at the Little Rock Library.



**Lewis Mayfield, John Henry and Tony Stevenson**



**Ford Thomas, Randy Busbea, and Robert Cantrell.**

**Marion Mathis** has recently had double bypass heart surgery. His wife **Treva** enjoys her activity with the Ft. Smith Chapter of DAR. **Marion** is among a group of SCS/NRCS retirees in the Ft. Smith area who have noon lunch together the first Wednesday of each month at Western Sizzler on Rogers Avenue. Others in the group are **Bill Garner, Ronnie Keener, Paul Whittington, Jerry McGary, John Chenowith and Glen Laurent.**

**Marilyn Marshall** has been very active in organizing and leading the Little Rock Central High School Alumni Association. **Dru Cantrell** has served all of us SCS/NRCS retirees by mailing out information and meeting announcements and keeping our list of contact info.

**Pat Clinton** has about 50 cattle on his farm near Walnut Ridge. He is the VA representative who handles complaints.

**Anderson Neal** retired 7/1/16 from the Arkansas Air National Guard after 31 years of service. He lives in Texarkana, is on the church board, and is a representative for minority farmers. On a sad note, his wife died recently.



**Marilyn Marshall, Dru Cantrell and Mike Sullivan (State Conservationist)**



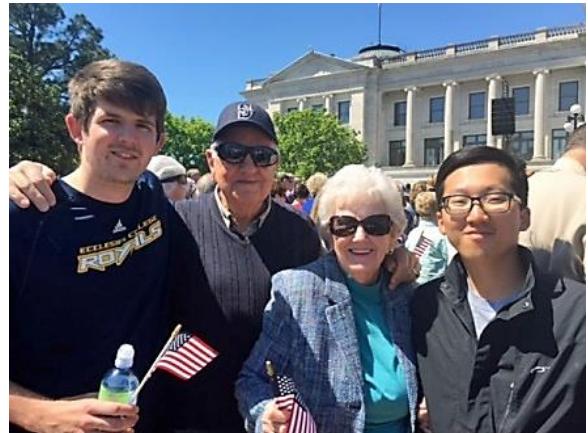
**Pat Clinton**



**Anderson Neal**



**Ralph and Nancy Mashburn of Lonoke celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a trip to Maui, HI with their son David and wife Jill of Redmon, WA. Afterward, other family members and friends joined them in a dinner celebration at a restaurant near their home.**



**Ralph and Nancy Mashburn also were a part of the Little Rock Franklin Graham Prayer Rally along with their grandson, Austin and his college buddy, Chow, from South Korea. Ralph and Nancy are still active in church and with The Gideons International and enjoy entertaining in their farm home, especially at Christmas time. They invite all their "old" SCS friends to stop in anytime.**

## CALIFORNIA

**Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative**

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

Hello to all our fellow retirees across the Nation from California. It is with great sadness we are sharing with you the passing of our good friend and SCS/NRCS colleague **Charles Davis**. His obituary is in the *In Memoriam* section.

**Following is a summary of the celebration of life events held for Charles Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**

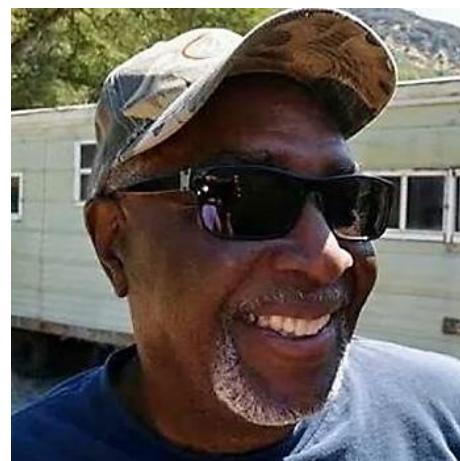
An estimated 150 people attended a Tuesday night vigil at the St. James Catholic Church, and approximately 350 who attended his Mass on Wednesday morning. 200 or more were at the reception following the Mass. People came from far and near. **Bob Snieckus**, Landscape Architect under Charles, soon to join the retiree ranks, came all the way from Washington, DC!

Many wonderful memories and testimonies were shared by family, friends and former co-workers about Charles. All the testimonies shared show what Charles meant to so many people. The two testimonies from his sons, Christopher and Michael, were particularly special as they clearly show what exceptional young men they are, as one would expect with Charles as their Father. There were also some wonderful family photos shown at the reception. All that transpired clearly showed the love for Charles and his importance in the careers and lives of all who knew or worked with him

Here are some of the photos shared by the family at the reception following the Wednesday Mass Service. Looking at all these photos, one thing is consistent: Charles almost always had a huge smile on his face!



**Charles, the Professional he was!**



**Charles in "Casual Mode"**

The many wonderful testimonies provided by his two sons, current and retired SCS/NRCS staff, are summarized in a document posted on the ARCSE.org website ([Click here to open](#)).



Charles and Vicki



Charles and fellow retirees enjoying their monthly breakfast gathering

### A thank you from Vicki

**Charles** was committed to the mission and purpose of NRCS. He loved his job. His 41 years of service are a testament to that commitment. His work allowed him to travel throughout California, most of the states, and abroad bringing his engineering expertise to those the agency served. There was nothing he enjoyed more than walking a ditch or kicking at the dirt in a field while talking to a landowner about conservation practices. Equally, if not more important to him was the NRCS family. Charles became invested in the well-being and success of everyone he encountered in the agency.

We said goodbye to Charles on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The NRCS family has shown me and our sons the level of admiration and love they held for Charles. We have received many cards and emails with messages that recall Charles' guidance or mentoring and all speak of the good and gentle man that he was. Many were able to attend the services held for him and shared their memories of him giving us broader vision of what he meant to others. We are deeply grateful for all the expressions of sympathy. We are deeply grateful that you knew the Charles that we knew and loved so much. Thank you."

Sincerely, Vicki Davis

In Memory of Charles K Davis,  
November 24, 1944--September 5, 2016  
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

So there you have it folks, it was a wonderful two days of celebrating Charles's life. He will certainly be missed but never forgotten. If any of you wish to send cards or communicate with Vicki you can use the following address: **Vicki Davis**, 916 Burr Street, Davis, CA 95616. --**Bill Ward**, California ARCSE Representative, Former Design Staff Leader under Charles.

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

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

## COLORADO

**Ivan Wilkinson, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [giwilk@estesvalley.net](mailto:giwilk@estesvalley.net)



**Ivan and Ginger Wilkinson** enjoying a hike to Mills Lake, Rocky Mountain National Park, on their 55<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

**Don and Mitzi Moss** moved to Montrose, CO about two years ago, and "it is treating us well. We are able to do some fishing and rest! Usual aches and pains but OK! Come Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> will have been retired 30 years! Drive safely! Don."

## FLORIDA

**No current ARCSE Representative**

This from Bob Halstead, [rghmoneta@aol.com](mailto:rghmoneta@aol.com)

The annual Captain Ernie Todd Steinhatchee, Fl fishing extravaganza was held again this year. The participants were **Ernie Todd** from Alabama, **Billy Milliken** from Kentucky, **Wes Oneth** from Oklahoma and **Bob Halstead** from Florida.

It was hosted by Ernie who provided the location, accommodations, boat, equipment and fish. Wes provided the necessary liquid refreshment (for those who needed it).

Billy provided the fishing expertise and Bob brought Sue's seven-layer cookies. Three of the four attendees harvested their limits of the Florida Gulf Coast's species of fish almost every day. The other participant will remain nameless, but he did bring the cookies. Great time, good company and lots of stories.



*Biscuits in the morning*



*Fresh fish in the evening*



*Come on guys, it's noon already!*



*Ernie, Wes, and Billy ready to go.*

## ILLINOIS

**Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative**

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

Retirees gathered in Champaign on October 6<sup>th</sup> to enjoy lunch and visiting. Attending were **Elsie Campbell, Lee and Nancy Bridgman, Jim Hornickel, Jim and Bonnie McQuilkin, Judy and Salvador Velazquez, Jim and Cheryl Evans, Dick Dickerson, Ray Coombes, Andy Cerven, and Dale Benz**.

**Jim Evans** told us how unwise it is to “heel” in trees for eight years before you plant them where you want them. He said it takes a lot of digging to get them out of the ground and moved. **Jim and Cheryl** moved into their new home eight years ago. He said his hop crop wasn’t too good. He planted some hops a few years ago and has one plant still growing. There goes the home brew beer market in Champaign!

**Lee and Nancy Bridgman** got two more great grandchildren this summer, which makes a total of eight great grandchildren. They were visiting a grandson in Vancouver, B.C. in June, and Nancy told about an experience she had while waiting in the car for Lee. Around 30 bikers rode their bikes down the road where she was parked, and the bikers were all naked. They apparently do this once a year, and she was lucky enough to be there to see this year’s ride! We asked her what kind of bikes they were riding, and she didn’t notice! We really didn’t get a good answer from Lee where he was, but he swore he was not riding a bike!

They also spent a week on a working cattle ranch in Wyoming in August. They said it was enjoyable, and they were really helping with the work. All these years we have heard about the boat trailer unhooking from Lee’s truck as he was driving down the interstate, but this story never was confirmed as being true. Lee confessed that it was true. Expecting to get a traffic ticket for speeding, Lee was surprised when the officer told him he lost his boat and did not give him a speeding ticket. Lee and Nancy are planning to spend three months in Arizona this winter. Lee celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday this summer, and he celebrated at a Cubs game in Chicago. It was all the Cubs needed to kick them in high gear. At this writing they won the NLCS and are on their way to the World Series. All this thanks to **Lee Bridgman’s** 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Elsie Campbell** told us about her wasps in her mailbox. Soaking them with a wasp killer made her mail box safe again. Elsie’s niece took her to Tennessee to visit some relatives on her birthday.

**Dick Dickerson** still works at the Illinois football stadium and the State Farm Center assembly hall during football and basketball games as a ticket taker. Dick, we are counting on you for winning seasons this year since you have front row access to all the important people.

**Ray Coombes** told about his daughter’s wedding in the St. Louis Cardinal’s Busch stadium in St. Louis. There was no game there that day, so the groom had plenty of room to run if he chose to do so. The wedding was performed at home plate. No wonder the Cubs outlasted the Cardinals this year-- the Cardinals were hosting weddings instead of playing baseball!

**Jim Hornickel**, retired two years ago, was a new retiree at our gatherings. Jim talked about his October cruise to Italy and in January is taking a trip to India. Sounds like an exciting life post-retirement, Jim. **Jim McQuilkin** still takes his train trips to Colorado to visit his daughter and family. They moved to the plains east of Denver, so Jim doesn’t have to travel the mountain roads now.

**Judy and Salvador Velazquez** spent five weeks with their son in Miami in September. She and Salvador also did their six-week mission trip to Mexico this year. The mission involved walking a 100-mile trip from Pachuca to Mexico City at the rate of 20 miles per day. Judy also took her first hot air balloon ride in Mexico. And Salvador made his first parachute jump, with a helper, while in Mexico. Judy and Salvador have certainly had an exciting summer. Glad they returned home safely.

Mark your calendar for April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 for our next retiree gathering.

## INDIANA

**Harold Thompson, ARCSE Representative**  
**Email: [harold.thompson58@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harold.thompson58@sbcglobal.net)**

Ron Marlow received the following from **Earl Terpstra**: "Judy had a stroke about two years ago. She is improving but has memory problems and needs to use a quad cane. Then she had a total shoulder replacement four weeks ago. It worked out great and relieved her pain. So you can see I've been a caregiver for about two years. I'm doing okay, still helping farm in addition to care-giving. Regards, Earl."

## IOWA

**Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative**  
**Email: [amjens1@gmail.com](mailto:amjens1@gmail.com)**

**Art and Mary Jane Bryant** returned September 19<sup>th</sup> from an 18-day trip through New England and the Canadian Atlantic Provinces that took them through 12 states and three provinces. A highlight for Mary Jane was a visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, and a highlight and particular honor for Art was being "rung aboard" The USS Constitution with the ship's bell. There were many highlights, but a few were Prince Edward Island and the Anne of Green Gables farm; Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and the Cabot Trail; Campobello, New Brunswick, **FDR**'s summer home; and Acadia National Park, Maine. In a nostalgia moment they visited Coventry, Rhode Island, and found the former military housing development and the house where they lived 50 years ago when Art was stationed to a Nike Hercules Artillery Group in 1966.

Thanks to **Lee and Alice White** for sharing the following: "We were privileged to participate in the wedding of our son, **Andrew White**, to **Kia Johnson** on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The wedding took place at Heart 6 dude ranch overlooking the Grand Teton National Park near Moran, WY. We had a marvelous 74-degree day with no clouds and only gentle breezes to interrupt our views of the Tetons. The next day the winds whipped up to more than 40mph, which restarted the forest fires in the area and actually closed the highway between the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Park. **Andrew and Kia** both work for the National Park Service at the Grand Teton N. P. We greatly enjoyed our destination wedding."



*Alice, Andrew, Lee White*



*Heart 6 Ranch Entrance*



*The Wedding "Cathedral"*



*Newlyweds Kia and Andrew White*

**Ann** and I were fortunate to get to take a couple of trips during the past two months. During the last of August and early September, we travelled to the northwest. The target destination was a Vintage Harvest Festival in Davenport, WA. It was fun to see wheat being harvested with antique equipment. My favorite was an old Harris combine that was powered by 12 mules. Along with the combines, we saw many restored tractors, pickups, and other farm equipment and met a lot of really nice people.



*12-Mule Hitch Pulling an Antique Combine at the Vintage Harvest Festival*

The added bonus was that we got to share the experience with my brother and sister-in-law, **John and Kay Jensen**. On the way to Washington, we enjoyed the Big Horn Mountains, Bear Tooth Mountains, and Glacier National Park. On the way home we drove through many of the varied types of beautiful and unique scenery that Idaho has to offer. We visited a lot of friends in Boise; then one of the highlights of the trip for me was a visit with **Ernie McCollum**, retired Soil Conservation Technician and great friend and role model, in Twin Falls. The drive home took us through Yellowstone and Teton National Parks.



*Snake River Canyon by Twin Falls, Idaho*



*Ann Jensen by the Little Salmon River*

After getting home, mowing yard, doing laundry, canning tomatoes, etc., we boarded a bus to head to Washington, DC. Some of the highlights of this trip included Arlington National Cemetery, the Nation's Capital, several of the Smithsonian buildings, Mount Vernon, and many of the monuments and memorials. A stop by the Flight 93 Memorial on the way home was a sobering reminder of the events of 9/11. Now I'm ready to stay home for a while!



*Milking Salmon Eggs at the Dworshak Dam Fish Hatchery*

When **David Beck** retired in December of 2011, he immediately went to a new job as the Executive Director of the Southern Iowa RC&D. One of Dave's big goals was to help the local folks in Clarke County work through all the issues to get them to the time when they could construct a new water supply lake. Obtaining the necessary land rights has proven to be a major challenge, but he is confident that it will happen. This year, Dave took on an additional duty as he was elected as the President of the Iowa League of RC&Ds. However, the biggest event in his retirement years occurred on May 28<sup>th</sup> of this year. That is the day he married **Tingting Shao**. Ting is originally from Xi'an, China. She immigrated to the United States in 2011. Ting and Dave have done quite a bit of travelling. I've also noticed from pictures that he has somehow convinced her to wear a lot of that purple Wildcat garb! It was good to hear from **Norm Koester** the other day. After Norm retired sometime around 1998, he started up a consulting engineering business that he very creatively named "Koester Engineering." Now, he has decided to retire from that business and start living a life of luxury. He said that during his time as a consultant, he has worked on about 200 projects of one kind or another. Of those, about 125 were paperwork items such as O&M inspections, hazard evaluations, breach assessments, legal consultations, and backyard runoff problems. About 75 of the projects were "honest-to-goodness design/construction jobs that resulted in something tangible for the owners and work for the contractors." He added, "On top of that, it made me feel useful all of these past years." I first met Norm in 1974 when I was sent to Council Bluffs right out of college. Norm has been a great friend and mentor of mine for a lot of years.



Dave and Ting Becks' Wedding Picture



Dave and Ting in Yosemite National Park

**Bonnie (Weller) Alley** retired in July from her position as National Volunteer Liaison with the NRCS Earth Team in Des Moines. She and her husband **Denny** hosted a party to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and her retirement in Farragut on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Bonnie was an area secretary for NRCS in Shenandoah and Council Bluffs for a number of years before joining the Earth Team staff.

Denny and Bonnie (Weller) Alley



**Lyle Asell** just can't seem to take life easy. After retiring from his second career as the Interim Director (and maybe a couple of other titles) at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, he joined the Lucas County Tourism Bureau. He recognized the need to promote conservation in a fun way and in a way that would bring people to the county. He started what has become an annual event in Lucas County.



Lyle and Charlotte's Entry



Mickey and Minnie



Emoji Bales

Haybale Art

The Haybale Art Contest was born. For five years, this event has brought tourists to the county. In addition to the Haybale Contest, he came up with the idea for a "Big Day of Birding." He pulled in partners from many state agencies to develop Lucas County's two birding conservation areas into a tourist destination. Lyle and his group are planning a two-day birding festival for 2017. Lyle continues to be a visionary thinker and tireless advocate for promoting conservation awareness.

**Eldon Weber** has been spending a lot of time writing a book about his memories while growing up as well as during his career with SCS/NRCS. The title of the book is If The Barn Could Talk. Eldon said "The most important incentive for me to write was stories and memories for my grandchildren. The book contains some examples of stories the barn might tell." Eldon grew up on a farm in the Lum Hollow Watershed in northwest Iowa. Lum Hollow had some monstrous gullies typical of those in the deep loess soils in western Iowa. The 1956 pictures show what the gully looked like before a watershed structure was constructed. The 1962 pictures show what the area looked like after the structure was in place.



Lum Hollow Watershed "Before" and "After" Pictures

Eldon said his experiences growing up on a farm where he witnessed this type of erosion steered him to his career in soil conservation. Following is a short excerpt from his book: "The Lum Hollow Stock Farm **barn** was the signature (icon) of our family farm. It was much more than a barn. It reminded us of all the family history; of our grandfather who raised purebred shorthorn cattle and was well known at least throughout the state and maybe nationally. If someone wanted to know where our farm was located, all we would have to say is "the one on the north side of Highway 141, with Lum Hollow Stock Farm painted on the front of the barn." The barn offered security, comfort, warmth and love for family, friends and animals (our livestock and pets)."

Recently we were saddened to learn of the death of **Paul Viner**. Paul retired in 2012 after working for SCS/NRCS for 31 years. He was the District Conservationist in Davenport for the 19 years preceding his retirement. Paul passed away on July 11, 2016.



*The Lum Hollow Stock Farm Barn*



*"A View From the Window."*

*The window was cut out large enough to back the elevator into that opening for elevating bales into the mow. It was also large enough for the cow that went up the steps to the hay mow and jumped out this window.*

**Reminder:** The retiree Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, at the Machine Shed Restaurant in by Living History Farms in West Des Moines. We will gather at 11am, and lunch will be served at 11:30. We look forward to visiting with you!

## KANSAS

**Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative**

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

What a rude awakening I had over the Labor Day weekend. I was awakened by the bed's head board vibrating against the wall and the mattress shaking like there was dog scratching a bad case of fleas. Yes, I was experiencing my first earthquake. Although the 5.6 magnitude quake occurred straight south of Salina in Oklahoma, the shock was felt across a number of states. **Ron** and I had a very enjoyable trip cruising down the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers for three days. We started at Peoria, IL, and ended at the arch in St. Louis, MO. The days were spent watching the world go by at approximately 10 mph. We enjoyed the scenery observing life along the river, watching the barges, and especially watching for wildlife and the soaring bald eagles. There was entertainment every morning and afternoon (music and a storyteller who told stories about what happened on that stretch of the river and about famous people from the area). We also ate very well on the boat, even being served prime rib one evening. If you are looking for a really laid back, short vacation, we would recommend it.

Kansas has three new retirees. After 34 years of service, **Barry N. Barber** retired on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, as the Supervisory District Conservationist in the Field Office at Winfield, KS. **Mike T. O'Connor** also retired on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, as the District Conservationist in the Field Office at Fort Scott, KS. **Thomas D. Cyre** retired on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. He served as a Geologist on the Engineering Staff in the Kansas State Office in Salina. Several retirees have suffered broken bones resulting from falls. **John Reh** was doing yard work in his back yard and caught his heel which caused him to fall and break his hip. He was able to get help by using the panic button on his car keys to attract the neighbor's attention. He is now at home. **Debbie Kaiden** was cleaning for her daughter's wedding reception coming up the next evening, when she slipped on the wet surface and broke her wrist. It was learned that **Deniece Roth** (spouse of **William Roth**) also fell and broken both wrists. Bill says he is now chief cook and bottle washer plus a number of other chores.

Two milestones were reached. **Cecil Palmer** celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in May. Cecil was a soil scientist serving in Norton, Stockton, and Salina. He retired in 1963. **Gene and Jan Burns** celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in October. Gene was an Administrative Services Officer in the Kansas State Office. He retired in 1994.

Our sympathy goes to the **Moser** family as **Lowell** passed away on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Lowell served many years as the District Conservationist in Atchison County retiring in 1994. His spouse, **Mary**, survives.

## KENTUCKY

**Vacant, ARCSE Representative**

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

**Lawrence Eastham** has a new address. He has moved from Bardstown to 238 Ben Roy Road, Nancy, KY 42544. Lawrence spends the winters in Florida, but should be in KY awhile longer. **Jack Kuhn** retired in 2015. He may be reached by email [Kuhndogs@earthlink.net](mailto:Kuhndogs@earthlink.net) or by phone (502) 875-0281.



On October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Kentucky's SCS/NRCS retirees met at Lake Cumberland State Park, at Pumpkin Lodge. Left to Right seated: Fred Alcott (Vice President), Jimmy Marcum, Jerry Coleman (President). 2<sup>nd</sup> Row: Roy Toney (past president), Anthony Burns. Back Row Standing Left to Right: Harold Woodlee, Tom Butcher, Rodney Hendrickson, Steve Crabtree, Joel Legris (Secretary/Treasurer), Charles Turner, Ira Linville, Charlie Farmer, Greg Stephens, Tom Marcum, Connie McKinney, Gerald Hart. Behind Connie and Gerald: Don Henry, Kenneth Overhults, E.T. Cash, Gary Reckner, Doug Hatchett and Jamie Smith. Photo taken by Roy Toney.

**Bobby Elkins**, retired CET, finally got home after an extended stay in the hospital for an E. coli infection. Bobby has home health coming and has gained 10 pounds, so is doing better. If you'd like to send Bobby a card, his address is 375 Concord Road, Richmond, KY 40475. **Jimmy Marcum**, retired DC from the Richmond, KY Field Office, where Bobby worked, recently talked with Bobby and said that he has enjoyed the cards he's received during his illness. Jimmy thought he might like to get more.



**Soil Scientist** retiree meeting September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Left to Right: Orville Whitaker, Bill Craddock, Jim Haagen, John Robbins, Bob Iggle, Steve Coleman, Steve Blanford, Glen Kelly. Photo taken by Thelma Haagen, wife of Jim Haagen.

**Billy Milken** has a new phone number, (270) 472-1113. **Betty Prows**, Retired Area Clerk, is recuperating at home from a broken leg as a result of an ATV accident on her farm. Send well wishes to 708 Mt. Vernon PK, Cynthiana, KY 41031 or send Betty an email [betty5355@att.net](mailto:betty5355@att.net).

**Helen Barnett** passed away October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 at the age of 89, in Winchester, KY. Helen retired from the Human Resources (HR) Office after 23 years of service. She was fondly known as "Momma Barnett" to staff. She was always pleasant and eager to help.

**John Buie**, retired Area Engineer, lost his wife **Susan Fern Buie** on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2106. Send condolences to John at 265 Combs Lane, Somerset, KY 42503.

## MAINE

**John J. Simon, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [jjnmsimon@tds.net](mailto:jjnmsimon@tds.net)

Well, hello to all in the great US of A after a very dry and sunny summer in Maine. As of the 19<sup>th</sup> of October we in Maine (at Bangor) had only 24.02 inches of rain. The normal rain at this time is 32.76 inches, so we are 8.74 inches shy. Quite a bit for this part of the country!

**JULY:** Thanks to **Art Taylor**, I have a list of attendee's at last Tuesday's the 12<sup>th</sup> breakfast: **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon, Judy and Charlie Boothby, and Ray Voyer**. Yours truly was not there as I was on vacation with my son and his family. Can't pass on much because I wasn't there, but I can say that my vacation was extremely pleasant.

I enjoyed my two grandkids immensely and met the new dog (Batman) of the family! Only children would use a name like that for a dog. It took Batman several days to get used to us being with the family!

**AUGUST:** We had five attendees at our Tuesday breakfast on the 9<sup>th</sup>: **Judy and Charlie Boothby, Bruce Champeon, Roger Ashe, and John Simon**. **Art Taylor** emailed me that he could not attend because the contractor was due to hitch up his generator gas (propane) and electric lines.

Art is working on the wood trim around the doors and windows of his house and has received the shipment of the cabinets for his kitchen, so he is on the final stretch. Art indicated that his daughter **Andrea** and family are moving back into the Bangor area. Of course **Linda and Art** are ecstatic over the news of having their grandkids nearby.

**Charlie** indicated that he is putting in entrees for the "Largest Trees in Maine" contest sponsored by the Penobscot County SWCD and the Maine Bureau of Forestry. All three trees are in his back yard. I'll let you know the results. The contest is for *any* species of large/old tree, so look around.

I had an unexpectedly pleasant meeting with **Ed Snow** recently on Wednesday June 29<sup>th</sup>. He is spending his summer at his camp on Half-Moon Pond. **Noreen** and I had dropped my sister off at her daughters place in Bar Harbor and were on our way back and stopped at Reny's in Ellsworth. Low and behold, who was sitting inside the entrance but Ed. We had a great visit. Ed is having some problems with his legs, so he is slow getting around and probably will not be coming up for our breakfast. He introduced me to his lady friend who is very charming and obviously a good match for Ed. God bless you both, Ed.

**Noreen** and I had the pleasure of having lunch with my sister and my niece **Patti** at the Route 66 restaurant in Bar Harbor and really enjoyed it a lot. It is a scaled-up version of Nicky's restaurant in Bangor, with a little of Governors to boot (it has a train running around the restaurant). It is hard to describe it, but I recommend it to any who are in the Bar Harbor area.

**SEPTEMBER:** Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> we had a friendly group of retirees at breakfast: **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon, Bob Lagassey, Judy and Charlie Boothby, Norm Kalloch, and John Simon**. The photo below shows the smiling faces! All are in apparent good health.

**Norm** showed up for his annual eye examination at Dr. Moulton's. He schedules his eye exams on the second Tuesday of the month. Good planning Norm. **Norm and Audrey** do not spend the winters at West Carry Pond any longer. He has increased the number of solar panels at the camp, however, and is quite satisfied with the results.

**Bruce** is doing a walk for Alzheimer's funding in October. If he hasn't contacted you, give him an email if the spirit moves you.

On Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> we had our annual Noon lunch at Coles in Gray with nine in attendance: **Art Taylor, Geoffery Coombs, Steve Blodgett** (my buddy all through grammar school), his wife **Beverly, Noreen Simon, Gary Hedstrom, Paul Hersey, and Myron Van Kirk** (SCSer from 1962 in Presque Isle and also Gary's brother-in-law). John Simon took the photo.

We all had a great time "remembering"--isn't that a lot of what retirees do together!? Along with a lot of laughter. We can laugh about it now!

I just finished reading a great book that many of you may be interested in. Its title is Anti-Cancer a New Way of Life, by David Servan-Schreiber, MD, PhD, Viking press. He has a web site: <http://www.anticancerbook.com>. It is an inspiring and informative book and one worthy of owning a copy of. The angels were involved in my finding the book, as I found this new hard covered book



Clockwise: Bob, Judy, Charlie, Art, Bruce, Norm, and John

at the Hampden take it or leave it and I just happened to go in to look around. The spirit (my guardian angel) wanted me to share it--I am sure of it.

**OCTOBER:** The October breakfast was held the 11<sup>th</sup> in the "truckers" room this month because there was no room for us in the inn--for some reason. In attendance were **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon, Dave Musselman, and John Simon.**

**Art** is on the last stages of his new house. All outside work is finished. His lawn even looks pretty nice. Art is finishing up the woodwork around his windows and doors, and the floors and plumbing are still to finish. All work is inside now, just in time for the winter to start! Art is still active in the "River Keepers" group that helps with school programs teaching ecology. The group has several large canoes which they use to take kids on a short trip down the Penobscot River to the Bangor area, where the kids are treated to a lecture on river ecology and pizza. This is part of meeting the Clean Water law requirements for municipalities.

On my part, I shut down the AC portion of my mini-split and put it on "fan only." It costs me about \$0.08 per day to run the fan in this mode to prevent stratification of the grand room. It has a cathedral ceiling. On sunny days the room gets quite warm from the sun, and the fan keeps the whole area nice and cozy and evenly tempered.

I decided on not running the mini-split in the heating mode this winter. I analyzed the last several winters using the mini-split and analyzed the many years before installing the mini-split and broke the records down for comparison on the basis of degree-days. The savings on oil amounted to about 77 gallons for a 7,000 DD winter. It cost me well over \$300 for electricity to run the mini-split, so until the price of oil exceeds about \$4/gal the mini-splits stays off during the winter heating mode. As I have indicated before, on a two story house a mini-split for heating belongs on the first floor, and on the second floor for cooling. Oh well. Those folk with a ranch house on one floor are ideal folks for a single unit. I really need a mini-split downstairs for the winter mode but do not plan on staying long enough to enjoy the payback.

The fall lunch that we had planned for in Presque Isle was tabled until next year. Till next month, take care and God bless.

**Bruce** took part in the Alzheimer's walk on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> in Bangor. As of Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> he had individually raised over \$2,600 from family and friends! Wow. He said he was #1 until someone got a big donation and took over his lead. Congratulations to Bruce and his family and all his friends in USDA and elsewhere. Even though Bruce led in donations, the groups discussed in the paper did not include Bruce. Boo. Anyway, we love you Bruce and pray for you and **Pat**.

**Dave** wanted to breakfast with us before he left for Florida, as he will be leaving later in the month. He and **Lydia** will be driving down to Florida, but they are not looking forward to the long drive. Dave says it gets more difficult every year. Dave spends a lot of mornings at the nearby Hermon golf course and, come to find out, he does some golfing with **Tim McCluskey** (my wife Noreen's nephew). He says the Hermon course is a good one and fun to play. Dave gave no indication of the range of his scores for me to pass along. Dave looks great, and retirement is agreeing well with him.



Clockwise: Art Taylor, Geoffrey Coombs, Steve Blodgett, Beverly Blodgett, Noreen Simon, Gary Hedstrom, Paul Hersey, and Myron Van Kirk.



Clockwise: John, Bruce, Art, Dave at Dysarts October 11, 2016. Great looking retirees!

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Jim Wesoloski, ARCSE Representative**  
**Email:** [Jim.wesoloski@gmail.com](mailto:Jim.wesoloski@gmail.com)

Well, it's been a quiet few months for the Massachusetts retirees. We survived the summer drought but are still below average for the year's rainfall if the drought continues. Maybe we can avoid some winter snowfall, too. Just as the swallows leaving Capistrano is a sure sign of impending winter, **Lou and Cecil Currin's** returning to their winter roost in Hadley is another sure sign.

The July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend marked the retirement of **Steve Beaulieu**, soil conservationist at the West Wareham field office, who retired after more than 30 years with the agency. Steve had previously worked in the Holden office, and we wish him the best in his retirement years.

Not to be outdone by Steve's retirement I decided that the end of fiscal 2016 would be a good time to wrap up my ACES assignment with NRCS, and I'm now retired again. I started with SCS in 1963 as an engineering aide at the Northampton Work

Unit. I spent most of my career in the Amherst office and can truthfully say that it was an enjoyable experience to be able to have worked with some delightful people.

On September 28<sup>th</sup> **Betty** and I attended a mini-reunion of the Amherst watersheds crew. Attendees included **Frank and Jane Resides, Sandy O'Neil, Carol Claughton, and Cecil and Lou Currin**. We were able to catch up on family news and reminisce about the olden days. Especially memorable was the time **Frank Resides** answered the ad wanting a home for Mabel, the pet sheep, and Frank offered a good home—in his freezer.

Hard to believe that it's less than two months until the shortest day of the year, and then it's only a few weeks until the daffodils start popping up. Let's hope the checks keep coming every month and we can find a way to spend that 0.3% pension increase.

## MINNESOTA

**Marlene Mechelke, ARCSE Representative**

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

Metro retirees met for lunch on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at Pippins in Roseville: **Margy and Micki Gangl, Vic Ruhland, John Brach and Marlene Mechelke**. This was a small group, but there was no loss of conversation. Most had some exciting summer vacations.

The **Gangl** girls spent two weeks in September/October on a wonderful Danube River cruise. "It was our first river cruise and we thoroughly enjoyed it. We thought it would be a more relaxing way to travel, rather than taking a bus/land tour. However, we were kept really busy. The best part was not having to pack/unpack all the time. We traveled with UniWorld on a beautiful boat with 105 other people. We started out in Prague and drove to Nuremberg, where we boarded our boat. Besides Nuremberg, we also visited Regensburg, Straubing, Passau, Melk Abbey, and finally, Vienna. We stayed over in Vienna for three days on our own where we could do our own exploring.

The weather was beautiful and it was particularly lovely because the leaves were in color along the banks as we cruised down the Danube. The food was also great, and what we are used to, as we are of 100% Austrian heritage. We met some very nice people, and the trip was over all too soon. Now reality is setting back in as we are raking and raking leaves and getting the yard closed down for winter."

The group of mountain bikers who call themselves the High Altitude Wind Suckers or "HAWS" had another adventure in September out in Utah and Arizona. This year's participants included three retirees, organizer **Pete Cooper, Fred Kollmann and John Brach** and one active duty NRCSer, **Scott Swanberg**. The group's first day was a warmup ride through Zion National Park followed by a stroll to the Narrows Trailhead. The next day, the group packed up the camping equipment headed to the high country of the Kaibab National Forest. They spent the first day riding the Rainbow Rim Trail, which is on the north rim of the Grand Canyon. Over the next three days, they rode 65 miles from Grand Canyon National Park to the Utah border on the Arizona Trail, camping out each night along the way. As per HAWS trip planning rules, the trip was downhill, starting at 9,000 feet and ending 5,000 feet elevation (with a few hills along the way).

There was one particularly steep and rocky section of trail where the older and wiser riders (Brach and Kollmann) decided to go around. Pete had a somewhat spectacular wipeout, but the laws of gravity were overcome when he landed in a tree. Helmets do work, and after some basic first aid he was back on the trail.



**Scott Swanberg, Pete Cooper, John Brach, and Fred Kollmann**

Previous HAWS trips included Telluride Colorado to Moab Utah (2009), Bears Ears to Moab in Utah (2010), the Maah Daah Hey trail in North Dakota (2011), and Black Hills Trails in South Dakota (2013). Previous HAWS participants have included **Roger Mussetter, Roger Hirschman, Phil McCloud, Glen Kajewski, Frank Fink, and Skip Vettum**.



*HWAS lunch stop on the Arizona Trail*

## MISSOURI

**Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative**

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

The annual NRCS/SCS retiree's luncheon was held at the Columbia Senior Center on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Those in attendance were: **Bob and Lenore Ball, Ken Benham, Mike and Pam Blaine, Jack Cronhardt, Jerold and Mayree Sue Crowder, Maurice and Gloria Davis, Jerry Edwards, Roger Hansen, Jean Herman, Rob and Rosie Herschbach, Bob and Diane Hummel, Darlene Johnson, Dick Purcell, Richard and Marjorie Koenig, John and Carol McCarthy, Gena Michalson, Frank and Kay Miller, Bill and Kris Pauls, Dave and Phoebe Rastorfer, Jack Schneider, Ed Smith and Jack and Joyce Walker.**

**Lane Thurman:** "No news from me other than Nancy is recovering well from her cancer this summer. She has stopped chemo and is finally growing her hair back, short but growing. Didn't get a chance to do much fishing this summer, so will have to wait until next year and hit it hard to catch up. My fish supply in the freezer is getting low."

**Dennis Shirk:** "Hello Folks! Sitting in the porch swing enjoying the day. We had a great camping and riding trip to Lesterville. The weather was perfect. Tomato plants are doing better than they have all season, but I don't have the knack of gardening in planter boxes down pat yet. Lois's shoulder is progressing nicely with the physical therapy. I have my wood stove and pipes cleaned out and resealed so we are ready for a nice warm fire. We are well and very blessed. See ya down the trail!"

**Paula Price:** "I thought when retirement came we'd all have more time! Not so much! Through the summer I helped with the 175<sup>th</sup> Andrew County Celebration by researching Empire Prairie in Northeast Andrew County, the location of my forefather's homestead. Last Thursday night The Andrew County Museum display was opened, and for a first-timer I thought the community displays were well done. We took a short trip to the Table Rock area in September and hope to do another one in October. Other than a couple of rounds of flu this year (knock on wood), Alan has remained rather healthy. In June the Realty Executives group for whom I worked merged with RE/MAX Professionals in St. Joseph. Thankfully the Savannah office became a branch office, so not much change happened for me. Our granddaughters are 7 and 2. **Jordin** (7) enjoys scouts, volleyball, and her twin sisters. **Holly** and **Rylee** enjoy bugging Jordin, climbing and just overall having a good time. We need to bottle some of their energy for a dose every now-and-then. I do hope everyone is enjoying retirement to the fullest extent possible. God bless and thank you so much for the prayers and concerns for Alan's continued medical issues. Eat chocolate!"

**Jack Schneider:** "Travel, as usual. We are exploring Capital Reef and Escalante in Utah right now. Expect to have family for Thanksgiving and have Christmas at **Keith's** new home in Wilmington, DE. Everybody keep safe for the rest of the year, and have great holidays."

**Jim Rickman:** The Rickmans have been traveling a lot. "In March we did a river cruise in Europe, and in September we went to Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Seeing the conditions in Vietnam, it sure made me glad I wasn't there during the war. Presently, we have been to 74 different countries. My goal is to make it to 100 before expiration. Our granddaughter graduated from U. of Texas and got married this year. Quail numbers have been up and down, mostly down, but this year is likely going to be the best in many years. The quail counts have set new records. Coming out of a field after hunting dove, five coveys of quail flew across the trail. I have never seen anything like it. Hope everyone is doing great."

**Bill Pauls:** "We are firmly settled in here at the Lake of The Ozarks, Camdenton, MO and lovin' it. We've become involved with the locals. Love the area on a daily basis. Lake is a constant source of enjoyment and fun. Garden did well this year. Sitting here typing watching the birds at the feeders overlooking Kinderhook valley from our back deck; 11 mile mark of the Big Niangua Arm.

Water is calm today, but a storm looks to be brewing over yonder mtn. A 1/2 mile to our cabin lakeside--open invitation to all current and former SCS/NRCS employees to come visit anytime, just give us a call at (573) 289-3745. It would be fun to chat up 'old times' and current goings on. Can stay with us here at the mountain house or down at the cabin--great get-a-way spot. A lot of fun stuff to do year round. I walk down to the cabin sometimes when Kris has had enough of me (grin). I'm down there a lot! Marathon #94 was put in the book on September 11<sup>th</sup> in Erie, PA. Also went on up to Niagara Falls to celebrate anniversary 45<sup>th</sup> of our marriage--best thing I ever did, except for my "great" soil mapping of all those million acres for SCS of course. What a gorgeous place that NF is! Now looking forward to #95 on the Towpath C&O Canal along the Potomac, DC 11/13 (probably a solo trip). Hope to finish my 2<sup>nd</sup> tour around the 50 states in the next two years, have mostly NE states (NY, MA, ME, NH, VT, CT, RI) left, plus AK and HI. Then probably start doing shorter races as these marathons seem to be getting "longer" every year. At least they are taking me longer to run! What's up with that--I can't be getting old, can I? You are as young as you feel! Our two kids, their spouses, four grandkids, and granddog (the "fetchin'uss" & "tuggin'uss" mutt ever) all doing well!

Everyone have a fun Halloween and a 'Thankful' Thanksgiving. Take care of yourselves and your loved ones. God Bless you all."

**Mike Blaine:** "Things are winding down on Blaine Hill. All that is left to do in the garden is to dig the sweet potatoes then disk it up. We had a marvelous pumpkin crop this year that came from a volunteer plant no less. We're ready for the big family deer hunt that begins November 12<sup>th</sup>. Got the deer stands all repaired and the shooting lanes all cleared. Next on the agenda is to cut more firewood. I have less than 1/2 enough stacked by the house. There is lots of seasoned wood on the farm, I just have to chunk it up and haul it to the house. We converted our fireplace to a stove a couple of years ago, and it really made a difference in the heat we get from it. The fireplace was just a paneled wall around the fire area. I replaced the paneling with barn wood from the farm. It turned out looking pretty good, I thought."

**Pat Beneke:** "Bill and I just came back from a road trip driving on the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina and Virginia. We had originally wanted to enjoy the fall leaves and their changing colors. This year the leaves were turning late, and those areas on the north end of the Parkway were still mostly green. It was still a beautiful drive and interesting to see the small farms carved out of the mountain sides. We stayed in a place called Fancy Gap, VA. Out west you cross mountains in passes. Gaps have much cooler names. In North Carolina we took a side trip to Mt. Airy. Any of you old enough to remember the **Andy Griffith** show (that includes all of you) should recognize the name. I was taking a picture of his home place when Bill said we have to move--the police are behind us! Turns out to be a prop car from the TV show had pulled up. We moved anyway. A second side trip we stumbled into was an HGTV road show of tiny houses. We toured several, and they are tiny. We decided we needed a little more elbow room. Hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful fall weather."

**John Turner** reported that **Edwin Bush**, retired Soil Conservation Technician in the Paris field office, has passed away. Mr. Bush retired before the agency changed its name to NRCS!

A link to Edwin's obituary follows:

[https://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?CFID=605d54d5-5146-40eb-92e3-062f6c28163e&CFTOKEN=0&o\\_id=3888195&fh\\_id=14063](https://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?CFID=605d54d5-5146-40eb-92e3-062f6c28163e&CFTOKEN=0&o_id=3888195&fh_id=14063)

**Ted Utz** reported that **Dee Blanton** has passed away. Dee was a retired Technician at the Albany Field Office.

**Erin Assenmacher** Area Administrative Coordinator at the Springfield office: "It is with extreme sorrow that I am sending this email. NRCS has lost a great employee and a wonderful man. **Bob Howe** passed away Saturday, September 10, 2016, in Springfield, Missouri. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the United Methodist Church in Bolivar, <http://butlerfuneralhome.com>."

Please keep Bob's family in your thoughts and prayers during this very difficult time. If you would like to send cards to show your support, addresses follow: **Kathy Howe**, 1157 E. 527 Road, Morrisville, MO; **Amy Carter**, 5841 S. Geranium, Battlefield, MO 65619.

**Ronna Chrisman** in the state office reported that **Duane Viele** has passed away. Duane was a DNR Soil Scientist that worked 30 some years and mapped multiple counties in Missouri working with SCS/NRCS.

[http://www.lebanondailyrecord.com/article\\_a310b23e-970e-11e6-ad75-ab7654af8d2c.html](http://www.lebanondailyrecord.com/article_a310b23e-970e-11e6-ad75-ab7654af8d2c.html)

From **John Handler**. Hope you all have a great fall and getting ready for a great Thanksgiving. By the time you read this, it will be all over. All those beautiful leaves will be on the ground being recycled into next season's abundance. In the 21 years I lived in New England, I never saw such brilliant autumn color as this autumn! Entire mountainsides were stunning with color from the valley floors on up to the elevation where the conifers start. Some of the locals attribute the vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows to the drought that the White and Green Mountains were experiencing this summer (quite evident with rivers and streams at the lowest level I remember, and some scenic waterfalls non-existent). And I thought the colors here in Minnesota were well-defined this year, but the prize this autumn has to go to New England!





## MONTANA

**Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative**

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

Montana big sky report



*Mary Ann Gooby on her way to get groceries.*

**Gooby Ranch Report:** I thought you would be interested in the selfie **Mary Ann** took on her way over to Butte to get groceries, so I could see the county she rides through. When the weather is nice she likes to ride over the mountain to get to Butte since it's a lot shorter distance and she doesn't have to worry about vehicles running over her.

It's 50 miles by road to Butte, and every time she takes her horse to get groceries it saves us a lot of gas. Our vehicles are so old that we get only about 10 miles to the gallon. By taking the over-the-mountain route it saves Mary Ann a couple hours' time, which is a big help since she can get home in time to get my supper ready before my favorite evening TV programs come on.

**Gordon Watson Report:** Three old SCSers who were all together at the Glendive FO 50 years ago celebrated the event with their spouses in Missoula this past week: **Harold and Karen Cottet, Ken and Tina Kaul, and Gordon and Joann Watson.**

**Gordon Decker Report:** We've been somewhat busy this summer for "retirees." It's been a super year for Kathy's flower gardens, my vegetable garden and fruit trees. Had to clean older fruits and vegetables from the freezer to make room for the new, and we're still not done. We just returned from a group trip to Memphis and Nashville, TN sponsored by the Bozeman Senior Center. Saw lots of history and heard lots of good western music at the "Grand Ole Opry," the Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theater, and in all the restaurants and bars on Beale Street in Memphis. We toured Graceland, Sun Studios, Country Music Hall of Fame, and the Fontenel Mansion (**Barbara Mandrel's** log mansion made with logs from the Seeley Lake area). **Jim** (NRCS retiree) and **Joan Johnson** were part of the tour group. We spent time at the family ranch this summer: spraying for noxious weeds in the spring, routine maintenance in the summer, and cutting our annual supply of wood this fall. Also spent time with the kids and grandkids attending baseball and football games.

**Hal Hunter Report:** Still trying to bring attention to the poor ecological condition of the Northern Range (winter range) of Yellowstone National Park (YNP) and the continued downward trend in range health. The Society for Range Management (SRM) has embraced the concern. A special issue of the SRM publication "Rangelands" will be focused on Northern Range health, and sent to each member of Congress. Six people were selected by SRM to write the special "Rangelands" publication. Three NRCS retirees will be writing the upland health section of the special issue: **Hunter, Fidel, and Husby.** It was suggested by the writing committee that additional rangeland health assessments be done, since the guiding document is an interagency effort: BLM, USGS, NRCS, ARS. So, Hunter, Fidel, and Husby completed 15 additional rangeland health assessments in August. Date for all drafts to be completed for team review is January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. SRM also offered to facilitate a Coordinated Resource Management planning effort, YNP management declined, as did Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks. Members of Congress, **Zinke, Daines and Barasso** (WY) are interacting on the issue. I have also been aiding Western Resources Legal Center. The organization has policy compliance concerns. I have started "shopping" around my report, documenting the poor ecological condition of the Northern Range to various national news organizations, hoping to bring national attention to the issue.

**Jim Johnson** sent the following: "We went on a Bozeman Senior Center week-long trip to Tennessee in September. Time on the trip was spent touring Memphis and Nashville. We enjoyed visiting those cities and places that are well-known for **Elvis Presley** and country music. A highlight was attending a sold-out performance of the Grand Ol' Opry in Nashville. **Gordon and Kathy Decker** were also on the trip."

## NEBRASKA

**Norman Kempf, ARCSE Representative**

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The breakfast meeting was called to order by **Bob Engle**, VP with 15 members present in September.

**Craig Derickson**, Nebraska State Conservationist, was a guest at the September meeting and gave the following report: There is lots of business now at the end of the fiscal year. Next year will probably be operating on a continuing resolution since no budget has been passed by Congress. The NRCS had a living soils exhibit at the state fair, and it was a smash hit. A December 7<sup>th</sup> national NRCS meeting is being planned in Nebraska. A **Hugh Hammond Bennett** memorial is being discussed. It is hoped that some of the retirees will be in attendance. Currently, NRCS is working with GSA to discuss the possibility of relocating the state office, the National Soil Survey Center, and the Soil Mechanics Center to a new location.

The October meeting was the annual fall breakfast to which spouses are also invited. The breakfast was held at the Egg and I, at which 16 people attended.

**Peter Jensen**, 92 of Lincoln passed away on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. He served for many years a state range conservationist. **Harry Paden** passed away on September 1<sup>st</sup>. He served as a soil scientist for the Soil Conservation Service. **Craig Smith** lost his wife **Kathy** on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (See Memoriam Section).

**Steve Scheinost** has spent the last few months traveling. He and his wife traveled to California and drove along the Oregon coast. They spent a week with their daughter in Idaho. They also spent time fishing in Nebraska at several lakes. On their trip to Alaska they got to see Denali in its entirety.

**Norm Helzer** went to the volleyball games in Eugene, OR, and then toured the coast line. **Paul Bartlett** and his wife traveled to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in Canada and then went to Niagara Falls. **Roger Hammer** met with his fellow retired military members.

**Jim Culver** had a high school reunion in Pawnee, Oklahoma, where a 5.6 earthquake struck recently. On his way back stopped to see **Lester Brockman** in Newkirk, OK.

**Norman Kempf:** He returned recently from an 8-day trip to Cuba. It was a great tour and the people seem happy and well fed. Saw a lot of 1950s cars. One evening we were transported to our evening meal in 1950s cars. I rode in a 1954 Chev. One of the more interesting stops was at a cigar-making factory. The factory quota was 15,000 cigars per day. Each person was expected to produce 80 to 160 cigars each day depending on size.

**Bob Engel** attended his 55<sup>th</sup> high school reunion in Wisconsin.

**Cam Loerch**, He was recently diagnosed with cancer and is receiving treatment. Please remember Cam and his family in your prayers. **JoAnne Thiele** has come down with pneumonia again. It was reported that **Charles Eperspacher** is completely blind now.

## NEW YORK

**Nancy Lee, ARCSE Representative**

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**Ellen Luchsinger** writes: I had a busy summer of camping, paddling and hiking mainly in the Adirondacks. Even camping ("glamping") on a Serengeti Safari when I traveled to Tanzania, Africa. Stayed at a lodge/farm that had contour strip cropping, 150 cow dairy operation, and coffee plantation--quite a surprise! A wonderful trip where I shot the "Big Five" with my camera! (Lions, Elephants, Leopards, Cape Buffalo, and Rhinos plus many other animals, people and sights.) This fall I visited Letchworth Park to hike and bike while enjoying the gorgeous views and turning foliage and included a free tour of the Army Corps of Engineers' Mount Morris Dam. I probably spent more time at the park this fall than I did during the year that I worked in Wyoming County.

News has been received of the recent death of **Gerry Dalton** who worked in the State Office in Syracuse.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Jim Canterbury, ARCSE Representative**

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Nine retirees and guests from the Raleigh area met at the Bob Evans Restaurant in Cary for breakfast on September 15<sup>th</sup>. This event takes place several times each year. The picture caption lists those attending.



*North Carolina Retirees' Breakfast: L-R Tommy Cutts, Dr. Maurice Cooke, Horace Smith, Roger Montague, Cecil Settle, Jim Canterbury, Ed Helmey, and John Garrett.*

## NORTH DAKOTA

**Robert Bird, ARCSE Representative**

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At the beginning of our Annual Reunion on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, we took a moment to remember ten former co-workers or spouses who passed away in the last year. State Conservationist **Mary Podoll** gave us a brief overview on NRCS activities. Attendees were given the opportunity to make comments: **Ron Sando** is working at the golf course again this year. He plays golf four times a week and has two holes-in-one and has shot his age twice. **Ron and Karen** had their grandkids from California in Bismarck for seven days of touring Medora, fishing, and 4-wheeling in the desert, and then they rested for three days. Ron still does some consulting work for the Water Boards, and Karen enjoys playing bridge. **Diane Mittelstedt** says she is about to retire from tax work, and this summer put up 32 jars of grape jelly. **Herb Mittelstedt** noted that their granddaughter got married. They had their grandkids come home for 11 days and he can't take it anymore. Herb bought a copy of the Constitution, read a book on "Road to Serfdom" and noted that Moses at 120 years of age climbed a mountain to die. Don't know what all that means. **Dick Kukowski** noted that age and wisdom travel together. He has seven great-grandchildren and noted that the children of youth are the future of our country. **Myron Senechal** said they celebrated their grandson's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. He has visited with **Neal McClure** and noted that Neal will be 100 years young on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>. Myron has been researching his family and has 20,000 ancestors in a genealogy database and is planning to visit Quebec again. **Pat Johnson** had a busy year and sold her home and downsized to a smaller place. She also got a knee replacement. **Jackie Miller** noted she has been retired for 14 years. They have a cabin in Pick City on Lake Sakakawea, celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this summer, taking a Senior Citizen bus trip this fall and spend time in Minnesota visiting grandkids. **Vi Person** visited her daughter in Florida in January, has a son in Minneapolis, and her last trip was to Dubai. She is in many groups and has many friends. **Wes and Mary Ewine** had a good year. They went to Maryland, and Wes attended the NDSU Bison game, winning their 5<sup>th</sup> National Football championship in Frisco, TX. They winter in Mesa and have a cabin on Lake LaMoure in the summer. **Chris and Jean Hansen** have two grandkids in Bismarck and one in

South Dakota, and their health has been good. Chris works part-time for the State Land Department in the summer. **Brad Benson** noted that he spends about 50% of his time watching TV, and it was good to be at the reunion. **Alan Ness** has been retired for 10 years and was at our reunion 10 years ago. He is still farming, has three kids and is looking at seven grandkids soon. **Rod O'Clair** said they found cancer in Dec. 2014, and it has been a long struggle to get cancer free. He has two daughters. One is a Lt. Col. In the National Guard with four children and a grandchild and is an Environmental Scientist in the Fargo Water Plant. He has a grandson who built his own water-cooled computer and is in the Gold Star Marching Band. He does seasonal work with APHIS. He noted that **Kenny Rye**, former DC at Killdeer is in the hospital in Fargo with a blood clot.



*The annual meeting of the North Dakota retirees at the Bismarck Elks on Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Pictured front row, left to right: Jean Hansen, Susy Moen, Diane Mittelstedt, Jeannie Bird, Mary Ewine, Karen Sando, Vi Person, Cheryl Senechal, Pat Johnson. Back row, left to right: Chris Hansen, Herb Mittelstedt, Wayne Moen, Dick Kukowski, Bob Bird, Wes Ewine, Ron Sando, Rod O'Clair, Jackie Miller and Myron Senechal.*

**Wayne and Susy Moen** celebrated their 58<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary last Thursday. They have five children, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. They have good health, do a lot of traveling and can't beat being retired. **Bob and Jeannie Bird** spent part of the winter in Texas and got back out golfing this summer. Bob still volunteers with VFW and the American Legion, Engineering Societies and the SWCS. They both volunteer indexing county records at the ND State Archives.

As mentioned earlier, **Neal McClure** is going to the century mark on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>. If you want send him a card, his address is: Neal McClure, Sheyenne Crossing, 225 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. W., #305, West Fargo, ND 58078. We wish everyone a great family Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and Best Wishes for the New Year.

## OHIO

**Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative**

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On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016, nineteen current and retired NRCS/SCS employees (nine ARCSE members) gathered at the MCL Cafeteria at 5240 East Main Street in Whitehall, OH, along with eight additional family members.

**Terry Cosby**, State Conservationist for Ohio, addressed the group to update us on current NRCS activities. Attendees then updated the group on current activities in their families and professional life.

Attendees included: **Dave Berna**, **Joe Branco** and his wife **Marge**, **Terry Cosby**, **Henry Fisher** and his wife **Goldie**, **Jon Gerken**, **Ralph Gray**, his wife **Betty** and their grandson (name unavailable), **Bob Hendershot**, **Keith Huffman** and his wife **Joanne**, **Nancy Jervis**, **Jon Kreglow**, **Mike Laughrey**, **Lennie Losh**, **Rex Mapes**, **Ed McConoughay**, **Jim Piper**, **Merv Skiles** and his wife **Betty**, **Joe Steiger** and his wife **Carolyn**, **Larry Tornes** and his wife **Anna**, and **Jon Warner**. *[Editor's note: Betty Skiles passed 10/17/2016.]*



Facing camera from left: Lennie Losh, Joe Branco, Marge Branco, Betty Skiles, and Merv Skiles.



From left, Table 1: Merv Skiles, Betty Skiles, Marge Branco, Larry Tornes, Anna Tornes, Joe Branco, Joanne Huffman, Keith Huffman, Lennie Losh, and Rex Mapes. Table 2: Ralph Gray, Bob Hendershot, Goldie Fisher, Carolyn Steiger, and Henry Fisher. Table 3: Ed McConoughey and Jon Kreglow.



From left: Henry Fisher, Goldie Fisher, Ralph Gray, Bob Hendershot, Ed McConoughey, Carolyn Steiger, Jon Kreglow, Jim Piper, and Joe Steiger.

## OREGON

### Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

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Oregon's Willamette Valley has had a very wet October. By the day of the fall quarter retiree lunch on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 7.01 inches had been recorded at the Portland International Airport. Only 2.19 inches is the average. Even so, nineteen retirees and a spouse floated to fall quarter lunch held at the Clackamas The Old Spaghetti Factory. The group welcomed three first timers, including **Mark Parson**, **Kristi Yasumiishi**, and **Dave Dishman**. Others attending were **Anna Cerotsky**, **Kay Denfeld**, **Bobbie Hart**, **Jack Kanalz**, **Lowell and Marian Kenedy**, **Jack Land**, **Jon Lea**, **Rose Loehr**, **Chad McGrath**, **Jeff Repp**, **Marcine Richmond**, **Leland Saele**, **Pat Straka**, **Eldena Vanderzanden**, **Gail Voge**, **Ralph Wadleigh**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**.

**Eldena Vanderzanden** made a trip to the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta which she said was spectacular. **Jack Land** told one of his fishing stories. **Rose Loehr** had a story about her successful Alaska fishing trip. **Mark Parson** introduced himself telling of his retirement from a position in NHQ and moving to a home in Stevenson, WA that has a wonderful view of the Columbia River. **Lowell Kenedy** went to a plowing event on his farm in Eastern Washington. There he found out that large tractors have difficulty in rainy weather. **Leland Saele** said he made several trips to North Dakota to check on his farm and his family. He also made a trip to Disney World and Puerto Rico with family. **Bobbie Hart** and her husband celebrated their 53<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary. They made a trip to Spokane and Lake Coeur d'Alene. **Dave Dishman** told us that he is doing a lot of volunteer work plus hiking, biking, and fishing. **Chad McGrath** mentioned that he has been staying close to home but did make a trip to McCall, ID. **Jeff Repp** said that he and **Maureen** have been staying pretty much at home. They did, however, make a trip to Montana for a few weeks. **Jack Kanalz** told us that he and **Geneal** had taken a trip to Portugal. Geneal had a fall and injured her leg. Fortunately, she is mending very well. **Jon Leah** enjoyed a get-together with his daughter. **Gale Voge** has been busy painting her home. **Kay Denfeld** entertained a niece for a few weeks who has been living in Hawaii. **Kristi Yasumiishi** is now three weeks into her retirement. She enjoyed a trip to Montana to visit her brother. There she caught a four-pound German Brown trout. She is also catching up on past episodes of the *Game of Thrones*. **Pat Straka** is now living in Keizer. She is enjoying taking care of her grandchildren and a grand-dog. **Marcine Richmond** keeps busy keeping up with her family and making trips to the beach. **Anna Cerotsky** is downsizing. She also made trips to Southern California, Sacramento and Denver.

Several sent their regrets. **Russ Hatz** told me that he and **Sue** were on a ten-week trip to Florida. They expected to be in Arkansas on the day of the lunch. Their plan is to be home by Thanksgiving. **Dick and Kathy Sylvester** were making their annual trek to Montana. **Thor Thorson** told me he would be hunting wily elk in Baker County. **Joe Sahlfeld** said he would be in Bellingham, WA to see his new grandson, **Noah Edward Sahlfeld**. **Clifton and Marva Deal** would be celebrating their 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary. He went on to say at their age they needed at least two days to celebrate.

The winter quarter retiree lunch is planned for January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Peppermill Restaurant in Aloha.



*Mark Parson, Jack Kanalz, and Ralph Wadleigh*



*Jon Lea, Jack Kanalz, and Chad McGrath*



**Jon Leah, Gale Voge, Kay Denfeld, Kristi Yasumiishi, Pat Straka, and Marcine Richmond**

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Bill Bowers, ARCSE Representative**

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**Tim Murphy, PA Bugle Editor**

Email: [vindemurph@verizon.net](mailto:vindemurph@verizon.net)

The PA Retiree's group met September 18 and 19 in Carlisle. Over 30 people attended the Sunday evening meal at Fiddler's Restaurant on the Mayapple golf course. It was especially good to see **Munk and Mo Munkitterick** and **Bob and Carol Heidecker**. The food was great and the discussion and renewal of old friendships even better.

Monday morning we met at Hoss's for coffee, tea and fresh bagels with many homemade jams and jellies supplied by those in attendance. **Matthew March**, of the Cumberland County Historical Society, provided very interesting information about the influence of the Cumberland Valley on the settlement of the US and how the Whiskey Rebellion played an important role in the taxation policy of the newly formed US federal government.



*This Sunday evening event is becoming a very popular time to gather together*

The business meeting was highlighted with the group taking action to support the Keystone Chapter of SWCS scholarship program to the tune of over \$300. Thanks to all who supported this important project. There was a table of memorabilia which included caps, T shirts, patches and pins. Some were "up for grabs" and some were for "observation only." Among the memorabilia was a copy of **Ivan McKeever's** "Reflections on my Work as State Conservationist in Pennsylvania (1946 – 1968)," EWP caps and shirts, and many SCS/NRCS caps. Thanks to all who brought the memorabilia! A gold belt buckle and belt, from the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCS, came from an anonymous donor. This was raffled off with proceeds going to the scholarship fund.

**Denise Coleman**, State Conservationist, provided a report on current activities in Pennsylvania. Highlights included the Strategic Plan, a Summary of Activities in the Chesapeake Bay by NRCS, and several personnel actions which include the retirement of **Gary Smith**, who was in attendance with his wife, **Ann**.

After a great lunch at Hoss's, the group traveled to the nearby US Army Heritage and Education Center. The Center provided a tram and a guide to show us the Army Heritage Trail that highlights nearly every era of Army history from the Yorktown Redoubt, World Wars I and II, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. We were introduced to the indoor Soldier Experience Gallery where one could experience the United States Army through the eyes of the men and women who lived its history, in war and peace, from the Spanish American War to current operations in Afghanistan.

Folks could stay as long as they liked to enjoy the gallery and experience the history of the US Army's activities and roles in the past and present.

First-time attendees included **Willie Ruffin** and **Judy Hughes**. A big Thank You to **Rosemarie Updegraff** for making hotel and restaurants arrangements, to **John Mickley** for handling registration and keeping the financial books and paying the bills, to **Tim Murphy** for editing The PA Bugle and arranging for our speaker, and to all those who shared their jams and jellies!

Looking ahead, put September 17 and 18, 2017 on your calendar! Suggestions for locations and activities there are welcome and expected. Drop Bill or Tim a note, email or phone call with your ideas and suggestions.

Congratulations to the latest retirees, **Joel Elder** and **Natalie Dibert**. Enjoy the PA Bugle, send us your news, and please join us at next year's retiree event.



**Kneeling:** Ed White, Harvey Pinkerton, Nevin Ulery, Bill Bowers. **2<sup>nd</sup> Row:** Judy Wood, Gina Murphy, Judy Ulery, Mary Ann Bowers, Ann Akers, Ellen Mank, Rose Marie Updegraff, John Mank, Dale Updegraff, Frank Resides, Jane Resides, Judy Hughes, Jane Schuetz. **Back Row:** John Akers, Alan Wood, Vickie Pinkerton, Donna Mickley, John Mickley, Tim Murphy, Anne Smith, Gary Smith, Shirley Thomas, Bill Parrish, Willie Ruffin, Shirley Lindsey, Don Lindsey, Fred Schuetz.

**Wayne Bogovich** sent the following: "Sorry we missed the retirees' event. We are in the middle of finally moving the last of our earthly belongings to the farm in Bradford County. We've been working on it since April but only got serious about it since August. The last trip consisted of a full 26' U-Haul and a 15-passenger van (with all bench seats removed carrying all my glass carboys.) I've got an old Concord vine at the farm that had the trellis fall down a couple years ago. It's a mess but hopefully this winter I can trim it and rebuild the trellis for future harvest."



*We honored our veterans and thanked them for their service.*

**Don Lindsey** says: "The Lindseys are enjoying mid-fall with our grass still green enough to look like it's May. The Retirees' meeting was wonderful. Thanks to all who organized it. Great to see all those who were able to be there."

Not much exciting going on. Our church just finished two weekends of the Pumpkin Festival. Weather wonderful for three of the four days! We plan on a short trip to enjoy Pennsylvania fall foliage.

**John Akers** wrote: "This was a summer for outdoor weddings for us. Our grandson **Andrew** got married the end of July at Bedford, VA, and the reception was outdoors at night at our son **Jerry**'s house north of Lynchburg, VA.

The next one was in September where my cousin's granddaughter got married outdoors, but the reception was indoors near Pleasantville in Bedford County.



**Alan and Judy Wood** avoided the **BIG HOT** in Pennsylvania this summer with a trip to Scandinavia. Stayed cool along the fjords in Norway and ended up in St. Petersburg, Russia.



The other three weddings were held at Crystal Spring Camp Ground, south of Breezewood. We were there as visitors to the wedding ceremonies, but not as invited guests. We have a cottage at the Crystal Spring Camp Ground, and I help with mowing the grass and taking care of the benches, so we like to go the wedding services, because we know the families from Camp Meeting.

We had a nice Father's Day dinner with our daughter **Julie** and her husband **Bob Burns** at John's Diner in Carlisle. We got a good dinner and a good laugh since it was John's Diner.

We enjoyed the retirees' meeting and it was good to see my old co-workers and their spouses. Although I went to high school at Carlisle, the War College museum and display were built later and I had not seen that area before. Best wishes to all!

**Natalie Dibert** shared the following: "Well, the day I've been anxiously awaiting for so long has finally arrived--I'm now an official retiree today and couldn't be any happier! Come Monday morning I know it will seem weird *not* waking up at the crack of dawn to an alarm clock, not fighting rush hour traffic, and not walking into my office to face an onslaught of user distress calls, servers down, printers not printing, etc. Now who in their right mind would want to give that all up by retiring? But seriously, while I won't miss the everyday stress of work, I know I'll miss the interaction with all the USDA employees I've come to know through the years. Still, I feel it's time to turn that page and start the next chapter of my life. I want to take a break from all things IT, at least for now--got lots of catching up to do."

**Fred Bubb** freely admits to frequently being in prison during the early part of his SCS career. The Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary, The Allenwood Federal Prison, and the Laurelton State Prison for Women all had large farm operations in Union County and were conservation district cooperators. One day the technician and Fred went to the 7,000-acre Allenwood Prison to check some recently completed terraces. This was a minimum security prison, and the main gate was open and not staffed, and they had permission to come and go without checking in. Prisoners wore khaki and so did Fred. Back in those days, khaki was the unofficial SCS uniform.

As they were surveying, Fred noticed the farm manager puffing up the hill at some distance. Fred called to him and when he saw who it was, gave them a not-so-pleasant greeting. It seems a guard had spotted two guys in khaki heading around a far hill, and sounded a break alarm. From then on, Fred had to report in.

Fred says he got his prison start when he was a soil scientist in Centre County. He had to soil map the Rockville State Prison farm and through missed communication, he was nabbed for trespassing. Desiring to reform Fred, **Ivan McKeever** transferred him to Allentown where there were no prison farms, but the county jail was just across the street from the field office just to keep him straight.

**Wayne Bogovich** offers the following: The year was 1981. There was a special Area 3 meeting in the late winter/early spring at the Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative building. I had been working just less than a year for SCS. My wife **Jackie** had given birth to our first child at the end of the previous year. At the meeting, the State Conservationist (**Munk**) spoke with the help of overheads about a dire financial situation. Basically, PA SCS didn't have enough funds to pay everyone on the roles for the entire fiscal year. I recall his exact words: "On July 30, we all go home." I got real nervous. I was sitting between **Gene Krotzer**, Area Technician and **Therold Furman**, Technician in the Somerset Field Office. One of them noticed my nervousness, leaned over and said: "Don't worry, he does this every year."

PA retiree historian, **Fred Bubb**, made a plea at the Carlisle annual gathering for any items including photos that might shed light on the early days of the Pennsylvania retiree group. He was given some photos and old SCS publications. One of the photos was from 1987 and was of a group on the Millersburg Ferry. Speculation is that the first meeting was called by **Corky Miles** in the early to mid-1980s and was held at the New Cumberland Community Park. There were also three photos of meeting attendees that cannot be identified as to where and when. Fred is intrigued because he is not in any of these photos, but they were evidently taken during the time of State Conservationists **Munk Munkittrick** and **Jim Olson**. Please check out that box of old SCS stuff in the attic and forward any photos or any written materials having to do with the retirees' meetings. Send to Fred Bubb, 711 15th Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070.

*"Land must be expertly cared for if it is to be maintained in a productive state." --Hugh Hammond Bennett*

### **Southeast Pennsylvania**

**Frank Resides**, West Chester, PA 2016

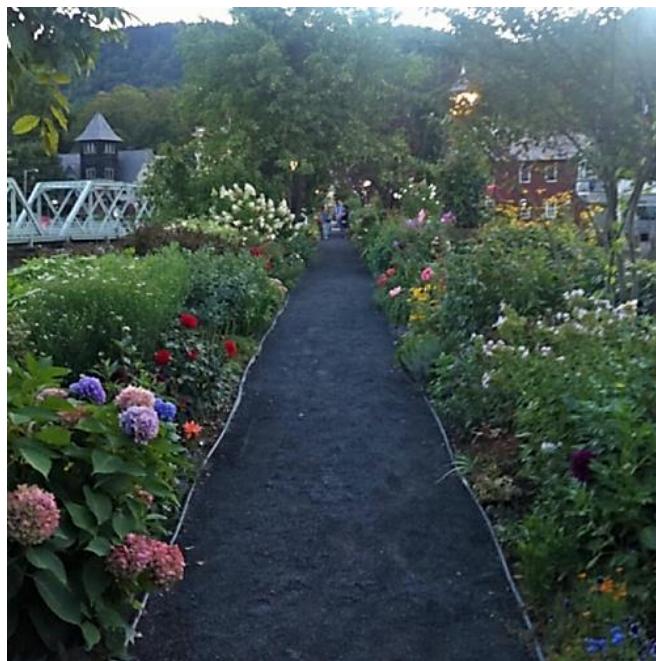
Jane and I returned on October 2<sup>nd</sup> from a four-day trip to western MA, where we had lived from 1969 to 1983. We had not been back there in many years, and it was nice to reconnect with some of the friends we had when we lived there. Some have moved away, and sadly, several are now deceased, and are resting in the Riverside Cemetery in Sunderland. Riverside is a beautiful and peaceful place, almost entirely shaded by large oak and maple trees. Our visit there brought back some pleasant memories and was a blessing.

**Carol Claughton**, (Steve's wife), had us to her house, along with **Sandy O'Neill** (John's wife), for a delicious home-cooked dinner. Her hospitality was appreciated, and we had a nice visit.

We drove west one afternoon on the Mohawk Trail from Greenfield to the villages of Shelburne and Buckland. These towns are connected by a foot bridge over the Deerfield River. Known as the **Bridge of Flowers**, both sides of the path are planted with a variety of beautiful flora. We had not walked on the bridge before, a unique experience!



**Bridge of Flowers, Shelburne Falls, MA**



Bridge of Flowers, Shelburne Falls, MA

While in Amherst we had lunch one day with **Carol Claughton, Sandy O'Neill, Cecil and Lou Currin, and Jim and Betty Wesoloski**. We also dined one evening with **Jeff and Ann Perchak**. Jeff came to work for SCS in 1977, having graduated for the U-Mass as a Civil Engineer. Jeff was a beekeeper and helped me get started with bees in 1979. **Jeff and his father, Peter, Luther McDougal** and I used to go flounder fishing to Quincy Bay every spring. Jeff usually drove my truck camper while Peter, Luther and I stayed in the camper having some refreshments, especially on the way home. It was always a "fun in the sun" trip. Jeff transferred to the Corps of Engineers early in his career and retired from there in 2014. He is now employed by Consigli Construction Co. and is currently working on a very large building in Natick, MA.

We also had dinner at the WOK restaurant in Deerfield, one of our favorites, where a lady told us that they opened in October, 1976, and are celebrating 40 years this month. The food was as good as ever.

It was a busy weekend in the Bay State (Commonwealth) with a horse show in Northampton, Homecoming at U-Mass and the Big E (New England Exposition) underway in Springfield. Traffic around Springfield and Hartford was more atrocious than usual, and we were thankful to get home safely.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Grady Adkins, ARCSE Representative**

**Ellis Morrow, ARCSE Representative**

**Email:** [grady.adkins2@gmail.com](mailto:grady.adkins2@gmail.com), [emorrow41@bellsouth.net](mailto:emorrow41@bellsouth.net)

The Fall Meeting of the South Carolina Retirees was held October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at Strawberry Hills Farm in Chesnee, SC. Eighteen retirees and/or Conservation Partners made the trip: **Marcia and Grady Adkins, Charles Banks, Dennis Bauknight, Dennis DeFrancesco, Martha and Steve Edwards, Carolyn and Niles Glasgow, Greg Henderson, Wayne Henderson, Linda and Al McNeill, Shirley and Bill Melven, Ellis Morrow, Andy Rollins, and Jimmy Sanders**.



SC Retirees at Strawberry Hills Farm, October 20, 2016

Following lunch at the Strawberry Hill Farms Café & Ice Cream Shop, the group was herded into the wagon and given a guided tour of the operation by **James Cooley**'s daughter **Beth**, the Farm's Marketing Manager.

The farm in the upstate of South Carolina was purchased in the early 1900s to farm cotton. Following WW II, peaches became the primary crop. About 1,000 acres are presently in peaches. In 1995, six acres of strawberries were planted to diversify the operation which has grown to be the largest strawberry operation (115 acres) in the state. In 2007, 36 acres of blackberries were added to the farm. Summer squash, cucumbers, cantaloupes, and pumpkins are also grown.



***Bedded plants - Stone walls in waterway***



## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

**Penny Galinat, ARCSE representative**

**Email: [plgalinat@yahoo.com](mailto:plgalinat@yahoo.com)**

**Gary Coplan**, retired Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations: After **Mary Jo** and I retired in 2009, we moved to Sioux Falls. It was hard to leave Brookings after being there 25 years, but we're now closer to our kids and grandkids. We have three daughters (two in Sioux Falls and one in Yankton), and one son in Shorewood, MN. All are married, and we have nine grandchildren and two step-grandchildren. Our kids and spouses all have jobs and other family that makes it likely for them to stay in the towns they now live in. That makes it easy for us to see and visit them quite often.

I worked part-time for Millborn Seed Company in Brookings for a couple years. Since then, Mary Jo and I stay busy just doing things around home and with our family. Mary Jo enjoys crocheting and reading, and I enjoy just repairing and doing small projects outside and in the garage. Recently I've made two gymnastics beams for some of our granddaughters.



***Gary Copland crafting gymnastic beam***

Our only long distance traveling has been a trip to Hawaii and a couple of bus tours. For the past 25 years, we've had a one-week vacation (timeshare cabins) at Lake Okoboji with all of our kids, spouses, and grandkids the same week in August, so they can schedule it a year in advance. All the adults and kids continue to enjoy it!

Mary Jo and I appreciate being in good health, except for the normal things that come with age. On October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016, we'll celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Mary Jo was an elementary school secretary for 20 years. We both enjoyed our careers, but we're thankful for no longer being involved in the very different workplaces of today! Best wishes to all of you and would enjoy staying in touch! 6305 S. Vintage Place, Sioux Falls, SD 57108, cell (605) 271-1926; email [jcoplanj@sio.midco.net](mailto:jcoplanj@sio.midco.net)

**Tom Quinn**, retired District Conservationist: My wife, **Kathy** and I have moved from Spearfish to Sioux Falls to get closer to our kids and grandkids, who currently reside in Watertown and St. Paul, MN. Our son **Joe** and I have started a new company called Quinn Home Improvement and will be working from Sioux Falls to Watertown, mostly painting, but can also do remodels. I've been in Spearfish most of the summer finishing up several painting jobs that I had agreed to do before we decided to move, but by the end of September I will be in Sioux Falls permanently. Kathy has been there living with her mom when she wasn't being grandma in Watertown or St. Paul. Cell: (605) 641-6923 or [thomasgquinn@gmail.com](mailto:thomasgquinn@gmail.com)

**Ron Hendricks**, retired State Conservationist: **Mary** and I are doing fine. Mary keeps busy with Cattlewomen and the hospital board to name just a couple. The ranch pretty well keeps me busy fixing and changing. We now take in cattle on grass and winter bulls for a neighbor. This summer we built a "bull proof" windbreak. Now a couple of the neighbors want them, also. We've built two more since then. These tires are what is cut off when they make "rubber tire tanks."



*Ron Hendricks and family with "bull proof" windbreaks made from tires*

They are about 12-feet in diameter and weigh from 3/4 to 1 ton each. There are thousands of these tanks being used; they never wear out. They cause a real disposal problem for the businesses making the tanks, as there is virtually no reasonable way of disposal. We're finding out that they will be willing to pay part of the trucking to get rid of them, which makes the cost for windbreaks and fences very low as basically there is only the installation cost, which we do with our own equipment (nothing special). I wish I had run across these 20 years ago; it would have saved a lot of time and labor for maintenance. Our granddaughters **Kacey** and **Sidney** were here this summer to help and took some pictures. "The coffee pot is always on." Stop by; we would love to see you. 35004 224st, Gann Valley, SD 57341; phone: (605) 293-3293; email: [bsranch@midstatesd.net](mailto:bsranch@midstatesd.net)



**Cheryl Nielsen**, retired Rangeland Specialist: **Ward** and I had a great trip to Australia and New Zealand for five weeks last year. We did a customized-independent travel with help from About Australia Travel Co. Main stops were Port Douglas AU-Barrier Reef,

Daintree, and Cape Tribulation. One of the highlights was seeing a male Cassowary with juvenile in the wild. Cairns AU: Ag food tour of coffee, wine, dairy and macadamia nut plantation. Highlight for me was petting a wombat and koala at Night at the Zoo in Cairns. Kakadu National Park near Darwin AU. Rock art on the Ubirr hike a trip highlight, billabongs and the sunset yellow river cruise-bird life and crocs. Alice Springs AU: cattle station tour, parrots and Uluru. Kangaroo Island: wildlife galore--seals, sea lions, koala, wallaby, kangaroos, echidna, cape barren geese, macaws, cute possums, gum trees and sheep. Queenstown, New Zealand: jet boat, steam boat, Milford and Doubtful sounds. Stewart Island: bird life; Dunedin forested yellow eyed penguins. We also saw the little blue penguins and Fiordland crested penguins, all forest-type penguins. Near Christchurch, we visited a heritage breeder of kune-kune pigs and other heritage breeds of sheep, goat, chicken, and rabbits. North Island, New Zealand: we learned about the Maori culture in Rotorua, visited the worm caves, and last stop was Auckland, where we did a wilderness tour and visited Kelly Tarton's sea life. We were there in winter, and yes, we did have a few snowy days while on the south island. We stayed away from towns; main objective to see wildlife, landscapes and agriculture.



*Sleeping Koala on Kangaroo Island, AU*



*Kangaroos on Kangaroo IS*



*Doubtful Sound, New Zealand-south IS*



*Yellow eyed penguin near Dunedin, New Zealand*

Ward is still working at the feedlot near Nisland. I'm turning into a hermit; but yard, garden, and flowers keep me busy in warm months and work on genealogy, house projects, and splitting wood in winter months. The dogs **Rollo** and **Griz** demand much of my attention, too. Last year was fun following the National Champion NE volleyball women; their success helped decrease the depression over the NE football team. So, of course, we still wear our red and watch the Cornhuskers. Every spring we go to a baseball game and usually go to a football game in the fall. Love the freedom of retirement! So nice not to be tired all the time. ([cnielsen@sdplains.com](mailto:cnielsen@sdplains.com))

**Ken Heil**, retired Soil Scientist: **Toni** and I are fine and enjoying a busy retirement. We are leaving October 1<sup>st</sup> for a Panama Canal cruise with our daughter **Laurie** and her husband **Mark**; we are looking forward to it very much. Enjoyed camping, fishing, keeping up with the grandkids this summer. We wish everyone the best.

**Darrell Vig**, retired District Conservationist: I'm in Menominee, WI. **Lois**' oldest sister just found out she has cancer, so we came to see her. She seems to be getting better, so I will go back to the Garden of Eden. We bought a farmstead during the Atlas Blizzard in October 2013, three miles south of Eden and ten miles south of our Roy Lake cabin. We never planned on doing that when we went to the auction--didn't even know the owners were selling the farmstead. I needed more work to do--remodeling the farmhouse. There are several more summers of work yet to do. Half of the 20 buildings need to be torn down--fun, fun. My Garden of Eden is a tree nursery for our Tree Farm back northeast of Sturgis, which my son operates. I will grow evergreen only from seedlings to three feet then dig and haul to Bear Butte Trees, our tree farm. Josh will grow them till they reach 8' to 20' plus and transplant to people's yards or wherever. We also move trees. So I stay busy. (125 Pine Cone Circle, Spearfish, SD 57783; cell phone 605-347-1904)

**Bob Strait**, retired Civil Engineering Technician: **J.D.** and **Melba Olson**, retired Soil Conservation Technician from Winner, stopped in earlier this summer. Bob took J.D.'s place when we moved to Winner many years ago. He is 89 and they still go a lot and are very active. It was fun to see them. We still live at Lake Poinsett and are doing OK--just normal things most 80+ year-olds deal with--seems like most of our outings are trips to doctors! Bob still golfs a couple times a week when the weather cooperates. We had a busy summer with grandchildrens' weddings and family get-togethers. Otherwise, we stay pretty much close to home.

We have eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; all but one grandson and two greats live in South Dakota, so we see them often. We will celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on November 24. Sometimes wonder how we got so old so fast!



*Picture taken at Pauline's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party last year*

**Dwight Hale**, retired State Conservation Engineer: I am very pleased to report at age 76, I am still doing fine! I retired in 2004; and my sister **Norena** arranges yearly, month-long trips to somewhere in the free world. Some of the trips have involved sailing in 45-foot rented yachts with a sailing club (French Polynesia, Sicily, Croatia, Caribbean, Great Barrier Reef, etc.). Most other trips have been guided tours involving planes, helicopters, speed boats, ships, trains, buses, cars etc. Our trips have taken us to 25 countries from Australia and New Zealand to much of Europe and Scandinavia. These trips have given me a much more positive attitude about the free world. Everyone has been glad to see us and eagerly help and take our money without trouble. They are learning a little English; and due to the TV, internet, smart phones, etc., they even think and dress very much like us. (1730 Riverview SE, Huron, SD 57350; home 605-352-3417; cell 605-354-3417)



*Finland, looking for Rudolf.*



*Eating kangaroo tail from the barbie in the Australian Outback.*

## TENNESSEE

**Allen T. Crowe, Darwin Newton, ARCSE Representatives**

**Email:** [atctn60@hotmail.com](mailto:atctn60@hotmail.com), [newton5151@charter.net](mailto:newton5151@charter.net)

The following was submitted by **Dana York**. East Tennessee Retirees got together for a Pot Luck lunch at Dana York's farm, Hale's Haven, in Jonesboro. All enjoyed great food and telling stories from past SCS-NRCS adventures and catching up on what everyone was doing today. One active group of retirees!



*Left to Right: Wayne Treadway, Russell Kinser, Roy Settle, Chip Ramsey, Lynice Broyles, Mike Hubbs, David Benner, Bill Dailey, Beth Hasty Douthat, George Pruitt and Dana York (in front of her "new" 1955 GMC Dump Truck)*

## TEXAS NORTH

**Arnold King, ARCSE Representative**

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

Eleven members attended the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Bernie Owen, Joyce Petty, Barb and Dave Stockbridge, Douglas Seibel, Anita Plummer, Dennis Erinakes, and Elaine and Billy Don Davis.** Vice President **Doug Seibel** called the meeting to order.

**Dennis Erinakes** reported that his rent properties required 13 roofing jobs. He also has a new member in his “family,” **Rosie**, a one-year-old black Labrador that he’s had for three weeks. He described her as a “powder keg,” very active, and loves to chew (right through his network cable), but she should be ready to hunt in September. His other dog, **Ranger** gets along with her and possibly finds her good company after losing his buddy, **Shobey**. **Dennis** enjoys reading articles on health issues and said Consumer Reports had a good issue on dietary supplements. He also mentioned a newsletter called “Worst Pills Best Pills.” See [www.worstpills.org](http://www.worstpills.org).

**Elaine Davis** will be attending a family reunion in September. **Joyce Petty** hopes to be settled in her new place by September. **Arnold King** reported that **Harland and Anita Dietz** recently moved back to their native state of Kansas. Harland won a masterpiece art contest with his painting “The Golden Years.” The painting will be included in the “Art is Ageless” calendar to be published this fall. He enjoys painting scenes he admires from nature and particularly prairie scenes.

**Anita Plummer** will be attending a Plummer family reunion along with her son and daughter. **Barb Stockbridge** reported that she and **Dave** got to see a Dolly Parton show in North Little Rock, AR on August 13<sup>th</sup>. **Dave** reported that they will be visiting friends the end of January and will spend time in Key West, FL. He also reported that **Morris Lobrecht** will be having back surgery in three months.

**Doug Seibel** reported that he has been a volunteer taking usher training at Bass Hall and that he has to follow a dress code. He needed a pair of black shoes, and even though he had not worn black shoes in a long time, he remembered he had an old pair that might get the job done. On his first night during the Sound of Music, his shoes practically disintegrated. Thankfully he was excused from duty, and he gingerly walked to his car in stocking feet.

**Bernie Owen** is the Legislative Chairperson for NARFE Chapter 1201 in Arlington, TX and is a hard-working recruiter for the chapter. He arranged for **Joe Barton**, U.S. Representative for District 6, to speak at the August 25<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting. Issues important for NARFE members (and all of you who are not members) were discussed, such as the Windfall Elimination Provision that impacts those who worked for most of their lives in careers that did not contribute to Social Security, but have enough quarters to draw a reduced amount of Social Security benefits. Also discussed were the increased premiums for long term care insurance. **Bernie** is also helping **Del Rockenbaugh** with OPM, etc.



*Bernie Owen and US Representative Joe Barton*

**Dennis Gaster** invites members of the SCS/NRCS Alumni Club to visit NARFE Chapter 1201 on November 21<sup>st</sup> to hear Blue Cross Blue Shield and Government Employees Health Association representatives discuss FEHBP changes for 2017.



NARFE Chapter 1201 Meeting Joe Barton

We plan to have a potluck picnic for the October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting with barbequed meat being featured.

Fourteen members attended the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Those attending were: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Bernie Owen, Joyce Petty, Anita Plummer, Dennis Erinakes, Tom Hodges, Bernelle Baxley, Arnold King, Mary Mattinson, Don Newman, Jim Rickman, Dave Drennan, and Clyde Goodman.**

President **Clyde Goodman** called the meeting to order. Treasurer **Dennis Gaster** reported that we have \$1878.85 in the treasury as of 9/16/2016

The October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting will be featuring a barbecue lunch with meat provided by Cousin's BBQ and paid for by the Alumni Club. There will be Sliced Brisket, Smoked German Sausage, Turkey Breast, Cousins BBQ Sauce, and slider buns. **Clyde Goodman** is bringing a pot of beans. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share.

**Clyde Goodman** reported that his 50<sup>th</sup> high school reunion was called off since only three members of his class signed up. He also mentioned that he had knee surgery to remove a non-malignant tumor. His wife **Marla's** health continues to improve, and they are planning a cruise in January. He reported that his friend **Dennis Neffendorf** (former NRCS employee) is running for county commissioner in Gillespie County. **Dennis** inherited the home farm after his father passed away, and he has been growing peaches and blackberries. The peach trees, however, have been hit with a die-off this year. **Clyde** used his executive order power as club President to appoint **Arnold King, Bernie Owen, and Joyce Petty** to the nominating committee for 2017 officers.

**Bernie Owen** reported that **Maxine's** brother, **John Reh**, (former Assistant State Conservationist in Kansas), broke his hip on Labor Day and subsequently had replacement surgery. **Bernie** serves as Legislative Chair for NARFE chapter 1201 in Arlington and reported that Long Term Care insurance is going up 83% in 2017. The COLA for 2017, if we get one, will be very small and may not cover the increase in the Medicare Part B premium for those not held harmless. The COLA will be announced on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Early voting starts October 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Don Newman** attended a wedding in Amarillo and got in on a black-eyed pea shelling activity. **Arnold King** recently attended the national meeting of the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE) St. Louis. Dues for the organization are \$18.00 per year, and he encourages club members to join the organization. **THE FIRST YEAR IS FREE, SO PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING.** Arnold and his wife are planning a trip to the Panama Canal, and they will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in November.

**Jim and Jere Rickman** recently toured the countries of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. **Jere** likes to try the different foods in the countries they visit, and she sampled some dog meat--yum! **Jim** could not bring himself to sample the dog meat, but he did try the fried tarantula legs--more yum!

**Mary Mattison's** granddaughter, **Hanna Mattinson**, is an accomplished soccer player for Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. A grandson attends Hardin-Simmons University and also works as a cashier for Sam's Club.

**Joyce Petty** reported that two different sales of her house fell through. Sorry about that **Joyce!** **Dave Drennan** recounted his wonderful planes, trains, and automobiles trip to Alaska. They spent time in Anchorage, Whittier, Valdez, and other places of interest that included the old Kennecott Copper mine that closed in 1938, a hot springs (where **Dave** tried to boil himself), and an ice hotel. **Dave** is planning a trip to California where he wants to spend some time in Alcatraz! Or is that just seeing Alcatraz?

**Dennis Erinakes** is planning a trip to Nebraska to shoot some pheasants, and he enjoys training his new dog. He continues to work on the groundwater district, but there are those who are not in favor of these districts. **Bernelle Baxley** is going to Savannah, GA with a church group.

**Bill Kuenstler** wrote on September 10<sup>th</sup>: "We are getting settled into our place here in Santa Rosa Beach. Things are a lot quieter in the area since the kids are back in school, and all of the vacationers have gone back home. Making a left turn across traffic is now possible without waiting five minutes for the oncoming traffic to clear! I have been working to get our (one-car) garage organized. It became a storage unit when we unloaded the U-Haul truck. I bought a shelf unit that I need to assemble, and plan to build a storage area/loft along the back wall across the full width of the garage. I just need to make room for stuff."

The temperatures are getting a little cooler. I always step out onto the back porch while my coffee is brewing, and it has been noticeably cooler the past few mornings, in the low 70s instead of upper 70s. And the humidity is down a little as well, which helps. Tropical Storm Hermine pretty much bypassed us, fortunately. We had one cloudy day and about 0.2 inches of rain, and that was it. There was some minor beach erosion to the east of us, around Panama City. The Tallahassee area took the brunt of it, mostly with downed trees and branches knocking down power lines. Right after the storm went through, there were +/- 100,000 people out of power, and 3-4 days later there were still 50-60,000 out. They pretty much had to rebuild entire stretches of power lines, since the wires were broken in so many places, and most of the poles were broken and/or blown down. A picture of the Kuenstler home is shown." Arnold King's comment: *A Beautiful part of Florida, are you taking reservations for next spring?*



**Bill Kuenstler's new house**

## UTAH

**Skip Nelson, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [skipnel7@comcast.net](mailto:skipnel7@comcast.net)

Linda Lytton recently returned to Utah to spend time with family members, including her sons, **Justin, Jason, and Jared**. Linda worked as the Executive Assistant for two State Conservationists in Utah: **Frank Holt and Skip Nelson**. She retired from NRCS when she married her High School Sweetheart, **Danny Wiesemeyer** and moved to Tulsa, OK where he lived.



**Dee Cummings**



**Jim Lytton and Skip Nelson**

Linda notified **Dee Cummings** of her planned visit. Dee has worked in the State Office for NRCS Utah for what seems like forever. She is the Secretary for the Resources Staff and the Engineering Staff. Dee coordinated a Luncheon at Red Lobster in Salt Lake City, UT for NRCSers who knew and worked with Linda. A few are still working, but mostly retirees attended. A good time was had by all, sharing fond memories of being co-workers, and reinforcing the fact that we will be friends forever. Those in attendance were: **Richard Vigil and his wife Ruth Ann, Linda (Lytton) Wiesemeyer, Barbara Carey, Patti (Todd) Sutton, Marilyn O'Dell, Jean Goble, Monte Turner and wife Jeanine, Jim Lytton, Joyce Rice, Stephanie Humphrey (daughter of the late Ellaine Humphrey), Dee Cummings, and Skip Nelson**.



**Joyce Rice**



**Marilyn O'Dell and Jean Goble**



Skip Nelson and Linda (Lyton) Wiesemeyer



Ruthann and Richard Vigil

## WASHINGTON, DC, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

**John Peterson, ARCSE Representative**

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

The National Capital Area Retirees held their fall luncheon at the Ft. McNair Officers Club in DC on Thursday, Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>. **Barbara Osgood and Diana Morse** made the arrangements. **Lee Shields** offered the blessing. Our guest NHQ speaker was **Noller Herbert**, PE, the Director of the Conservation Engineering Division in the Science and Technology Deputy Chief area. Noller received his BS in Civil Engineering from Northern Arizona University, and his Masters in Public Administration from American University. He served in the State Engineer position in Phoenix, AZ, and has 33 years of engineering experience. He also supervises the National Water Management Center and the National Design, Construction, and Soil Mechanics Center. The Engineering Division currently manages the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP), Watershed Dam Rehabilitation Program, Watershed Operations Program, Conservation Innovation Grants Program, and like other NHQ divisions is responsible for developing and maintaining engineering standards and specifications used in all NRCS programs.

Noller mentioned his challenges were sustaining engineering within NRCS, keeping up engineering standards and specifications, keeping Job Approval Authority something to be earned, keeping up with advancing technology, and keeping the SCS/NRCS culture alive. And he used some of his own Navajo background to discuss keeping culture alive, a really nice touch. He also mentioned the new Soil Health Division within Science and Technology, and the Dam Watch program developed to monitor watershed dams during flood times. All the attendees said they really appreciated Noller's talking of the things his division was doing to help the people working in the field. The following attendees attended the luncheon: **Selena Benedict, Paul Benedict, Bill Boyer, Jerry Bernard, Robin Heard, Ross Lahren, Lennie Losh, Lennie's driver and friend from Ohio Mark Wilson, Diana Morse, Barbara Osgood, Blanche Peterson, John Peterson, Margie Ralston, David Ralston, Kendrick Safley, Marc Safley, Lee Shields, Peter Smith and Noller Herbert**. The Spring Luncheon will once again be at the Ft. McNair Officers Club on Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Any retirees who happen to be in the DC area then are encouraged to attend. It is always a fun time to reminisce with old friends.

With the Washington Nationals in the major leagues baseball playoffs, **Blanche and John Peterson** are hoping this year might be the year they make it to the World Series. They have their tickets through the World Series, but in past years the Nats didn't make it that far. Playoff baseball is always a crapshoot. But as John said "playoff baseball, beer and brats, life is good." And the Nats disappointed again, lost to the Dodgers in 5. Lost 3 one-run games. C'mon spring training. Start the dream again.



Doug Helms and John Peterson at Baltimore Ravens vs. Washington Redskins game in Baltimore, 10/09/16. Redskins won 16-10.

Received this from **Jim Spitz**. "Hey John, Hilde and I have sold our house in the Smith Mountain Lake (SML) community, and have moved to The Glebe, a life-care retirement community in Daleville, VA. It will be a new chapter in our lives, probably the final chapter, in a wonderful community with a spectacular view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. We are in a temporary cottage while ours is being built. We will continue to attend our church, but the 10:30am service, not the 8:00, as it is 31 miles away. It was time to make this move. Hilde has had increasingly more severe migraines over the years, plus other issues. Last year I was not ready, but this year my feet, knees and back stopped me from cutting the grass, spreading mulch, etc. The facility backs up to the Appalachian Trail. I have been retired since September 1989--27 years. I've never lived anywhere that long, and never experienced the loss of close friends before. Thankfully, being involved in many volunteer activities over these years has kept me busy both involving the lake and off lake and have been very rewarding. I gave up the auction involvement after nearly 24 years. My calling of items dropped from 110 to about 75 per minute, and my legs couldn't handle the concrete floor."

After 15 years serving a volunteer Rescue Squad as an EMT, I applied for a Life Membership during my current service on the Board of Directors and have been chairing the annual chicken BBQ for the fire/rescue/dive for 12 years. Instead, I was given a 5-month leave of absence. What's next? Hilde is very busy with music. Three years ago she started a German singing club after an Octoberfest near the lake. The club gradually grew to 17 German speaking singers, male and female, and they participated in the next Octoberfest, singing all the German drinking/party songs. Hilde plays the accordion. She and five other musicians accompanied about 17 singers. Now the Roanoke Germans have joined with the SML group, and they have 25 singers and 7 musicians. They meet once a month for lunch, gossip in their native language and singing. The ladies involved mostly married American GIs. The men mostly grew up and went to school there as children of American GIs. They call themselves the SML-Roanoke Saengerbund.



**Jim Spitz with his Middle School kids.** They meet monthly under the Glebe's Legacy Program. End of year they have a banquet with their parents, teachers, students and residents who meet with the kids once a month. "I'd be proud to have these youngsters in my home!"—Jim Spitz.

Anyway, we are both reasonably healthy and the food is wonderful, served by a wait staff of young people, high school and college age. Our new address is: 70 Draper Pl, Daleville, VA 24083. Our email remains the same. Best regards, Jim."

**Jim Gulliford** reports, "The Soil and Water Conservation Society has received a grant from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation to host a National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health, that will be held November 8-9, 2017 in Indianapolis. Details forthcoming." Thanks, Jim.

Received this from **Art Holland**. "Hey John, I had a great Viking River Cruise last of Aug and first of Sept. Flew to Paris. Bus to Tier Germany, via Luxembourg where the Battle of the Bulge cemetery and memorial with 5,076 headstones including Gen. Patton's are located. On boat down the Moselle river to Koblenz, up the Rhine river to the Main river, through 34 plus locks on the Main river alone to Bamberg and Nuremberg. Visited many castles built in the Middle Ages. Then to Prague, Czech Republic. Then took a three-day tour to Kennedy Space Center and Epcot, cut short to two days due to Matthew. Sun City came through the Hurricane ok, but Hilton Head Island took a beating." Not good news about Hilton Head.

**A note from John Moore.** John reports he completed a two-week expedition in August 2016 in east Greenland, trekking along the sides of fjords in virtually uncharted areas with a team of eight experienced trekkers: four men and four women. "The expedition started on Kulusuk Island, population 230 Inuit souls, the largest population center along the entire 2,000-mile eastern Greenland coast. Small commercial prop aircraft land on a gravel runway. The team was greeted by our outfitter with his 12-gauge shotgun, inasmuch as we had to walk a half hour to the headquarters over glacially polished bedrock, and were constantly on guard for polar bears. Small speedboats carried us about 75 miles up a major fjord where we were dropped off. Each person carried about 50 lbs of food and gear on virtually unmarked terrain, covering five to 12 miles a day. At camp at night each person did 70 minutes of bear guard duty and walked the camp perimeter with a loaded incendiary flare fired by a spring-loaded firing pin, to be aimed at the bear's head. We had six flares each and a whistle. The guide had the shotgun. The route took us through incredible glaciated terrain with innumerable hanging valley glaciers and long outlet valley glaciers that emanate from the

Greenland Ice Cap itself. We crossed dozens of ice-cold glacial meltwater streams by removing our boots and donning crocs. John celebrated his 69<sup>th</sup> birthday on the trip, and was the oldest kid there."



## WASHINGTON

**Gerald Richard, ARCSE Representative**

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

Present at our September and/or October luncheons at the Timber Creek Grill and Buffet were: **Jud Melton, Joe Carmack, Ralph Schmidt, Larry and Jean Edmonds, Carl Vennes, Hans and Katie Krauss, Jerry Richard and Chet Jahn**. On September 27 and 28, **Harold and Karen Cottet, Spokane, WA, Ken and Tina Kaul, Spokane, WA and Gordon and Joann Watson, Bozeman, MT** met in Missoula, MT to commemorate 50 years of friendship and professional association. Within a three-month time frame in 1966 Harold, Ken, and Gordon were transferred into the Glendive, MT Work Unit Office. **Don Anderson** was the WUC. Many stories that occurred at work and even more about what happened after work were remembered, but never embellished! They had a great two days together.



**Fifty Years of Friendship, Missoula Montana. Left to right: Harold and Karen Cottet, Ken and Tina Kaul, Gordon and Joann Watson**

## WEST VIRGINIA

**Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative**

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

Civil Engineer **Sam Ware**, of Parkersburg, WV, passed away Sept. 23, 2016. Sam worked on one of the first concrete dams built by NRCS in West Virginia. You can read more in obituary section of this newsletter.

**Lynn Shuts** shared the following “**Bernie Yednock** and I took our second annual fly fishing trip to Montana in early September. I had broken my right wrist two weeks earlier while fishing the Elk River in WV. I made the trip against the advice of my doc and the wishes of my wife. I am right handed, so I was somewhat handicapped. Bernie toted my luggage, helped me in and out of my waders, and took the fish off my hook. All I had to do was catch them while casting left handed. We fished five rivers in southwestern Montana, in landscapes ranging from prairie grasslands to forested mountains, in pursuit of rainbow, cutthroat, and brown trout. We traveled nearly a thousand miles in big sky country, crossed the continental divide twice, and caught all three species of trout, as well as whitefish. I am happy to report that I am ‘right-handed fishing again.’”

**Dee Weston** stated that “It was great to meet up with **Marlene Menear** and share buckwheat cakes and old memories with her at the recent Preston County Buckwheat Festival.”

## WISCONSIN

**James Enlow, ARCSE Representative**

Email: [jjenlow@att.net](mailto:jjenlow@att.net)

The Wisconsin retirees met for lunch and participated in tours on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Richland Center, WI. **Keith Behling** was the gracious host. Those in attendance included hosts, **Keith and Dottie Behling**, **Michelle Wilkinson**, **Gene and Annemarie Nimmer**, **Stan and Marlene Dingle**, **Bob Urhig**, **Betty Stibbe**, **Roman and Bea Statz**, and two people from Richland Center Renewable Energy.

The get-together began at the Oakwood Fruit Farm located about 10 miles east of Richland Center. It has the most technologically advanced high speed computerized apple grading and sorting system in the Midwest. Each apple has 40 pictures taken of it for sorting and grading.

Lunch was served at the Phoenix Center in Richland Center. The menu had several choices with large portions which everyone enjoyed. After lunch, the Richland Center Renewable Energy (RCRE) made a presentation and led a plant tour. It is a “first” for two competitive dairy processing companies to join into a high strength waste stream processing to discharge water into the Pine River at nutrient, chemical and biological levels far below minimum standards. It was a very educational day that retirees enjoyed.

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

**Keith McCall, Shenandoah, IA**  
Marc Safley, Chronicler, Senior Conservationist

## OBITUARY INFORMATION

**Ron Marlow, Secretary-Treasurer**

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

**Surname**

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

**Barnett**      Helen R. Barnett (89) passed away on October 2, 2016, in Winchester, Kentucky. Helen was the wife of **James L. Barnett**. She is survived by her husband and one son. Helen worked in the Personnel (HR) section of the Kentucky State Office of the Soil Conservation Service, for 23 years, prior to retirement. She always wore a smile and was always ready to help. Staff in the state office lovingly referred to her as "Momma Helen."

**Black**

Life Member **Glen Elwood Black** (86) of Belton, Texas passed away on October 24, 2016 in Belton. He was born in Killeen, Texas. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Texas A&M University. Glen retired from the Soil Conservation Service in 1987 as the Assistant Director of the SNTC. He married LaVerne Smith on January 3, 1953 in Harlingen, Texas and they were married for almost 60 years before she passed away in 2012. Glen is survived by his sons **Gregory A. (Michelle) Black** of Edwardsburg, MI and **Michael G. (Jeane) Black** of Bristol, TN, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Glen's

memory to the Lakeview Baptist Church Building Fund, 7717 State Hwy 317, Belton, Texas 76513.

<b>Blanton</b>	<p><b>"Dee" Dillard H. Blanton</b> (83) of New Hampton, Missouri passed away October 5, 2016 at his home. He was born in Excelsior Springs. On August 15, 1953 he married <b>Marilyn Goble</b> at the Christian Church in New Hampton, MO. She survives of the home. <b>"Dee"</b> was a 1951 graduate of Albany High School, a member of the New Hampton Christian Church, and served in the United States Navy. He worked for the Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Technician for several years in the Albany Field Office and then later worked as a farmer. Survivors in addition to his wife of 63 years, <b>Marilyn</b>, include a son, a daughter, and six grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to the Lord's Warehouse in care of Roberson Funeral Home, PO Box 46, Bethany, MO 64424. Online condolences may be left at <a href="http://www.robersonfuneralhome.com">www.robersonfuneralhome.com</a></p>
<b>Brittan</b>	<p><b>Lynn Arthur "Britt" Brittan</b> leaves behind, "The Love of his Life," <b>Meg</b>, his wife of 38 years, his daughter, <b>Dale Durniak</b> (Chris) of Chico, a grandson, a stepson, two step grandsons and a step-daughter. He was a graduate of the University of California and worked as a soil conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, retiring as the District Conservationist in Petaluma, CA. Britt was preceded in death by a daughter, <b>Susan Wiens</b>. At his request, a private memorial will take place at a later date. Donations may be made in his name to the Redwood Chordsmen, his Barbershop Chorus, 556 Danby Ct., Petaluma, CA 94954.</p>
<b>Brown</b>	<p>Senior Conservationist <b>William "Bill" Thelton Brown</b> (97) passed away peacefully on Sept. 22, 2016, at his home in Fort Worth. Following Bill's longtime wishes, his body was donated to the UNT Health Science Center. Bill was born on a 40-acre farm in Pondtown, near Hartford, Alabama. After graduating in 1938 from Geneva County High School, he followed his dream and joined the Navy in 1940. During World War II, Bill served aboard the USS Louisville and the subchaser SC1302. While in the Navy, he exchanged letters for three years with a pen pal from Staten Island, NY, named Anne Scotto. After the war ended, he wasted no time getting to New York to meet the letter-writer. Bill said it was love at first sight, and they married eight months later, the day after Christmas, 1946. Bill entered Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn University) on the G.I. Bill. Upon graduation, he spent his career with the Soil Conservation Service, first in Mobile County, AL, then in Texas. Bill and Anne settled with their family in Fort Worth in 1967. Bill was a devoted member of Genesis United Methodist Church. He was a dedicated blood donor. Bill is remembered by many as a member of the Employee Development Center in Ft. Worth. He provided training to new employees in the southern states. Bill was preceded in death by his parents and his loving wife of 63 years, <b>Anne Scotto Brown</b>. Survivors include his son, <b>William Scott (Nancy) Brown</b>; his daughter, <b>Lois Anne Brown</b>; his four grandchildren, and his two great-granddaughters. A memorial service to celebrate Bill's life will be announced at a later date.</p>
<b>Buie</b>	<p><b>Susan Fern Buie</b> (74) passed away October 1, 2016 in Somerset, Kentucky. Susan is survived by her husband, John Buie, retired Area Engineer with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. John may be reached at 265 Combs LN, Somerset, KY 42503.</p>
<b>Bush</b>	<p><b>Edwin Bush</b> (90) of Paris, Missouri, passed away on September 14, 2016 at Monroe Manor Nursing Home. <b>Edwin</b> was born in Stoutsville, MO. He married <b>Hazel DeOrnellas</b> on August 24, 1949 at Paris, MO and she preceded him in death on December 17, 2001. <b>Edwin</b> joined the Soil Conservation Service as the agency's first part-time employee in 1965. He became a full time employee as a Soil Conservation Technician in 1967 and retired in 1989. He was a member of the Paris Presbyterian Church, where he served as Elder. <b>Edwin</b> was also a past member of Monroe County Saddle Club and Lions Club. He is survived by two daughters, two sons, eight grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Paris Presbyterian Church and Monroe Manor Nursing Home.</p>
<b>Dalton</b>	<p><b>Geraldine "Gerry" Dalton</b> (93) of Fishers, Indiana passed away on October 11, 2016 at Allisonville Meadows in Fishers. She was born in Dunkirk, New York. Geraldine proudly served her country in the United States Navy during World War II at Pearl Harbor. She worked as a secretary for the VA in Syracuse, NY, and then for the Soil Conservation Service. Geraldine was a former member of St. James Catholic Church. Geraldine is survived by her son, Michael (Mary) Dalton; two granddaughters, and a great-granddaughter. Geraldine was preceded in death by her husband, <b>Francis Dalton</b>, in 1991. Memorial contributions may be made to American Diabetes Association, PO Box 11454, Alexandria, VA 22312. Condolences: <a href="http://www.randalroberts.com">www.randalroberts.com</a></p>
<b>Davis</b>	<p><b>Charles Kenneth Davis</b> (71) passed away on Sept. 5, 2016, after bravely facing the challenge of cancer. Charles, a 42-year resident of Davis, was born in Albuquerque, NM. He graduated from the University of New Mexico in 1969 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and worked for the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in the Albuquerque, Roswell and Santa Fe offices, serving in the New Mexico National Guard during this time. In 1974, Charles moved to the Davis office of SCS as a design engineer. Charles remained in Davis becoming the USDA NRCS (formerly SCS) State Conservation Engineer. He was a registered Professional Engineer and was honored as NRCS Engineer of the Year by the National Society of Professional Engineers in 1998. Charles retired in 2009 after 41 years of service. Charles was a member of St. James Catholic Church, where he was a lector at mass until he became ill. He and <b>Vicki</b> led the parish marriage-preparation program, working with many engaged couples over the years. Charles was a third-degree black belt in the martial art of Tang Soo Do and was an instructor at Davis Arts Center for many years. He was a car enthusiast and had a special love for Nissan Zs. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Vicki; sons <b>Christopher</b> and <b>Michael (Cassandra)</b>; and two grandchildren. Gifts in his memory may be made to the St. James Church Memorial Center or the St. James School Annual Fund.</p>
<b>Harper</b>	<p><b>Larry Laverne Harper</b> (74) of Kirksville, Missouri, passed away February 10, 2013 at Lenoir Woods Nursing Home in Columbia, MO. He was born in Bloomfield, Iowa. On June 14, 1959 in Bloomfield, Iowa, he was united</p>

in marriage to **Alberta Oleta Brunk** who preceded him in death on May 25, 2010. Larry is survived by two sons and five grandchildren, as well as two great-grandchildren. He was a graduate from Bloomfield High School with the Class of 1955. Larry was employed thirty five years as a soil conservation technician for SCS until retiring in 2001. He enjoyed showing sheep for thirty-five years. He was a member of Kirksville Moose Lodge #1751 and the First Christian Church of Kirksville.

**Holscher**

**William H. "Bill" Holscher, Jr.** (77) a long-time resident of Hillsboro, OR passed away on October 14, 2016 at the Bend Hospice House. William was married to **Bette Holscher**, the secretary to the NRCS Oregon State Conservationist when she retired. He was born in Forest Grove, Oregon. He graduated from Forest Grove High School in 1957. Bill worked for Tektronix, Inc. in Beaverton for 46 ½ years, until he retired in 2004 as a Senior Electronic Technician. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Bette Holscher, of the family home in Hillsboro, Oregon. Also surviving are a daughter and son and their spouses and his six grandchildren. The family suggests that remembrances be contributions to Partners in Care Hospice House, 2075 NE Wyatt Ct., Bend, OR 97701, in his memory.

**Howe**

**Robert Warren "Bob" Howe** (57) of Morrisville, Missouri passed away September 10, 2016 in Springfield, MO. He was born in Ava, Mo. **Bob** enjoyed being outdoors, whether that meant hunting, fishing, or playing baseball with his children. He spent over 30 years with the Natural Resources Conservation Service as the head of both Polk and Dallas County. He also served in both the United States Air Force and the Air National Guard, where he built friendships that would last his entire life. Of all of his service, **Bob** was most proud to do work at his home church, the United Methodist Church in Bolivar. He is survived by his wife, **Kathy**; by three children; **Amy (Adam) Carter** of Battlefield, MO., **Calen Howe** of Destin, FL, **Michael Howe** of Morrisville, Mo., four step-children, and eleven grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in Bob's name to the United Methodist church of Bolivar, Mo. Friends may leave condolences at [www.butlerfuneralhome.com](http://www.butlerfuneralhome.com)

**Jensen**

Honorary Member and Senior Conservationist **Peter N. Jensen** (92) of Lincoln, Nebraska passed away on September 26, 2016 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born in Salina, Kansas and served in the US Navy from 1943 to 1946 in the South Pacific. Peter served on the USS McClelland, which was anchored in Tokyo Bay at the time of the peace signing with Japan. He graduated from Colorado A&M (CSU). He worked for the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Kansas and Nebraska for 30 years as State Range Conservationist. After retirement Peter and Doris traveled extensively and were active volunteers. He is survived by his beloved wife of 69 years, **Doris**; son, **Gregory Jensen** of Lincoln; daughter **Karen (Deryl) Travis, Jr.** of Lincoln; two granddaughters, two grandsons, and five great-grandchildren. Memorials may be directed to Pathways to Compassion Hospice, 1401 Infinity Rd. Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68512

**Mathis**

**Stacey Jo (Henslee) Mathis** (54) of Atoka, Oklahoma and a former resident of Konawa, Oklahoma passed away on October 10, 2016 at Alliance Health Hospital in Durant, Oklahoma. She was born in Sacramento, California and moved from California at six weeks old to become an "Okie." Stacey graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1984 with a Bachelor degree in Agricultural Education. She started working for the Soil Conservation Service in 1983 as a summer trainee and continued until her death as a District Conservationist in Atoka, Oklahoma. Stacey was baptized at the Assembly of God Church in Konawa in 1974. She is survived by her husband of 27 years, **Greg Mathis** and son, **Joseph Mathis** of their home in Durant, and mother, **Maxine Henslee** of Konawa. She was preceded in death by her father, **Jackie Lamont Henslee**, and sister, **Tina Jeanette Henslee**.

**Mayer**

**Donald K. Mayer** (83) of Balsam Lake, Wisconsin passed away on September 1, 2016 at the St. Croix Regional Medical Center. Don was born in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. He served in the United States Army from 1954-1956. He graduated from the University of River Falls in 1963 summa cum laude with a degree in Biology and Conservation and earned a Teaching Degree. Following graduation Don worked for the SCS/NRCS, retiring in 1997 as the District Conservationist in Balsam Lake. He enjoyed substitute teaching at the Unity School until 2004. He was a member of the American Tree Farm Association, the Balsam Lake American Legion and a proud member of Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church in Balsam Lake. He enjoyed fishing, deer hunting, gardening, reading, military history, and collecting gun shell casings. Don leaves to celebrate his memory, wife of 48 years, **Brenda Mayer**, Balsam Lake; daughter, **Monica (Shawn) Kelly**, Gilbert, AZ; and son, **Kurt Mayer**, Balsam Lake, WI.

**Moser**

**Lowell Alan Moser** (82) of Effingham, Kansas passed away on October 6, 2016 at St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, MO. He was born in Horton, KS. Lowell graduated from Highland Junior College in 1955. He received his Bachelor's in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University in 1961. Lowell proudly served in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict. He was a Soil Conservation Planner for the USDA in Holton, joining in March of 1969. He later worked as District Conservationist in Atchison County, retiring in 1994 after 28 years of service. For most of his life, he raised Holstein, Hereford, and Angus cattle and showed them at local, district and state fairs. He was a member of Effingham Union Church and Elks Club in Hiawatha. Lowell is survived by his wife of 52 years, **Mary Jane Warren** in Hiawatha. Other survivors include a son, a daughter, and three grandchildren. Memorials may be given to the Atchison Co. 4-H or Kansas Junior Hereford Association c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436.

**Mueller**

**Nelson Ernest Mueller** (70), a resident of Sulphur, Oklahoma passed away October 27, 2016 at Tulsa, OK. He was born in Clinton, OK. **Nelson** graduated from Oklahoma State University with a Degree in Animal Science. He had lived in several places working for the Natural Resource Conservation Service, moving to Sulphur in 1985. He owned a lawn care business. **Nelson** enjoyed horse racing. He was a Viet Nam Veteran who served in the US Army. **Nelson** was a member of the First Christian Church. He is survived by his wife of 34 years **Mary**

Mueller	Mueller, of Sulphur, OK; a daughter & son-in-law, <b>Jessica &amp; Steve Tilley</b> , of Ada, OK; a son, <b>Brad Mueller</b> , of Sulphur, Ok; and a granddaughter. Online condolences may be sent to <a href="http://www.dearmanfuneralhome.com">www.dearmanfuneralhome.com</a>
Paden	<b>Harry E. Paden</b> (89) of Lincoln, Nebraska passed away on September 1, 2016. He was a retired soil scientist with USDA Soil Conservation Service. He is survived by son, <b>Roger Paden</b> , Lincoln, and daughter, <b>Pat (Dave) Cotton</b> , Omaha; grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Skiles	<b>Betty W. Skiles</b> (77) of Pickerington, Ohio passed away on October 17, 2016. She was born in Gap, PA. Betty worked for Pickerington Local Schools in the library for 33 years. She was a member of Peace United Methodist Church. Betty was also an avid quilter. Survived by her husband of 55 years, <b>Mervin Skiles</b> , an ARCSE member who retired from NRCS in 1995 as the State Resource Conservationist; children, <b>M. Todd (Melanie) Skiles</b> , <b>Scott Skiles</b> , and <b>Jan (William) Stehle</b> ; and three grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in her name to the Pickerington Police Department, Canine Unit, 1311 Refugee Rd., Pickerington, OH 43147 or Peace United Methodist Church. Online condolences may be found at <a href="http://www.spencefuneralhome.com">www.spencefuneralhome.com</a> .
Smith	<b>Katherine E. "as in Elvis" Smith</b> (73) passed away peacefully in Lincoln, Nebraska on August 4, 2016. Kathy was born in Scott City, Kan. Her career for over 30 years in retail sales included owning her own unique fashion boutique. Kathy is survived by her loving husband of 54 years, <b>P. Craig Smith</b> , who retired from NRCS; two children and five grandchildren. Memorials can be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital. Condolences online at <a href="http://Roperandsons.comstory">Roperandsons.comstory</a>
Thomasson	<b>Frederick J. "Fred" Thomasson</b> (69) passed away on September 8, 2016 at Essential Health in Fargo, North Dakota, from the effects of Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. He worked for a few years at the SCS office in Leeds, ND. He is survived by his wife Susan of 47 years, his son James (Jessica) Thomasson, his daughter Kathleen (Paul) Gross, his four grandchildren, a sister and brother.
Viele	<b>Duane Eugene Viele</b> (62) of Lebanon, Missouri passed away October 19, 2016. He was born in Lebanon. <b>Duane</b> was a soil scientist for the state of Missouri Department of Natural Resources for 30 some years, mapping multiple counties in Missouri working with SCS/NRCS. He was a member of Community Christian Church in Camdenton. Survivors include his parents, one son, three daughters, and four grandchildren. Sign guest book at <a href="http://www.shadelscolonialchapel.com">www.shadelscolonialchapel.com</a> .
Viner	<b>Paul Viner</b> (61) of Park View, Iowa, passed away on July 11, 2016, at Clarissa C. Cook Hospice House in Bettendorf. Paul was raised in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, as the second of 12 children. Paul spent his career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service working as a district conservationist in the Iowa counties of Muscatine, Greene, and Scott before retiring in 2012. Those left to cherish his memory are his wife of 35 years, <b>Christine</b> ; three children, three grandsons and a granddaughter. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be given to the family to be donated to a wildlife conservation program to be decided at a later date.
Walker	<b>Jerry E. Walker</b> (68) of Jay, Oklahoma, passed away on October 16, 2016 after a long illness. He was born in Sunnyside, Washington. Jerry earned his Bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University. He proudly served in the United States Army during Vietnam. Jerry worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service for 26 years in the offices at Coalgate, Enid, Wagoner, Jay, Guymon and Miami where he retired as the District Conservationist. He served on the Delaware County Conservation Board from April 2003 through December 2009. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, gigging, team roping, traveling and spending time with his grandchildren. Jerry was a member of the Triple Cross Ranch Church. He is preceded in death by his daughter Hayley Hughes. Left here to miss him dearly are his wife of 32 years, <b>Kathy Walker</b> of the home, daughter <b>Ashley Treadwell</b> of Tulsa, Oklahoma, son <b>Matt (Whitney) Walker</b> of Jay, Oklahoma, two granddaughters and a grandson. Oklahoma Family and friends can leave online condolences and share precious memories by visiting Jerry's Book of Memories at <a href="http://www.honoringmemories.com">www.honoringmemories.com</a> .
Ware	<b>Samuel "Sam" Joseph Ware II</b> (55) of Parkersburg, West Virginia passed away at his home with his loving family by his side on September 23, 2016. He was born in Clarksburg, WV. He was a graduate of West Virginia University School of Engineering. He was employed as a Civil Engineer with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service for 33 years. He is survived by his loving wife of 32 years, <b>Katrina (Morehead) Ware</b> , two sons, a daughter, three grandchildren, and his mother. Sam was a member of the Knights of Columbus, a past board member of the Parkersburg Art Center and a member of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Joan Bisesi Fund for Head and Neck Oncology Research (Fund Number: 640545), Wexner Medical Center Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, 660 Ackerman Road, 6th Floor, Columbus, OH 43202. Please visit <a href="http://www.lambertatman.com">www.lambertatman.com</a> to share online condolences with the family.



*Fall sunrise on Aquia Creek at Potomac River, Stafford, VA*



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**DEADLINE FOR THE JAN/FEB 2017  
NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS  
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