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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired SCS and NRCS Employees

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NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

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

2018 Appropriations—As reported last issue, NRCS's 2017 budget was a pleasant surprise because of the \$14 million increase in Conservation Operations, as well as the addition of \$150 million for Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations. The question is will the good news continue.

On July 12th, 2017, the Full House Appropriations Committee approved the 2018 Agriculture Appropriations Bill, including \$40 million for the Watershed Program (\$110 million less than approved for 2017, but \$40 million more than the President's budget), \$5 million for the Watershed Rehabilitation Program (\$7.0 million less than approved for 2017, but \$5 million more than the President's budget) and \$858.9 million for Conservation Operations (although this is \$5.6 million less than 2017, it is \$92.9 million more than the President's request).

Perhaps more importantly, the House did not make reductions to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program, two Farm Bill programs that appropriators have historically cut so that they can use the funds in other programs (e.g., in 2016 EQIP's authorized funding level was reduced by \$321 million). While leaving the Farm Bill funding intact is good for NRCS in 2018, this might be a one-time event if it were done to ensure that the Farm Bill score by CBO next March includes full funding for the conservation programs. The rationale for doing this is that it will enable the Appropriations Committees to maximize their opportunity to raid mandatory conservation funding in future years.

On July 20th, 2017, the Full Senate Agricultural Appropriations Committee approved their version of the 2018 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. NRCS received \$874.1 million for Conservation Operations (\$9.6 million above the FY2017 enacted level and \$108.1 million over the President's budget request). The bill also includes \$150 million for the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations, but no funding for Watershed Rehabilitation. In addition, the Senate Ag. Appropriations bill includes a fix for the DUNS/SAM issue. In essence, farmers signing conservation program contracts with NRCS were being required to go through a non-trivial business registration process as if they were contractors seeking to do work for the Federal government, rather than cooperators in Federal conservation programs.

Other Legislative Activity—After failing to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act this summer, Republican Congressional leaders are seeking to aggressively move its legislative agenda forward. And it's a big agenda:

2018 Budget—One urgent need is addressing the September 30th, 2017 deadline to pass a new government spending package for fiscal year 2018, which begins October 1st, 2017. If "what's past is prologue," we should expect to see a Continuing Resolution passed in September. **President Trump** has said that he will veto 2018 funding if it doesn't include funding for his proposed border wall. Consequently, the probability of a government shutdown when the Continuing Resolution ends may be a little higher than normal.

Raise the Debt Ceiling—Engaging in the periodic "raise-the-debt-ceiling" dance to prevent a default on the Nation's debt obligations is perhaps next in line because Uncle Sam is projected to run out of money around the end of September. Expect Congress to raise the debt ceiling.

Children's Health—Funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) that provides health insurance coverage for 9 million low-income children is set to expire and needs to be reauthorized by Congress.

Disaster Assistance—Funding Hurricane Harvey disaster assistance (FEMA will run out of funding at the end of September without factoring in Harvey) is another urgent priority for Congress.

2018 Budget Resolution—Congress in the past has funded the government without passing a budget resolution, but if the Senate wants to use the "budget reconciliation process," Congress is required to pass a budget resolution. More on this later.

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Tax reform—Expect this to be the next big issue for Congress and expect Mitch McConnell to tackle tax reform using the budget reconciliation process since it requires only 51 votes. However, reconciliation allows debate and a limited number of amendments. In addition, the process requires that everything in the reconciliation package be related to spending or revenue, which effectively excludes legislative language that is solely related to policy.

Infrastructure Package—The \$1.0 trillion infrastructure bill that the President has asked Congress to produce has faded from Congress's near-term radar screen for several reasons, including cost, lack of details from the administration, and higher priorities.

Healthcare—Although the President has called for Congress to revisit the “repeal-and-replace” effort, **Senator Orrin Hatch** has said that the Senate is done with health care for the foreseeable future.

FAA Reauthorization—Congress faces a September 30th deadline to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which is “must-pass” legislation. **President Trump** and some Republicans on Capitol Hill are interested in separating air traffic control from the FAA and transferring their operations to an independent outside agency. Democrats would likely oppose this plan.

Clearly, priorities will have to be set for this big agenda. One option being discussed by Republicans is to shift all the hot-button issues to sometime later in the year so they can move forward on the remaining issues.

Farm Bill—Over the past two months there has been movement on the 2018 Farm Bill. The House and Senate Agriculture Committees have held hearings here at the Capitol, as well as numerous listening sessions at the local level. House Ag. Committee Chairman **Mike Conaway** has said he wants to move a new farm bill in the last quarter of this year or early in 2018. Leaders of the Senate Agriculture Committee say they are eager to begin work on a new farm bill that will carry forward the basic structure of the 2014 law, with some relatively minor modifications. “This is not time for revolutionary change,” Chairman **Pat Roberts**, R-Kan., said at a committee hearing on commodity programs and crop insurance. “Stability and predictability are the two key words.” And according to Michigan’s **Debbie Stabenow**, the ranking Democrat on the committee, “We’re looking at fine-tuning and not anything dramatic.”

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue went on a “Back to Our Roots” RV tour of five Midwest states in early August that was designed to gather input for the 2018 farm bill. He was in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana.

On August 9th, 2017, **Colin Peterson**, the top Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee, told an audience of sugar producers and processors that the biggest problem facing the farm bill, beyond financing, is going to be what to do with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Heritage Foundation has been trying for years to separate nutrition programs from the Farm Bill. Their thinking is that by separating nutrition from the other Farm Bill programs, they could get rid of the Farm Bill. For political reasons, it is very unlikely that the Heritage foundation will be successful; however SNAP, because of its size, will continue to be an issue.

The possibility of a budget reconciliation bill that requires a cut in SNAP or other agriculture spending raises the possibility that the entire farm bill could be included in the reconciliation process. Farm groups prefer to enact a new farm bill through “regular order.” But it’s not clear that the entire farm bill could even be included in reconciliation because of Senate budget reconciliation restrictions. The Senate’s Byrd rule essentially prevents inclusion of provisions that don’t change spending or revenue levels.

USDA Reorganization—The Senate Agriculture appropriations bill rejects **Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue**’s plan to eliminate the Undersecretary for Rural Development. The Senate Appropriations Committee Report encourages Perdue to nominate a Deputy Undersecretary for Conservation under the new Undersecretary for Farm and Conservation Programs.

Personnel Changes—There still is no progress on Senate approval of high ranking political appointees at USDA. This will be one more thing the Senate will have to act on in September. NRCS, like the rest of USDA, is still working under a hiring freeze, which means there are numerous “actings” in vacant positions. On August 21st, 2017, **Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue** named **Tony Tooke** as the next chief of the U.S. Forest Service, succeeding **Tom Tidwell**, who is retiring effective Sept. 1st.

Waters of the United States Rule—On August 8th, 2017, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator **Scott Pruitt** met with farmers, elected officials, and agricultural industry leaders to listen to their priorities for re-writing the Waters of the U.S. Rule (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act. The controversial rule has been put on hold by the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals amid strong opposition from farm organizations, home builders, and others who consider it to be an overreach of federal regulations. Shortly after taking office, **President Trump** issued an executive order to rescind or revise it.

CAFO Emissions Reporting—On August 17th, 2017, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals gave EPA until November 14th, 2017 to figure out how to enforce emissions reporting requirements for thousands of animal feeding operations and to comply with its April ruling that found that EPA illegally exempted all but the largest concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) from reporting releases of hazardous substances, including ammonia and hydrogen sulfide, above certain levels.

Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported on August 2nd, 2017 that “Nutrient pollution, primarily from agriculture and developed land runoff in the Mississippi River watershed, is continuing to affect the nation’s coastal resources and habitats in the Gulf.” NOAA revised its June estimate of the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico from 8,185 square miles to 8,776 square miles. This makes the zone the largest since measurements began in 1985.

Conservation Compliance and Crop Insurance—An ERS report released on August 2nd, 2017 indicated that linking conservation compliance to crop insurance, as well as commodity payments, ensures that farmers are motivated to prevent soil erosion and preserve wetlands, regardless of whether crop prices are high or low. At current price levels for corn and soybeans, the risk of losing crop insurance premium subsidies is a “...big part of the incentive” to comply with the conservation rules, said **Roger Claassen**, the lead author of the study. At a July 25th hearing, Senate Agriculture Chairman **Pat Roberts**, R-Kan., called the crop insurance linkage “unneeded, costly, burdensome.”

Big Data—Farmers are worried that the data they gather when they use precision agriculture on their land will be used by business without their consent. Witnesses at a House Agriculture subcommittee hearing on July 19th, 2017 cautioned that despite glowing talk of a digital revolution in farming and widespread adoption of precision agriculture techniques, there's still a long way to go before farmers can realize the true benefits of the data they generate. **Deb Casurella**, CEO of Independent Data Management, an Effingham, Ill., company founded in 2012 to help farmers file their crop reports with USDA, said that some estimates put the adoption rate of precision agriculture methods at 70 percent. "A significant byproduct is data," she said. "Farmers and ranchers are collecting all sorts of information about their operation, but they are last to the trough to get benefits from their own data."

Guest Workers—The Trump administration is reviewing ways to increase the number of legal foreign farmworkers, but a potential solution is likely to require action by Congress. "Labor is a huge issue and we've got people working on it full time to provide some reasonable solutions not only for agriculture people but for the American people," said **Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue**.

NAFTA—A broad array of agricultural groups, including the American Farm Bureau, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the National Pork Producers, U.S. Wheat Associates, among others, are working hard to keep the President from withdrawing from NAFTA. The three-country trade pact, which virtually wiped out agricultural import duties, allowed U.S. farm product exports to more than quadruple from 1993 to 2016.

Rural Broadband—On August 9th, 2017, the Federal Communications Commission and the U.S. Senate both took steps to help expand broadband service in rural areas. The FCC moved forward with plans to hold a "reverse auction" next year to provide nearly \$2 billion over 10 years to expand high-speed internet access in rural areas that do not have broadband service.

Crop Insurance Rate of Return—A recent Government Accountability Office report found that reducing the rate of return for companies participating in the federal crop insurance program could result in significant savings—as much as \$364 million per year. Current rates of return are targeted at 14.5%, but the GAO report found that from 2009 to 2015 the rate of return averaged 16%. GAO recommended the rate of return be set at 9.6%

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dana York

Thanks to all who attended our ARSCE meeting at SWCS in Madison, WI. We not only had a wonderful meeting room overlooking the water, but we had representatives from 14 states, as well as **Acting Chief Leonard Jordon** who joined us and gave comments about NRCS. He also became a new member!

Thanks also to **Cecil Currin** for his leadership as President and a new President Elect, **Cheryl K. Simmons**. We have an outstanding leadership team who continue to help keep ARSCE moving forward. At our board meeting we passed a budget that was reasonable for the next year and is made possible by most of our members receiving the electronic newsletter to help cut our costs. We stand at about 883 members today. At our highest we were over 1,500 members in 1997. We need each ARSCE member to give a membership application to those who are newly retired, and we need all of you to continue to provide news from your states for the newsletter.

In closing, as I sit here listening to the news of flooding from Hurricane Harvey, it reminds me of how well NRCS responded to Hurricane Katrina 12 years ago and many other local natural disasters in your states. NRCS will continue to be a first responder to these kinds of local and national disasters when the flood waters recede. Thank you for your past service and I look forward to working with you for the next two years as your President.

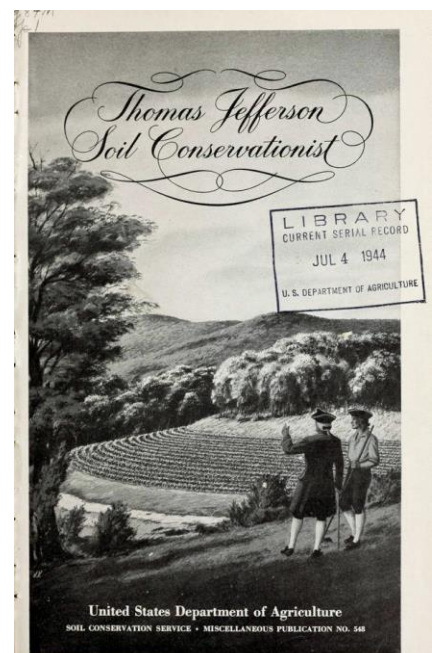
A BIT OF HISTORY

Douglas Helms, Historian

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Thomas Jefferson, Soil Conservationist As **Hugh Bennett** began his campaign for soil conservation, he collected historical examples of good and poor land use. From his days of writing soil surveys in Virginia, he began to learn about the conservation attitudes of **George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Edmund Ruffin**.

In the Soil Erosion Service and Soil Conservation Service, the historical geographers in the Erosion History Section collected additional information. From this material Bennett published Thomas Jefferson, Soil Conservationist. Bennett recounted Jefferson's difficulties in operating the farms as an absentee owner. He returned from a five-year stay in Europe to find his lands "in a degree of degradation far beyond what I had expected...." He started emphasizing crop rotations, legumes, and deep plowing as he sought to transition the farm from corn and bacon to potatoes, clover, and sheep. The emphasis on horizontal plowing, or contouring, came somewhat later in Jefferson's conversion to conservation.



Full text is available on-line at
<https://archive.org/details/thomasjeffersons548benn>



Planting corn on the contour on the old Shadwell farm. Strip crop of alfalfa at right. Buildings in the background mark the place where Thomas Jefferson was born. The original birthplace was burned in 1770.

After Jefferson's death, the need for contouring was largely forgotten and the lands went into decline. **Dr. J. W. R.**, a subsequent owner of "Shadwell" where Jefferson was born, wanted to reverse the process. He signed an agreement with the newly formed Thomas Jefferson Conservation District and started a conservation program on the farmlands. The new owner of Jefferson's "Poplar Forest" farm in Bedford County, Virginia, also began a conservation program with SCS assistance.

ANNUAL ARCSE LUNCHEON

By Ron Marlow

The annual Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE) luncheon was held at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin on July 31st. **Pat Leavenworth** was emcee for the luncheon, and **Bob Eddleman** delivered the invocation. We heard from an array of speakers that included, in addition to **Leonard Jordan**, the Acting Chief of NRCS, Wisconsin State Conservationist **Angela Biggs**, SWCS President **Jon Scholl**, SWCS Executive Director **Jim Gulliford**, and ARCSE President **Cecil Currin** and newly installed President **Dana York**. The following 32 people attended the annual luncheon in Madison, WI, and most of them are in the picture below. The list is sorted by last name.

Annual Luncheon Attendees			
First Name	Last Name	City	State
Angela	Biggs	Madison	WI
Bill	Conner	Madison	WI
Cecil	Currin	Hadley	MA
Stan	Dingle	Verona	WI
Marlene	Dingle	Verona	WI
Rich	Duesterhaus	Vienna	VA
Bob	Eddleman	Indianapolis	IN
Jim	Enlow	Madison	WI
Becky	Fletcher	Danville	IN
Jim	Gulliford	Ames	IA
Mark	Jensen	W Des Moines	IA
Ann	Jensen	W Des Moines	IA
Leonard	Jordan	Washington	DC
Sylvia	Kempf	Lincoln	NE
Norm	Kempf	Lincoln	NE
Arnold	King	Granbury	TX

Annual Luncheon Attendees			
First Name	Last Name	City	State
Pat	Leavenworth	Mount Horeb	WI
Ron	Marlow	Fairfax Station	VA
Ann	Marlow	Fairfax Station	VA
Jude	Mollenhauer	Vienna	VA
Earl	Norton	Auburn	AL
Julia	Norton	Auburn	AL
John	Peterson	Burke	VA
Sally	Schendel	Menomonie	WI
Mike	Schendel	Menomonie	WI
Jon	Scholl	Urbana	IL
Cheryl	Simmons	Fort Worth	TX
Harold	Thompson	Danville	IN
Tom	Thrall	Madison	WI
Richard (Pooh)	Vongkhamdy	Conventry	RI
Karen	Woodrich	Lexington	KY
Dana	York	Jonesborough	TN



***Acting NRCS Chief Leonard Jordan addresses the annual ARCSE Luncheon in Madison, WI
Mark Jensen Receives the President's Award for Meritorious Service***



Dana York and Cecil Currin present award plaque to Mark Jensen. The plaque reads "In Special Recognition and Appreciation for Outstanding Leadership Resulting in Exceptional Membership Growth and Retiree Activities as the ARCSE State Representative for Iowa."

The following are some of the activities (and subsequent results) by which Mark has expanded the awareness of the ARCSE among Iowa's retirees:

1. In the past year and a half, Mark has recruited 19 new ARCSE members.
2. He has prepared an article for every ARCSE Newsletter since he took over as Iowa's representative.
3. The previous ARCSE representative did not have a computer with internet access. Mark has compiled the hand written notes that were provided to him and organized the information.
4. In about 2008, the state office administrative section quit providing retiree names and contact information to the ARCSE representative due to privacy laws and concerns about personally identifiable information. Mark has sifted through past documents and developed a list of retirees since that time. He has been working on finding contact information for these retirees and providing them with information about ARCSE.
5. He has encouraged groups around the state to form, or in some cases continue to have periodic group get-togethers such as breakfasts, coffees, or luncheons.

6. Iowa has an annual Christmas/Holiday party with a typical attendance of 50 to 60 persons. This is organized by a small committee each year. Mark has served as the MC for the past two years.
7. Iowa has a bi-annual summer outing with a catered lunch, speaker, and sometimes a field trip. This event is also organized by a small committee.
8. He works with **Don Peterson** to maintain an email list that is used to keep retirees apprised of current events such as get-togethers, death notices, etc.

A Gift from Jim Enlow

At the annual luncheon, **Jim Enlow** gave **Ron Marlow** a really neat Christmas Ornament. Jim carved the ornament from a golf ball and says that it took him about two hours to carve it. Ron is sharing this to show appreciation to Jim and to continue demonstrating the wide array of talents of our members.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer

New Members

Stewart, Barbara	IA
Swanberg, Scott	MN
Benham, Ellis *	MO
Womack, Melvin	NHQ/VA
Jordan, Leonard	NHQ/VA
Franzen, Robert	NY
Martinez, Juan *	PR
Vongkhamdy, Richard	RI

* Lifetime Membership

ARCSE Budget and Membership Report for FY 2017

Ron Marlow, Secretary Treasurer

As of July 1st, 2017, ARCSE's membership was 883. This is a 50% decrease from the high of 1,768 members in 1998. Over the last nine years, membership has decreased by 338 members, at an average rate of 3.1% annually. There were 27 new members in FY17, 10 less than FY16. 19 new members were complimentary. 10 of the 20 complimentary in FY16 joined in FY17.

Budget Report—Fiscal Year 2016

(July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)

Income

Item	FY17 Actual
Annual Mtg.- KY	\$ 846
Dues	8,073
Dues, Life	*1,150
Interest Income	301
Contributions	874
Contributions (Life Members)	854
Printed copy Fee	1,762
Reserve Funds	-80
Total	\$13,780

Expenses

Item	FY 17 Actual
Administration	\$3,225
Special Incentive	1,000
Annual Mtg.- KY	2,896
Newsletter	5,454
Webpage	600
Awards	84
Membership in CCC Legacy	20
Bank Charges	0
Total	\$13,279

* Lifetime Dues for seven lifetime memberships. 469 members currently pay dues on an annual basis, accounting for approximately \$8,000.

There were 36 members dropped at either the May 1st cutoff or end of FY17, including 10 FY16 complimentary. There are 799 newsletters distributed by email, 95 of which are distributed to NRCS leadership. 168 newsletters are distributed in hard copy.

ARCSE ASSETS	
As of 07/01/2017	
(Includes unrealized gains)	
Liquid Assets	
Total Bank Accounts (Savings and Checking)	\$13,313.29
Investment Accounts	
Certificates of Deposit Totaling	22,951.36
OVERALL TOTAL Assets	* 36,264.65
OVERALL TOTAL – (07/01/2016)	35,555.28
NET CHANGE	**709.37

* This level of total assets is needed to meet future amortized lifetime membership expenses.

** Total assets have decreased eleven of the last fourteen years. During that period, total assets have decreased by 39 percent from \$59,475 to \$36,265.

Analysis of FY 17 Expenses per Member

Average annual expenses, per member, receiving printed copy newsletter	\$29
Average annual expenses, per member, receiving the electronic newsletter	\$ 10
Average annual difference in expense per member (Printed copy vs. electronic copy) - (difference)	\$19

Analysis of Current Finances

At the rate of asset depletion over the last few years and membership decrease, ARCSE's existence had become unsustainable. The Board and current membership has addressed this over the last two fiscal years by:

Appeals for contributions. Annual contributions help, and a strong appeal in FY2012 and in FY2016 resulted in significant response from membership that nearly balanced the budget in 2012, and in 2016 resulted in a significant replenishment to the reserve of \$3,648.72. Generous contributions in the amount of \$1,728 continued in FY2017.

Distribution of the newsletter electronically. 81% of the membership now receives the newsletter by email. This has reduced the publication and distribution costs by 62% and the total expenses by 34%. As of July 1st, 2017 all members are either now receiving the newsletter electronically or are paying an additional fee of \$12 per year for the printed copy.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

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

ARIZONA

Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative

Email: ckcookson@aol.com

Ken Cookson Report: My wife and I have been doing a lot of traveling this year. We went on a river cruise (long boat, 190 passengers) down the Danube River. We started in Nuremberg, Germany and had a good tour of the city. From there we went to Regensburg, then to Passau, then to Krems, Austria, then to Vienna and finally to Budapest, Hungary. There were many highlights, but one of the most beautiful areas was the Wachau Valley in Austria—a beautiful and ancient area for producing wine. We toured abbeys and cathedrals and were impressed with the art and sculptures in each. Hard to imagine some were over 200 years old.



Wachau Valley, Austria

At every stop we did a tour of part of the area and learned a lot about each location. The cruise lasted eight days, and we spent a couple of extra nights in Budapest. Budapest is actually two cities: Buda and Pest, separated by the Danube River. There are 27 locks on the river, and it was fun going through them.

This was our first river cruise. There was no shortage of food and opportunities for fun. The crew did everything they could to make our cruise memorable. We hope to do more.

In late June we went on a 40-day driving trip into CA, OR, WA, ID, MT, UT and AZ. We drove over 6,200 miles and saw some beautiful country. The CA trip took us along the coast, starting in the Santa Barbara area. We stayed in Monterey and did the 17-mile drive around Pebble Beach—beautiful! Further north we did some wine tasting and visited family in the Santa Rosa Area. A highlight is always a drive through the redwoods. We never tire of seeing the beauty of these magnificent trees.



Maurice Jernstedt and Ken Cookson

It was then to OR to visit friends and taste some wine. I had a very good visit with **Maurice Jernstedt**. We were on the same staff in the state office in the late sixties. He is a collector of blow torches and has over 1,400.

We visited family in Lakewood, WA and spent a couple of days with **Galen Bridge** and **Ewina Petersen** in Yakima. What a place for fruits, vegetables, hops, beer, and wine.

We then went into MT and a drive through Glacier National Park. Many people there were enjoying the beauty of this vast, magnificent park. Next we went to Hamilton, MT to visit with **Ron and Barb Moreland**. In addition to our huckleberry picking venture and playing golf, we went on a tour through the Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Hamilton. The lab does research on different stages of infectious viruses. We got some first-hand experience on the precautions needed when dealing with a level 4 virus, the really bad ones. That's me in the "lab" suit with Ron, Barb and my wife **Connie**.



Ron and Barb Moreland and Ken and Connie Cookson

It was a great trip, with good weather, no car problems, and we saw many beautiful areas. The down side was the smoke from forest fires in Montana. It was very evident in the Helena area and toward Missoula and Hamilton. This has been a major fire season for them.



Klingelhofer Name Reunion in Germany

Karl Klingelhofer Report: In May I spent 17 days in Germany and France. Flew to Frankfurt, Germany and then rented a car and managed to drive 450 miles by myself in six days. Primary purpose of the trip was to attend the Klingelhofer name reunion in Weilburg that they have every three years at different locations, but always north of Frankfurt. It is always my last one, as so many things are at my age (91). Have attended several before, and the group is getting smaller since the young people are too busy or less interested. After the group meeting, I visited a couple in their remodeled home. They have visited me three times here. I have the white cap on. Fellow in the red jacket front row is from S. Africa.



Normandy Cemetery



Monet's Garden

In July I did my Midwest trip a month late so I could attend the AirVenture Fly-in at Oshkosh, WI. First stop was my home town area in Illinois and visited the farm where I lived when I went to High School; put a rose on the tombstone where my wife's ashes are and my name without an end date; then to spend an afternoon with my high school classmate. There were only 13 in our class, and we both enlisted in the Army Air Corps when we were seniors. Neither one of us flunked out but neither of us got to fly; ended up being discharged as surplus when the war ended in 1945. He is still on the home farm, and he and his sons farm 2,200 acres of corn and soybeans. He was always taller than me, but he has not shrunk like I have. See picture of us by his corn field. At AirVenture I picked out the plane I want in the future. Only problem is it requires a \$2M deposit to get on the waiting list.



1944 HS Classmate and Karl



Airplane I want in my next life.

And now that I am home, I had eye surgery for my glaucoma August 3rd and can't travel or do anything strenuous for four to six weeks. No tennis, can't fly my airplane, lift anything over 12 lbs, or bend over to touch the floor. Eye is red and has stitches in it. No immediate correction to problem and won't really know until 4 to 6 weeks. Since the pressure in left eye couldn't be controlled any longer with drops, had to do something. Not too happy about it. However, I do have a tour to Cuba scheduled for October.



Ron, Barb, Maddy and Reed

Ron and Barb Moreland Report: We had a summer of family activities. In July we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary with our children and grandchildren. We just spent a week in the Tetons/Yellowstone with our two grandchildren, **Maddy**, age 20, and **Reed**, age 15. We had a cabin in the Tetons and tent-camped in Yellowstone. It was a treat to share and show off two of our favorite places with two such awesome and fun young people. And, included in our summer activities, because close friends are indeed family, we had such a good visit here in MT from **Ken and Connie Cookson**. Huckleberries and golf.

Bill Fobair Report: **Dr. Hugh Hammond Bennett** gave the key note address honoring the Soil Conservation Movement in America, authorized by the Soil Conservation Society of America in Rapid City South Dakota at 9am, August 26th, 1959.

Upon the conclusion of Dr. Bennett's address, I met with him and his assistant in the foyer and asked him if I could visit with him. He said, "Yes, come to my suite in my hotel at 1:30pm today."

He signed 200 official First Day Covers honoring the Soil Conservation Movement in America. I have two framed photos of **Dr. Bennet** and me, showing the First Day Cover of the Soil Conservation Movement in America and two brass coins commemorating his work, one in my office and the other in the National Headquarters of the Soil Conservation Society of America in Ankeny, IA. I sent all but two of the First Day Covers to **Mr. Bill Richards** who was then National Vice President for all the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the United States. I also have a copy of Dr. Bennett's publication, Soil Conservation, published by McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc. in NY and London in 1939. I also have an email from seguaromb@aol.com recognizing SCS/NRCS's 75th Anniversary. This Joint Congressional Resolution resulted in the establishment of 3,500 Soil Conservation Districts in the United States. When Dr. Bennett worked for the Soil Erosion Service, he developed the Legendary Soils Mapping Technique that is not only used in all conservation application in the United States but throughout the world. I was able to use these soils maps in developing conservation plans with complete confidence.



Bill Fobair picture with Dr. Bennett and commemorative items

CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

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Greetings to all our fellow Retirees across the Nation! Our wet season is finally pretty much over. Our final California rainfall amounts range from 120 to 200 percent of normal. I continue to keep a close look at how the Oroville Dam Spillway repair work is moving along. Much has been accomplished, with much more still to be done. The goal set by California's Department of Water Resources is to have the primary spillway functional for up to 100,000 cfs by November 1st. Work will go on into 2018 with more focus on the emergency spillway and further increasing the capacity of the primary spillway as well. The scope and scale of what has been going on and will continue through 2018 is simply amazing! Here is a good video update on the overall status of the work as of August 7th. https://youtu.be/sXsci94_Wmc, Oroville Update 7 Aug "Drill, Fill and Bill."



July 5th Retiree lunch Group. Lower left and clockwise: Harold Honeyfield, Bill Ward, Arturo Carvajal, Ed Schmidt and Shirley Leeper.

Monthly Lunches and Breakfasts: California retirees continue to have a monthly luncheon and breakfast for all who can make it. With summer being a busy time for many retirees, the groups are smaller than normal, but these opportunities to get together are always enjoyed by those who can make it.

Helen Flach has resumed her traveling after getting a new knee. She joined her sisters for their annual road trip, this time exploring Montana. She couldn't resist sending pictures of throwing snowballs on the Beartooth Pass while California baked in 108 degrees. She's also been busy with her Friendship Force group, entertaining visitors from Chiapas, Mexico and showing them the wonders of California. Her next trip, in late September, will be to Seoul, South Korea and various cities in Japan where she will be hosted by other Friendship Force families. Let's hope the situation calms down by then. Here are a couple of photos provided by Helen.



Helen's friends from Chiapas, Mexico



Helen from her Travels in Montana

Tom Wehri provided me the following update on what he and his wife **Naomi** have been up to: "My wife Naomi and I spent six weeks this spring in the Eastern US. We first did a two-week cruise of the Panama Canal with visits to Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Columbia. We enjoyed the engineering marvel of the canal. We then visited Grandson in Florida, then on to the Washington, DC area for two weeks to visit my son and a week of site seeing, on to Massachusetts to visit daughter and family for a week, and to Ohio to visit family and to my 60th Class reunion. In July we spent a week in Las Vegas at the Summer NBA camp and saw some pretty good basketball players. This traveling and a few visits to the cabin have kept us very busy. We send our Best wishes to our fellow retirees!"

In early July, **John and Ruth Stierna** traveled to Melbourne, FL for a family reunion and celebration of the 50th anniversary for John's younger brother. They spent a week on the beach and enjoyed the sun and sand. John tells us that the whole family survived the beach and pool by plenty of sun screen and watching the way the next two generations played and partied. A particular event was the nighttime crawl up the beach by huge sea turtles to lay eggs well above the tidal water line. The only disappointment was not seeing a major rocket launch at the Kennedy Space Center, due to a technical problem with nine seconds to blastoff.

Mike Simmons retired as an NRCS Engineer in 1992. He then went on to work as a private consultant in the same area in Ventura County on similar water resources and conservation work for 25 more years and now has finally retired from his private practice job. I had the good fortune of working with Mike early in my career and learned a lot from Mike. His daughter put together this nice photo collage of Mike with family members at his office, marking his retirement from private practice.

I called Mike to see how he was enjoying his 2nd retirement, now six weeks into it, so I could add that to my update here. After officially closing his office, there was still a lot of work Mike was doing regarding compiling and appropriate disposition of his many years of engineering records. While in that process, Mike shared with me that he suffered a stroke. It was determined that he had a 90 percent blockage of an artery in his brain. He now has a surgery scheduled for August 25th to place a stent in that blockage area. Mike says they will enter in from his hip area and go up an artery to place that stent! Really amazing what they can do these days.

Mike was in good spirits and very thankful for his very supportive family helping him get through this difficult health challenge. He sends his regards to all of his fellow retirees.

My wife, **Dana** and I hosted a birthday celebration event at our home for Dana's Mother, **Betty** who turned 80. About 40 family members and close friends came from as far away as Tennessee! It was months in the planning and certainly turned out be a very special day for her and all our family.

We captured the essence of the event with some wonderful photos, video, and music compiled and put on my YouTube channel for our family to enjoy: <https://youtu.be/G6GjMReAjSI>, A memorable family birthday celebration!

I purchased a new guitar, a D'Angelico Exl-1 Arch top! I am very excited to have this new guitar acquired with my focus to use it playing jazz music and adding jazz standards to our band's music. It is a beauty, and I am really a happy camper now with my two "Go-to" guitars!



Mike Simmons and family members celebrate his retirement from private practice



A very special birthday celebration event for Bill Ward's Mother in-law.



My New D'Angelico Exl-1

Well, that is all from California this time around. Wishing all our fellow retirees across the nation the best!

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

ILLINOIS

Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative

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Twelve retirees and their spouses gathered in Litchfield on July 12th for lunch and visiting. Attending were **Ed Weilbacher, Mook and Helen Allen, Glynn and Marge Shubert, Dave and Maribeth Rahe, John and Patty Paden, Albert Dowland, Lee Bridgman, and John Burns**. The report was that a good time was had by all.



Dave Rahe, Lee Bridgman, John Paden, Patty Paden, Albert Dowland, John Burns



Ed Weilbacher, Mook Allen, Helen Allen, Marge Shubert, Glynn Shubert

Dale Benz had the pleasure to visit with **Harold "Boge" Kraut** in August at his home in Calhoun County. Harold may very well be the oldest living retiree of the Soil Conservation Service. He retired in 1975 as a Soil Conservation Technician when it was still SCS. Harold reached 104 years of an interesting life on May 24th. Harold still lives on the farm that he bought in 1946. He celebrated his 104th birthday on his farm with 104 friends, family, and neighbors. A highlight of his celebration was the Harman Family Bluegrass Band that Harold has been a fan of and followed to many festivals over 45 years. Harold was born in a log cabin near Batchtown which is close to where he now lives. He served in the Navy during World War II on a mine sweeper in the Pacific Ocean.

I had the good fortune to meet Harold for the first time while I was in college and he came to our farm to survey for a pond. I remember asking Harold a few questions about the SCS and it was obvious of his satisfaction in the work that he did and the SCS. He spent his entire career with SCS in Calhoun county and farming the hills on the west side of the county. Harold's farming was always the conservation way using conservation tillage, contouring, meadow for his livestock, ponds, and growing Christmas trees.



Harold Kraut at 104.

Harold and his wife **Helen** enjoyed traveling across the US, and their travels always resulted in rocks that Harold would pick up. He still has quite a rock collection. Harold and Helen had seven children, and today he is up to 15 grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren, eight great-great grandchildren and two more on the way.

Harold has caretakers who live with him, but he is in excellent shape. He could recall a lot more details about the past than I could. It had been many, many years since I last saw and visited with Harold, and our visit this time was an honor for me. **(Editor's note: Dick Gooby also sent an article from the Calhoun News Herald about Harold's 104th birthday.)**

We are sorry to report the death of **Joe Barkley** on May 8th. Joe was living in Paris, IL at the time of his passing. We offer our sympathy to his son, **Dan**.

The next gathering for SCS/NRCS retirees in Illinois will be October 5th at Urbana Gardens Restaurant in Urbana. Lunch will begin at 11:30am. Hope many of you can join us for lunch and visiting.

IOWA

Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative

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On July 1st, **Barbara Stewart** retired as the State Agronomist, a position she held since 1995. She spent her entire career in Iowa and served in the following positions: Soil Conservationist, District Conservationist, DNR Liaison, Training Officer, Water Quality Specialist, and State Agronomist. Several retirees attended Barb's retirement party at the Hickory Grove Park by Colo. These included **Lyle and Charlotte Asell, Roger and Donita Link, Dennis and Cheryl Pate, Lynn and Candy Betts, John and Jill Myers, Mark Lindflott, Bob Dayton, Tom O'Connor, Duane Miller, and Mark and Ann Jensen**. Barb and **Randy** have had their daughter and granddaughter from Texas spending the summer with them, while their son-in-law is deployed, so they have had a fun and very busy summer. One of their activities has been showing sheep at the State Fair, something they have done for many years. Barb said this was one of their best years. Also while at the fair, Barb and Randy were the recipients of the Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award. The award was presented to them by Governor **Kim Reynolds**, wife of retiree **Kevin Reynolds**. Congratulations Barb and Randy!



Barb Stewart at her Retirement Party

On July 31st, **Jeff Godwin** retired as the Area Engineer in the Atlantic Area Office. Jeff spent his entire career of over 36 years in western Iowa, serving in engineering positions in Sioux City, Council Bluffs, and Atlantic. He had been the Area 4 Engineer since 1989. **Jeff and Teresa** were honored at an open house in Atlantic on August 4th. Some of the retirees who attended included **Lee and Alice White, Larry and Jill Hammitt, Sheila O'Riley, Marvin Lundstedt and wife, and Duane Ortgies and wife**. Jeff and Teresa are enjoying a trip to Rocky Mountain National Park before he starts his "second career" on September 1st as a Senior Engineer with Snyder and Associates in Atlantic.



Dale Kraus with his 22-inch Largemouth Bass



Cooking some fish: Lyle Asell, Dale Kraus, Kurt Hoeft, and Warren Johnson

The annual Iowa RC&D reunion fishing weekend was held mid-week in early May with **Christa Beck, Dale and Rose Kraus, Dora and Denny Guffey, Shirley Stout and Warren Johnson, Kurt Hoeft, and Lyle and Charlotte Asell** attending. Shirley Stout/Warren Johnson and the Asells live a few miles apart, so they hosted the event with fishing in a local lake. Fishing was superb for crappies all three days, but Dale Kraus had to show off by catching (and releasing) a 22-inch Largemouth Bass. Food and fellowship was good and abundant! They even had some excitement on the lake when a storm developed rapidly followed by wind, hail, horizontal rain, thunder, and lightening. Other than being wet, there were no ill effects. Lyle and Charlotte have only lived about three miles from the lake for the last 47 years and now wish they had fished it before this year!

Thanks to **Dick Hall** for passing on the following: "We had our annual Hall family campout the first weekend of August above the Gavins Point dam in Yankton, SD. We had 26 family members there spread out among Marian and I and four of our five children and their families. Today, being August the 21st, I just returned from a baseball game in Kansas City over the weekend with my son and grandson. The Cleveland Indians, a team that I have been a fan of for 69 years through thick and thin, did prevail. I have been a Cleveland Indians fan since 1948 when my aunt flew me to Cleveland for a week and took me to an Indians ball game against the New York Yankees. The Indians did win that game and went on that year to win the World Series, the last time they won the World Series. One last item: since I just passed my 83rd birthday, I guess that I now qualify as a Senior Conservationist with ARCSE. It has been a great run, and I have enjoyed every minute of it." Congratulations, Dick on joining the ranks of the Senior Conservationists!

Tom Oswald retired from NRCS in 2008. Almost immediately, he began working for the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in their Recovery Division. In mid-July, after nine years working for them, he once again decided to retire. Much of Tom's work was on the recovery following the 2008 flood and tornadoes and the 2011 Missouri River Flood. His emphasis was on reducing flood risk. He learned quickly that much of what we do in soil conservation reduces flood risk, but we rarely took credit for it as a benefit within NRCS. After retiring this time around, Tom and Pat got a Havanese puppy. That should keep them busy for a while!

Twin brother **Ted Oswald** retired from NRCS in 2014. He began working on a contract with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to assist field offices on projects. He has assisted Jasper, Johnson, and Iowa counties since 2014 and will continue to work with Johnson and Iowa counties through 2018. The nice part about working on a contract is that it allows for traveling and other activities. Ted and **Vicki** have been traveling to Portland, OR, to visit their daughter and her family who have a soon-to-be two-year-old son who Vicki nannied for nine months last year. Ted and Vicki's son, daughter-in-law, and their three kids live in Hawaii. Ted and Vicki enjoy touring Iowa wineries and breweries and hiking trails around the state. Vicki is a substitute teacher and is also an EMT for the local EMS. Ted said that fishing and hunting are his favorite hobbies. He noted that the raccoons and deer enjoy his gardening and tree/flower planting efforts!

In mid-July, **Joe and Sharon Ausan** flew to North Carolina to visit their daughter, **Lisa**, and her husband, **Tim**. Lisa and Tim live in a rural area near Charlotte.

Thanks to **Jim Ayen** for the following: "I went on an Alaska Inside Passage Cruise and Land Tour in June/July. I saw some wonderful landscape and animals. I read James Michener's "Alaska" before I went, so the history of the indigenous peoples was more understandable in the museums. I spent July 4th in Fairbanks, AK, where there were no fireworks because of the fire hazard, plus it never got any darker than like about 8:30pm here.

My brother and I hosted an Ayen reunion, with our families meeting in Kearney NE. Bill's family is in Colorado Springs and Wyoming and mine is in Minnesota, Missouri and Des Moines, so we decided Kearney was close to half way – well, the only place left with decent accommodations in central Nebraska. The only cousin not in attendance was my great niece and husband who are with The Navigators in Rumania. We had a good time. The 29 there had a good time getting acquainted and playing games."



Jim Ayen filling in when Santa was on break in North Pole, Alaska



Jim Ayen with his three kids

Thanks to **Linda Miller** for the following: "In June **Dennis and Linda Miller** spent a week in Ely, Minnesota at the Burntside Lodge. It was a time to fish, relax and visit with friends. This year the number of fish caught was a bit slim but we had a good time anyway! Dennis is back in Grand Forks County, ND, farming the 'family farm.' Wheat harvest is in full swing right now. Our daughter and two grandchildren, along with Linda spent a week with him in July. We were concerned that he might get bored being all by himself! The kids had not been to the farm before and loved being able to drive the tractor around the yard by themselves."

We were recently saddened by the death of **Herman Kopitzke**. Herman retired in 1986. He was a Hydraulic Engineer on the Planning Staff for many years.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative

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How disappointing. Here it is the day of the big eclipse and the Salina area is completely overcast. Where is the sun that Salina has had for several weeks? As Ron and I stepped out of the house to go to a viewing spot, it was pouring, so we decided to fix our lunch and stay at home. After lunch we looked out to see that it was clearing so we grabbed our glasses, went out on our deck, sat in our comfortable lounge chairs, and were surprised to find that we were able to enjoy almost the entire eclipse for our area.

On June 23rd, 2017, members of the Kansas Chapter of SCS/NRCS Retired Employees gathered for their annual meeting and dinner at the Holiday Inn in Salina, Kansas. Forty members and spouses or guests attended: **Guy McClaskey and Joyce Rich; Harold and Paula Blume; John Reh; Duane Evans; Deanne and Ron Lull; Mary Shaffer; John and Linda Ourada; Lawrence and Phyllis Wetter; Greg and Linda Henderson; Bill and De Roth; Bud and Terry Davis; Gerald Karnes; Rosie and Al Collins; Kayla and David Ascher**, all from Salina; **Keith Thompson and Tim and Karen Gogolski**, Osage City; **Donald Cooper**, Manhattan; **Bob Tricks**, Ellis; **Loren and Darlene Pearson**, Hays; **Robert and Carolyn Roth**, Great Bend; **Lonnie and Marlene Miller**, Lee Summit, Mo.; **Gary Kelley**, Sedan; **Bob and Glennis Trecek**, Belleville; **Glen Creager, Jr.**, Beloit; and **Tom Badger**, Topeka.

Bud Davis, retired Kansas NRCS state agronomist, presented a program about rainfall simulators that he manufactures, sells, and demonstrates in the U.S. and worldwide. **Davis** began selling the demonstrations—rainfall simulators in 2008 and has since distributed to more than 28 states as far away as Hawaii and Vermont, as well as Canada, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Ireland, Scotland, England, Australia, and Ukraine. He developed "Conservation Demonstrations" to give educators and researchers a convincing visual of the effects of soil texture, organic matter, root and vegetative systems on the soil. With easy setup and use, the demonstrator can focus on helping producers and others understand the importance of soil health and setting management goals for improvement. Visit the website <http://www.rainfallsimulator.com> for more information.



Bud Davis presenting his rain simulators

During the meeting each member summarized his career. The oldest member attending was **Guy McClaskey**, member who traveled the longest distance was **Gary Kelley**, and member with the most great-grandchildren (28) were **Robert** and **Carolyn Roth**. **Harold Blume** was elected president. **Duane Evans** served as president in 2016 and 2017. **Mary Shaffer** will serve as secretary-treasurer; and **Lawrence Wetter**, who served eight years as newsletter editor, retired from that position.



Robert and Carolyn Roth, winners of most great-grandchildren



Guy McClaskey, oldest retiree attending

Kansas has had several retirements. **John D. Drew**, Soil Conservationist in the Dodge City Field Office, retired on August 1st, 2017. Two retired from the Hays Area Office on August 4th, 2017: **Daniel H. Meyerhoff**, Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations, and **Jan M. Klaus**, Office Assistant.

Dan started working as a student trainee in Marysville, Kansas, the summer of 1978. During his career he served as a district conservationist in Greensburg and Lincoln, Kansas; area resource conservationist in Hutchinson; and since 1992 as the Area Conservationist/Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Hays. **Dan's** retirement was short as he has taken the Executive Director's position for the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts.

Jan started her career in 1979 as a "stay in school" employee for the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in Hays later accepting a full-time position with them. When FmHA was abolished in 1994 she worked for Rural Development for four years before accepting a position with NRCS in 1998 thus completing 38 years of federal service. **Jan** is looking forward to spending time in her back yard and planning her first vegetable garden next year.

A couple short notes. **Delbert Prophet** (former Assistant State Conservationist for Programs) and his wife, **Sheirlie**, have moved back to Salina from Independence, Kansas. **Francis Komarek** (former Civil Engineer on the Engineering Staff in Salina) has suffered a stroke and is currently residing at the Presbyterian Manor in Salina.

One retiree has passed away. **Layton C. Billips** passed away July 3, 2017. He retired in 2011 as the District Conservationist in the Hoxie Field Office. His wife, **Linda**, survives.

Several spouses have recently passed away. **Joyce Bohnenblust** passed away July 4, 2017. She was the spouse of **Gene** who passed away in 2008. He closed out his career as a Civil Engineer on the Technical Staff in the Hutchinson Area Office. **Marjorie J. Smith**, who passed away July 12, 2017, was the spouse of **Ivan** who preceded her in death in 2007. He retired as the District Conservationist in the Burlington Field Office. **Phillip R. Shaffer**, spouse of **Mary Shaffer**, former Public Affairs Specialist, passed away July 31, 2017. He served as judge of Municipal Court, as a workman's comp hearing judge and small claims court judge.

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:

In Memory: **Joe Frank Roberts**, Age 85, June 30th, 2017, Age 85; **Archie Daniel Weeks**, August 22nd, 2017, Age 81.

Joe Carpenter reported: Since retiring I have been working as a crop insurance adjuster, also working with the Washington County Conservation District. I'm still working as Deputy Director for the Washington County office of Emergency management. I also serve as the Commander, Springfield Washington County rescue squad and I'm president of Kentucky National Wild Turkey Federation.

I also serve on several boards, and I'm catching up on honey-do list--haven't been done over the past 35 years. My wife and three adult children are doing great. God is Good.

Don Crabtree has a new address: My street address is now 2162 Stepstone Rd. Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

Billy Finkbeiner reported: I am doing well and enjoying my free time. I have stayed busy all summer with yard work and projects around the house that I have put off until I had more time to complete. I am working on my Fall Food Plots now in preparation for hunting season. I am looking forward to spending a lot more time in the woods this year. Hope everyone is doing well.

Rodney Hendrickson reported: My wife **Alice** and I recently took a nine-day hiking trip on the Kerry Way Trail in Ireland. I'm planning to retire from my second career as Executive Director of the London-Laurel County Tourist Commission sometime in 2018.

**DEADLINE FOR
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017
NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS
OCTOBER 25TH, 2017**



Rodney Hendrickson in Ireland crossing a fence via a "stile."

Don Henry reported: On Saturday, May 20th, 2017, the University of Kentucky Honor Flight Kentucky flew more than 70 veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit their respective memorials. In doing so, UK became the first university in the country to sponsor an Honor Flight. I was one of those Veterans who made the trip. The President of UK, **Dr. Eli Capilouto** was also on board. It was a long day but very historical and memorable for the veterans and their guardians. I was honored to assist in the laying of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Don Henry on UK Honor Flight to Washington, DC

MAINE

John Simon, ARCSE Representative

Email: balnengr@tds.net

Hello America!

MARCH: On Tuesday, March 14th (the second Tuesday of the month) **Art Taylor, Bruce Champeon, Mary Thompson, and John Simon** had a pleasant breakfast together. We all did some remembering 30th anniversary of the great flood of 1987 in central Maine on April 1st. Wow, how time flies. Mary was Art's side-kick during that period. My side-kick was **Paul Perwada**, who I believe is now high up in one of the larger Portland consulting engineering firms. It was a difficult but fun time in our careers.

Tom Smith sent me an email and said he was going to come up for our breakfast, but the storm on Monday/Tuesday changed his mind. He and **Connie** were going to spend some time in Florida and visit his granddaughter who is in college down there. Happy trails, Tom.

The following may be of interest to some of you in understanding the difference between Hemp and the other stuff. Take a look, and you may be surprised at the information on these sites. There may be opportunities for farmers in diversifying their crops.

The 2014 Farm Bill has a section 7606, entitled "Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research." The description and provisions start on page 698. You can download what you need at <http://www.thefarmbill.com/>.

The U.S. Patent Office issued patent #6630507 to the U.S. Health and Human Services on January 2nd, 2001. The patent is entitled "Cannabinoids as Antioxidants and Neuroprotectants." A 24-page summary of the patent lists the health benefits and can be obtained by downloading the abstract dated October 2003 using Google. You will get numerous hits for you to read.

On July 18th, 1990 at the meeting of the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, a paper was presented that in effect identified a new discovery of the human Endocannabinoid System. Read more information on this fascinating system in our bodies at: www.beyondthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/eCBSYSTEMLee.pdf. Another interesting article from health and human service (HHS) is <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2241751/>

To get an understanding of the human Endocannabinoid System and its influence on human health go to: <http://norml.org/library/item/introduction-to-the-endocannabinoid-system>.

Very exciting stuff and if implemented would bode well for the health of the country. I pray that this is useful information for all of us to follow up on in the years to come, if anyone is interested.

APRIL: What a beautiful day it was Tuesday the 11th. It was 77.5 degrees at my home in Hampden! We had a great time visiting and remembering old times. In attendance were **Roger Ashe, Kay and Ray Voyer, Bruce Champeon, Art Taylor, and Myself**.

Roger still has two dogs, which he adores. He says they are great listeners who just look at you and wag their tail and wait for a pat on the head or a chin scratch.

Ray brought a jewelry case to the breakfast that he had made for us all to see and admire. It is a beautiful work of art with different types of wood for the sides, top and bottom. Wow! Looks Like some of the furniture that Art has made in the past. Art would like to be in his house by July as he is due for knee surgery then. He is finishing the flooring in the various rooms of his house now.

Kay Voyer indicated she is retired from teaching now and loves it. She does substitute teaching two days a week but loves it as none of the administrative stuff is involved. This is the same comment that **Paul Hersey** gives for his part time work with NRCS: all technical work with none of the administrative stuff.

Bill Moulton sent an email updating his winter chores. He and his son **Peter** cut 8,000 bd-ft of pine and hardwood lumber this winter, along with 12 cords of fire wood. He and **Pat** are off to Florida for a month's rest. Bill indicated he developed a "boot remover" of some kind. If you are interested, give Bill an email.

Heard from **Candi Dykeman** who passed along **Kay Nickel's** email to me. Kay is interested in keeping up with us all, so she is now on the list of retirees. It is good to keep some level of contact between all the retirees. Kay worked for years in Maine. She and **Vassar** are doing well and busy with all the winter visitors. Kay also said she is caring for a five-year-old and his siblings, so that is keeping her busy for now.

MAY: On Tuesday May 9th the USDA SCS/NRCS retirees and friends had their usual 9am breakfast at Dysarts on the second Tuesday of the month. In attendance were **Art Taylor, Charlie and Judy Boothby, Bob Lagassey, Paul Hersey, Gary Hedstrom, Ray Voyer, and John Simon**. My "kitchen sink omelet" was great but took a while for me to get down amid all the yapping that I do.

Charlie Boothby turned 82 on May 8th and is looking forward to being a "senior conservationist - SC" next year. He rattled my cage about updating Maine's list of SC's, which I have since done. Thank you Charlie for the encouragement.

I had a lousy spring, health wise, caught a wicked cold and got an infection that needed 10 days of antibiotics and then hurt my back digging holes for new shrubs in my back hedge! All in all, April was a bummer and May is not looking much better. Yuk!

Bob and Louise Lagassey returned from Florida and looked rested and tanned up. Welcome back to Maine!

Paul and Gary drove over from Farmington. It is a 1.5 hour drive one way--wow! They were going up to tour the UMO campus which neither have seen for over 20 years, I believe. Hope they enjoyed the sights. It is a much expanded school now from when they graduated, especially the engineering teaching facilities.

Besides Charlie's 82nd birthday on May 8th, both **Lola and John Ferwerda** turned 92 this past week, and **Phil Christensen** turned 76 on May 22nd. **Bob Lagassey** turns 79 on May 23rd, and **John Simon** turns 78 on May 28th. How did we all get so old! Quite a bunch of Gemini's, don't you think?

JUNE: Our yearly June noon luncheon on the 13th at the Coach House restaurant in Brewer was attended by 10 retirees, including **Elaine Tremble, Ellie and Joe Bertolaccini, Roger Ashe, Paul Hersey, Gary Hedstrom, Art Taylor, Dana Nelson, and Noreen and John Simon**.

The food was great, and we all enjoyed sharing information and getting up to speed with each other since last year. We are finally getting some good weather after all!

I brought a real great book along with me to the luncheon to show off, Growing a Revolution - Bringing Our Soil Back to Life, by **David R. Montgomery** from the U. of Washington. If you go to the web site for the publisher, www.wwnorton.com, you will get a good two-page summary of the book. I lent my copy of the book to **Paul Hersey** who still works part time as a planner, and I am sure he will enjoy it as much as I did and probably make use of some of the information. I believe that everyone with any interest in the future of agriculture should have a copy of their own!

Years ago I attended soil quality workshops (three-day sessions each) over a five-year period, sponsored by RC&D and led by **Von Razar**, who was DC in Bangor. This book covers many of the principles discussed at all those sessions! The book covers sustainable agriculture from around the world and also the direct relationship of soil health to the CO₂ issues. It has numerous references in the back to web sites for deeper researching into subjects of interest mentioned in the book.

I think society is approaching an awakening as to the similarities between the effects on the health of all plant and animal life of the complex of micro-organisms in the soil, and the complex of friendly micro-organisms that exist in the human digestive tract that sustain us in our health. To damage either is to damage the health of life on the planet.

We in Maine lost several long time SCS/NRCS retirees in June. **Ralph Walker** was a long time soil conservation technician in the Lewiston/Auburn office, and **Kenneth Laflamme** was a long time soil scientist at the state office. I worked many years with Ralph in both Auburn and Lewiston.

We up here in Maine are already having our share of drownings, especially those in small boats on lakes and on the sea. If you are out on the water, wear a suitable life jacket, especially in the ocean, as the water is still cold and hypothermia sets in quickly.

JULY: This month's breakfast was attended by only **Roger Ashe and John Simon**. We had a great time getting to know each other better. Roger is a great guy and a proud Marine. Thank you Roger for your military service to our country!

AUGUST: Last Tuesday we had six lively attendees at our breakfast: **Roger Ashe, Ray and Kay Voyer, Charlie and Judy Boothby, and John Simon**.

Charlie indicated that the hornets and their nest have taken over his small green house for the summer. I told Charlie of my saga with a huge (but quite hidden) hornets' nest. I have been staining my double decker back porch and got stung several times, once on the ear and once on the eyebrow. Boy, do those suckers sting! Finally, I located the nest and after three nights of attacks with hornet spray I got the nerve to knock the nest down. Wouldn't you know that two hornets staggered out of the nest! They are gone now and **Noreen** and I made a vow to examine under the porches every month or so.

The old fable is that we must be due for a snowy winter as the nest was quite high off the ground. At least this is what the old timers say. What am I saying--I am an old timer!

Art Taylor installed quite a system of solar panels on his roof --21, I think, enough for his needs for sure. Art is recuperating from knee surgery and will be back with the breakfast crowd next month. His new house is just about ready for living, sometime this fall.

There was a huge traffic jam at the Hampden exit on Tuesday in front of Dysarts which delayed my arrival. When talking to **Roger** during breakfast he said a large truck with one of those 250-foot blades for the windmills was having a hard time getting onto the interstate ramp and caused quite a backup. These windmill blades are quite a sight to see close up.

This Saturday's Bangor daily newspaper (August 12 and 13) had a big article on the Amish in central Aroostook County, especially around the Presque Isle and Fort Fairfield area. **Phil Christensen**, who lives in the Fort Fairfield area, was quoted extensively on the subject. They are having a welcome effect on putting idle land back into small farms. The Amish are very industrious and are having a welcome effect on the area which has been losing population. They love the area and are quite well accepted by the locals. Phil sold several parcels to the Amish and was glad to see the idle land now under the management of good conservationists. Like most Mainers, they do not enjoy the long winters! Many of you knew Phil when he was a state engineer and state conservationist. Phil retired to Fort Fairfield in 1999. See the complete article at <http://bangordailynews.com/2017/08/12/homestead/amish-community-celebrates-a-decade-in-central-arostook-2/>

Till next report, God bless you all and your families and enjoy the rest of the summer.

Patricia Lee Champeon, 80, of Glenburn, ME, died August 17, 2017. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

MASSACHUSETTS

Jim Wesoloski, ARCSE Representative

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Well, it's been a quiet few months for the Massachusetts retirees. We survived the eclipse which at 65% coverage was totally underwhelming.

July 2017 marked the retirement of **Deborah Johnson-Hawks**. Deb came to Massachusetts from Colorado and served as a soil conservationist, RC&D coordinator, district conservationist, and assistant state resource conservationist meanwhile earning a PhD degree from UMass-Amherst and raising her son **Seamus**. Innovation and creative approaches to problem solving were some of Deb's hallmarks, and her can-do attitude will be missed at NRCS.

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

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The Columbia area retirees' breakfast was held on August 8th. In attendance were **John and Carol McCarthy, Virgil and Joy Gardner, Richard and Marjorie Koenig, Ed and Judy Smith, Jerry Edwards, Dave Rastorfer, Gena Michalson, Maurice Davis, Jean Herman, Mike Wells, and John Turner**. The next breakfast will be held at the Denny's in Columbia on November 8th at 8am.

From **Larry Caldwell** in Oklahoma: **Carolyn** and I are going to experience the eclipse next Monday in Hermann, MO. We were able to get a B&B reservation a couple of months ago (quite a feat as most places have been full for months). We thought Hermann would be a good place to view it at one of the wineries on a hilltop, and if it is cloudy, we will just continue to drink wine and watch it on the big screen!! We always enjoyed Hermann -- been quite a long time since we were there.

Dennis Shirk: Good morning folks. There is not much to report (**Dean Morgan**, my former AC would say, "That's a very poor way to start a DC report."). We are very blessed, health wise. I have two of three fall calves on the ground. We've been taking short day rides, but I have rides planned for Labor Day weekend. Several more rides are planned for September and October. See ya down the trail!

Alton Taylor: The Taylors were in Arizona for the month of July. You may ask why July? Our daughter has fewer obligations then so we accepted their invitation. By the way, when it's 117 degrees, don't touch anything black. We had the triplets for the week before school started. They are almost 12. Now it's just us. Our Navy grandson's squadron is returning from the Middle East for the last time, we hope.

Lane Thurman: Just want to let all of our friends know that we have had a rough summer down here in Springfield. I was diagnosed with colon cancer earlier in the year, and on August 3rd had the tumor removed from the colon. The surgery went well, and I am on the mend now, but it was a rough week or so after the surgery. Now just rebuilding my strength and hoping to go fishing this fall. Haven't been all year and that is the tough part. **Nancy** is doing just great, taking care of me and keeping me fed.

Jack Schneider: August 19th, 2017 is our 50th wedding anniversary. We were married in Columbia, MO at Memorial Baptist Church. So, we have a houseful now with both sons, wives and three grandsons here to celebrate that and the eclipse. Our farm is exactly in the center of the eclipse zone. In September, our daughter-in-law **Ginna** is doing a 100-mile run in Steamboat Springs, CO. Not her first, by any means, as she won one overall in Santa Barbara, CA including beating all the male runners. After that we are heading south to Monument Valley and a few other sites before heading home. Sorry that I won't be in town for the retirees' luncheon. Hope all have a good time and visit.

Bob Harryman: Hello everyone. We are still in Bethany, MO. The "Big Deal" for me this summer is that I had my 80th birthday. All of my family and some cousins met at the farm on Elk River in McDonald County, where I grew up. We had cook-outs, fireworks and floated the Elk River. I have continued gardening and had a good crop of strawberries, tomatoes (40 plants) and sweet corn (3 plantings), along with potatoes, radishes, onions, beets, cabbage, and green beans. By the time you read this, the solar eclipse will have happened. We are close to the center, so we plan to visit my grandson, his wife and our great granddaughter at Kearney, MO to get the maximum effect. I just figured out that I have been retired about half as long as I worked. I never expected that. You all take care and enjoy life.

Bill Pauls: Lake of Ozarks Summer 2017 was/is full of H₂O fun--boatin', swimin', floatin', fishin', etc. Also watching all sorts of boats (big, real big, little, fast, slow, etc.) go by the cabin. Fun to watch wake boarders, skiers, jet skiers, etc. and always a lot of fishermen. Watching that and all sorts of birds and critters from a bit further up on Thunder Mtn; great view of Old Kinderhook Golf Course. Lately the young raccoons have been pretty active and fun to watch fall 20 feet off the bird feeders. Ain't a bad view from the hot tub with one's favorite "beverage." Garden did/is pretty good. Still runnin' up and down the mountain as well. Just back from marathon #97 in Juneau, AK with one set of our kids and g'kids. Great time! Next up, Corning, NY, then Atlantic City, NJ; should wind up the running season for 2017 at 99 marathons completed if the criks don't rise and God willin'. Hope to break a 100, almost get all the states done twice in 2018, maybe 2019. Also now watching a lot of G'kid sports over around STL. Also volunteering at the Camdenton Pregnancy Help Center and our Church (matter of fact doing some soils work for the church, as we are putting in a new cemetery/columbarium). Actually stayin' pretty darn busy (retirement?!) Life is good! Hope to also do some camping around the state in our Wolf Pup. Going to try to go to all the state parks of MO in the next few years. Everyone is always welcome if you're in the neighborhood. Life goes on. God Bless.

Mike Blaine: Summer went by altogether too quickly! I didn't get done nearly all I needed to. Now here we are heading into fall and I am not ready! We did have a really nice week at Hilton Head, SC with all the kids and grands in July. We do that every other year. We rent a big house, and all stay together and have a good time. There were 15 of us there. It was unseasonably cool, which was ok with me since I really don't like hot weather. But we still got to get in the ocean and played on the beach. My plans for the next month are to get my right hip replaced on September 19th and recover from that so I can then get my right shoulder repaired! I'll be glad to have all that done. I'm still looking forward to deer season and Thanksgiving. That is another time we try to have all our descendants come for a while. Best wishes to all from Blaine Hill.

Recent retirees are **Darrel Campbell, Ray Van Dusseldorp, and Frank Ewart**. We were saddened to hear that **Curtis Gooch** has recently passed away.

Reminder that the annual luncheon is September 14th at the Senior Center in Columbia. If you haven't already, please let me know if you plan to attend.

MONTANA

Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative

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Montana Big Sky Report

James Johnson Report: We were sorry to learn that **Stan Hamilton** died suddenly last week from an ATV accident in the mountains of Gallatin County. We are planning to attend the memorial service for Stan at 11am tomorrow morning at the Dahl Funeral and Cremation Service Tribute Center in Bozeman.

Gooby Ranch Report: We have two Rocky Mountain gaited horses we ride in the hills. There is always a chance that one of them will get sick or something, so **Mary Ann** thought we had better get two more Rocky Mountain gaited horses. They walk faster than most horses and smoother. So I agreed with Mary Ann. We went to a Rocky Mountain horse breeder and looked at what he had for sale. Since we are just poor little farm kids, his trained horse prices were through the roof. Besides that, Mary Ann is an excellent horse trainer. I asked about his untrained horses, and he said he didn't have any, but he knew a lady that had two that she bought three years ago as colts that had never been rode. We went over to her place, and the horses looked good but they were wild as a March hare. She wanted to get rid of them, since there was no way she could ever break them and it was costing her a lot to feed them hay. We did a lot of negotiating, and she finally said we could have the horses for nothing. I did a lot of figuring on the money she was having to pay a year for the horse feed. I told her if she would pay us what six months of feed would cost, we would take the horses off her hands. She finally settled on paying us for three months of feed to take the horses.

We had to go back home, get Mary Ann's horse, and haul it over to the lady's place that paid us to take her horses, which was about 150 miles from our place. The horses had never had a halter on them, and there was no way we could get them in the trailer. Mary Ann unloaded her horse and started herding the two new horses down the road. Since I didn't need to drive along

with Mary Ann, I drove down to the Missouri Head Waters State park and took a nap. When I woke up I drove down the road to see how everything was going with Mary Ann. She had herded the horses over 40 miles.

The horses were so tired and foot-sore when Mary Ann opened the trailer doors, all three horses jumped right into the trailer. Mary Ann is already getting them trained. Being the nice guy I am, I drove Mary Ann home while she rested.

NEBRASKA

Norman and Sylvia Kempf, ARCSE Representatives

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Patricia Ann Miller died on August 9th, 2017 and was 92 years old. She was a cartographer with the Lincoln Cartography Unit and retired from the Soil Conservation Service after 21 years. **Keith Sheets** reported that as a part of his 80th birthday celebration he and his family traveled to Lake Louise, Canada and the surrounding area by charter bus. **Bill and Coleen Hance** spent time in the Smokey Mountain area. **Dave Camper** reported that he and fellow bikers traveled to the Ft. Collins, CO area.

Steve and Jan Stover traveled to Williamstown, KY and visited the Ark Encounter which is a replica of Noah's Ark. Another NRCS retiree, **Bonnie Kadavy** has also visited recently. They all reported being very impressed by the Ark.

The following people attended the August Breakfast: **Val Bohaty, Norman Helzer, Bill Hance, Louie Buller, Harold Klaege, Gus Dornbusch, Bob Engel, Keith Sheets, Steve Stover, Dave Camper, Steve Scheinost, Don Manley, Paul Bartlett, Chris Chapman, JoAnne Thiele, and Donna Dornbusch.**

NEW YORK

Nancy Lee, ARCSE Representative

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The picture below is from the July retirees' picnic held at Dorchester Park, Whitney Point, NY. While we were enjoying the beautiful view over the lake, a bald eagle entertained us with a flight that was breathtaking. It was good to see old friends and our well wishes and prayers are with those who couldn't make it because of poor health. **Nancy Lee** writes: Preparing for a lifetime dream of a trip to Alaska in September with family.



New York Retirees' July Picnic

NORTH DAKOTA

Robert "Bob" Bird, ARCSE Representative

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The North Dakota Retirees will have their annual reunion on Thursday, September 14th, 2017 for lunch, visiting and a short program at 11:30am at the Bismarck Elks Lodge Room.

We lost **Gil Andersen**, who was a technician in Jamestown, ND for many years. He served in the U.S. Marine Corp in WWII in the Iwo Jima Volcano Islands in 1945, and received the Navy Unit Commendation for service in Iwo Jima. Gil was an active member of several veterans and service groups, including the VFW, American Legion, Elks, Eagles, Military Order of Cooties and the VFW Color Guard for 71 years. His last days were spent at the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon, ND.

Another loss was **Berneice Schield Lunday** who only worked for the SCS for a short time. She became a writer and wrote her parents' true story, Unblessed, a book that has truly blessed many and is still read and gives inspiration to others. She wrote and published The Schield Memories, The Lunday Memories, Sofie Sonya, the Schield Family Newsletter, and the Dakota Adventist Alumni News, and many articles, stories and poems. North Dakota retirees and those who once worked in North Dakota are welcome to join us on September 14th at the Bismarck Elks for a noon luncheon.

OHIO

Jon Gerken, ARCSE Representative

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Retired SCS/NRCS employee, **Gerald "Jerry" Tussing**, passed away July 8th, 2017. Jerry's last position with NRCS was as the Top of Ohio RC&D Coordinator.

Ralph Gray and the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad: The railroad is in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. It is the only scenic railroad in a National Park. The train has been running for more than 40 years. The train runs almost all year around. Several years ago, a train went from Canton to Akron.

As a Trainman, I help the riders on and off the train, tell them what time we arrive at certain stations, what time to get back to the train if they get off, and to elaborate on what we are seeing as we travel along.

The train starts at Rockside Station, Independence, south of Cleveland and goes through Peninsula to Akron and return. It is a three hour round trip, travelling 50 miles.

The train may have as many as 13 passenger cars and a café car, which has snacks, drinks and souvenirs. On nice Saturdays and Sundays there may be over 1,000 riders per day. On the north end of the train, there are two box cars to hang bicycles up, for bicycle riders who only want to ride the trail in one direction. The cost is \$3 no matter how far they want to ride. There are several special trains, such as Grape Escape, Ales on Rails, Mystery trips and others.



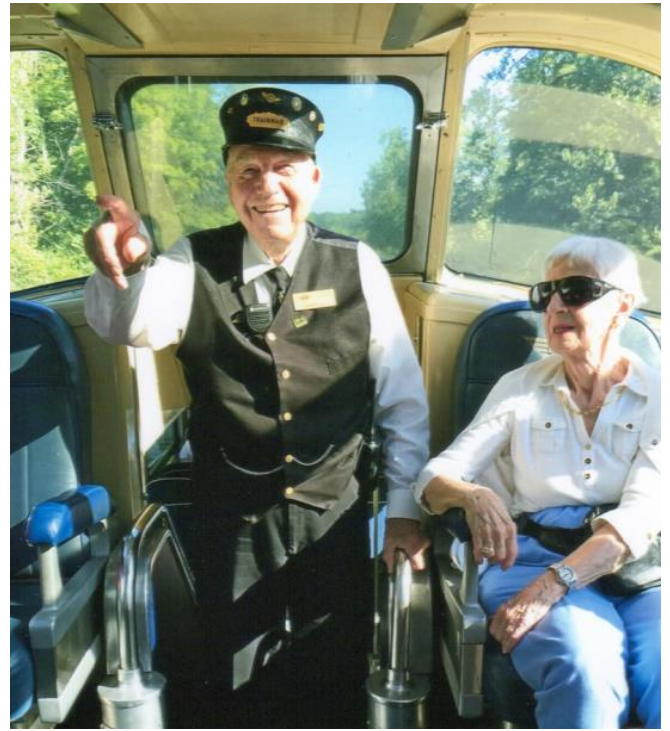
Ralph Gray is a Trainman on the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad.



Ralph Gray and great granddaughter Lottie Gray



Special activities at Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad include having a Thomas engine coming in to pull the train.



Ralph Gray and wife Betty in the dome car on Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad.

The Polar Express operates two trains a day in November and December, one out of Rockside and one out of Akron. These trains start at 7pm, so many of the children and some adults wear pajamas on the train.

The Polar Express story is read, then each person receives a cup of hot chocolate and a large chocolate chip cookie. The train arrives at the North Pole (Peninsula has been renamed). Santa goes by on his sleigh and comes back and gets on the train. Santa finds out what the children want for Christmas, gets his picture taken, and as he leaves, he gives each child a bell. The bell is the key part of the story. The children sing Christmas songs until they get back to where they started.



Ralph Gray and his wife Betty on the right with World War II veterans on a special car on Veterans Day.

OKLAHOMA

Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative

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Gary O'Neil's Mom, JoAnn O'Neill, passed away Thursday, August 17th. Services are not completely finalized with Trout Funeral Home in Ponca City, but it appears that the funeral service will be held at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 707 E. Ponca Street, Ponca City on Tuesday, August 22 at 10am. A link to the funeral home's website is below.

<http://www.troutfuneralhome.com/obituaries/JoAnn-Catherine-ONeill?obId=2492263#/obituaryInfo>

Please keep Gary and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

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Oregon's summer of 2017 will be memorable for several reasons. One was the August 21st Total Solar Eclipse which brought an estimated 1,000,000 visitors to the state. There was concern that there would be shortages of gasoline and groceries, a breakdown of the cell phone system, and massive traffic jams. Clear skies across most of the state made for excellent eclipse watching. However, once the event was over, everyone in the zone of totality wanted to go home. This did cause huge traffic jams. Fortunately, none of the other dire predictions occurred.

Another happening making the summer of 2017 memorable was record-breaking high temperatures. In early August Portland recorded five consecutive days with highs over 90 and a record daily high of 105. The summer won't be one of the green tomatoes or one that adds credence to the adage that air conditioning is not needed because there are only a few days with high temperatures.

The third reason making the summer of 2017 memorable was the summer quarter retiree lunch at the Peppermill Restaurant in Aloha. Attending were **Elena VanderZanden, Beth Zetter, Lowell and Marian Kenedy, Bunny Leuthold, Rene' Walls, Chad McGrath, Gary Formanek, Dick and Kathy Sylvester, Jeff Repp, Joe Sahlfeld, Kristi Yasumiishi, Terry Mitchell, Kay Denfeld, Pat Smith, John Hedlund, Don Wallin, Ron Raney, Leland Saele, Leonard and Sharon Gilson, Ralph Wadleigh**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**. The group welcomed Oregon's newest retiree, **Ron Raney**. Ron was a soil quality specialist in the state office.

News from attendees included **Eldena VanderZanden's** report that her fund raising team, Bedes of Sweat, raised over \$9,000 for the American Cancer Society. **Joe Sahlfeld** camped at Cove Palisades. **Kat Denfeld** has been busy entertaining relatives. **Dick and Kathy Sylvester** has been staying close to home and taking care of projects around the house. **Chad McGrath** is being busy being a grandpa babysitting his grandchildren. **Jeff Repp** has been doing some consulting work in Nevada and wetting a fishing lure. **Kristi Yasumiishi** is waiting for **Kip** to retire. In the meantime, she is sporting a new RAV4 (small Toyota SUV). **Rene' Walls** has been holding down the fort while his wife is doing some traveling. **Leland Saele** recently returned from visiting family in North Dakota. **Don Wallin** has been busy doing gardening. **Lowell Kenedy** told us he has a problem with the siding on his house. **Ralph Wadleigh** and his wife **Jan** will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

Several gave me their regrets. **Marsel Tingey** told me that he and his wife are both going strong, just not very fast. **Rose Loehr** gave me her usual excuse – "I'll be fishing in Alaska." **Russ Hatz** told me he would be conducting crop inspections in Alberta, Canada.

The fall quarter retiree lunch is scheduled on October 25th at Clackamas The Old Spaghetti Factory. Details will be emailed in early October.



Leonard and Sharon Gilson with Elena VanderZanden.



Joe Sahlfeld and Kay Denfeld



Kathy and Dick Sylvester, Beth Zetter, and Chad McGrath



Jeff Repp, Bunny Leuthold, and Kristi Yasumiishi



René Walls and Pat Smith



Lee Saele, Don Wallin, Gary Formanek, and Lowell Kenedy



Marian Kenedy, Ralph Wadleigh, and John Hedlund.

PENNSYLVANIA

Bill Bowers, ARSCE Representative

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From **Frank Resides**, SEPA: The Southeastern PA Retirees met for lunch at Guiseppe's in the Edgemont Shopping Center off West Chester Pike on August 19th, 2017. It was a beautiful summer day, and 19 of our faithful were there.

Those present: **Len and Mary Beck, Helen Brossman, Pat Burkett, Jean Francis, Carolyn Gehlen, Tom and Joyce Iivari, Jean Kirkaldie, Dave and Paula Lorenz, Ann Magee, Joe and Janis McDonough, Frank and Jane Resides, Fred and Jane Schuetz, and Shirley Thomas.**

As usual, we had a wonderful time reminiscing about the past and some crazy things that happened years ago. **Jean Francis** showed up with a pack of photos of NTC events taken some time after the Civil War, long before the gray hair came. It is always fun to see what we looked like several decades ago.

Art Holland called about an hour before lunch time to let us know that he had just gotten home from a rehab facility where he was recovering from a broken hip. He sounded well, and his son and daughter-in-law are there with him in SC to help him get situated at home. We wish Art a complete recovery.

This was our first visit to this venue, which contrasted markedly to the quiet back room at Roger's that we used for many years. We were set up at two tables in the middle of a large dining room where the noise level was just a few decibels below that of a jet engine, so general announcements or communication between tables was impossible. However, the food was good and it was BYOB, so all was not lost.

It will soon be 22 years since NRCS's Technical shop (Northeast National Technical Center) in Chester closed. However, we have met a couple times a year, nurturing sincere and caring relationships. We always thought it was a good place to work, had a good mission, and was staffed by dedicated personnel. Now we know it was! Although some are deceased and some have left the area, they may be gone but are not forgotten.

TEXAS NORTH

Arnold King, ARCSE Representative

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Twelve members attended the June 16th meeting. Those attending were: **Earl Blakley, Dennis Gaster, Bernie Owen, Joyce Petty, Anita Plummer, Elaine and Billy Don Davis, Jim and Jere Rickman, Bernelle Baxley, Clyde Goodman, and David Buland.**

President **Clyde Goodman** called the meeting to order. **Dave Buland** reported that the NRCS got some money for FY-17 and will need to cut 600 positions. The new Under-Secretary will probably not be announced until after the Legislature's August recess. He also mentioned that **Suzi Self** and **Lennes Perry** retired.

Bernie Owen provided **Berniece Newman** some NARFE information on what to do upon the death of a retiree. He mentioned that the August program will be given by **Jim Rickman** and the November meeting will be on the FEHBP benefits for 2018.

Bernelle Baxley celebrated her 91st birthday on May 30th. **Elaine** and **Billy Don Davis** are going on an Alaskan cruise in August. **Clyde Goodman** is enjoying his participation in Code Blue. His family reunion is scheduled for July.

Dennis Gaster has been busy with preparations for his Boy Scout troop summer camp adventure to be held on the Ortega Ranch near Las Vegas, NM. He recently bought a Stihl pole saw and has been trimming trees in his back yard, and replenishing his firewood supply for Boy Scout campfires.

Email received on June 27th from **Bill Kuenstler**: Here is a short update on what we have been doing over the past few months. Use as much or little as you see fit.

While the weather was cooler, I did a lot of cleaning and painting outside. I drug out the pressure washer and cleaned the house and garage siding, as well as our fence. Then I painted the fence (about 200 feet of picket fence), and the front and back porches on our house.

I also spent a lot of time over the winter organizing our one-car garage. I built a large storage area across the back of our garage, as well as smaller shelves along either side. I found some shelves and cabinets at our local Habitat for Humanity ReStore, and used those for tool and miscellaneous storage. I was finally able to get our van in the garage.

We have started the process of remodeling our kitchen. We had granite countertops installed, along with a new sink and faucet. We want to put in tile backsplash and rework the cabinets.

I have been doing some volunteering. One day a month I help with clean-up/landscaping at Topsail Hill State Park, which is a couple of miles from our house. One day a week I help in the kitchen at the local hospital. I help prepare and deliver food trays for the patients.



Bill Kuenstler on the beach in Florida beside a marked sea turtle nest



Sea turtle tracks to and from the sea to the nest

My most recent activity has been with South Walton Turtle Watch, an organization whose volunteers walk all the beaches in the county every day during nesting season (May 1--Oct. 1), looking for sea turtle nests. I walk a two-mile section of beach one day a week. We are on the beach at 5am, so that any new nests can be found and marked before people come to the beach (most of the turtles nest at night). So far I have found two nests on "my" section of beach. I've attached a couple of pictures, one that shows the track the turtle makes coming up to nest, and then returning to the gulf, and the other of me standing by a nest that has been marked.

Give my best to everyone in our group. I was sorry to hear of **Don Newman's** death. He was a fine gentleman.

UTAH

Skip, ARCSE Representative

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Everyone enjoyed each other's company as we had lunch at the Olive Garden in the Salt Lake City area. We shared fond memories of working together over the years, and caught up on each other's activities since retirement.

We may be a little biased, but we mutually agreed that NRCS is the best Agency in the World for at least two reasons. First, the Service provided is critically important and essential to our Nation and even the World. Second, and perhaps even more significant, it is the Employees who make it all happen. Several of the Utah Retirees have worked in multiple States, and recognized that the dedicated employees are the common thread throughout our great country, and are the key to making NRCS the success it is.



Front Row: Skip Nelson, Patti Sutton, Jean Goble, Marilyn O'Dell, Joyce Rice, Marianne Auseresses. **Back Row:** Margie Anderson (spouse), Jan Anderson, Bill Bradwisch, Dee Cummings, Jim Lytton, Linda (Lytton) Weisemeyer, Barbara Carey, and Mike Domeier.

WASHINGTON

Gerald Richard, ARCSE Representative

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Here is an update on **Jud Melton** who had the bad fall back in the last part of April that resulted in no feeling from the neck down. Jud has been and is in rehab at Post Falls, ID and continues to make slow but steady improvement. **Karen** is overseeing remodeling of their home to accommodate Jud where he can continue to do rehab. Hopefully the move home can come as early as the last part of September or in October.

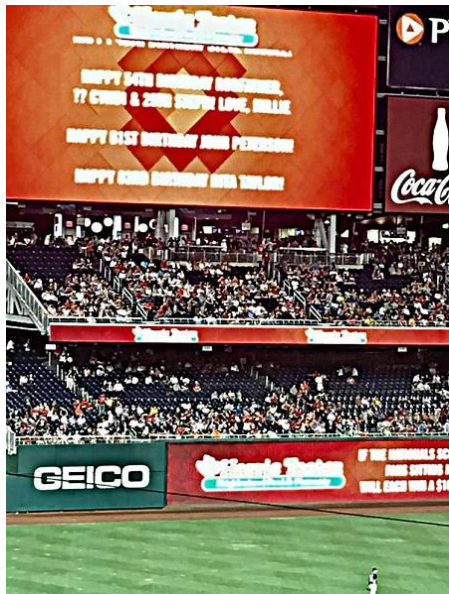
Phyllis Richard passed away on August 6th and will be dearly missed. It was special to Jerry that many of the retired SCS/NRCS folks in the Spokane vicinity attended the Memorial.

Ralph and Lynn Schmidt celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends at an open house celebration at their church in August. **Jack Rasmussen**, 94, a WWII marine veteran, received the "Quilt of Valor" on July 19th at the retirement campus where Jack and **LaRee** live. The Eastern Washington coordinator for the QOV presented the quilt at a gathering of members of the Greater Spokane QOV. It was a big surprise to Jack and was orchestrated over many months by his daughter **Terese Pratt**. The quilt is bordered in blue with large, cream-colored stars, with a bald eagle above the American flag. Jack, also a recipient of the Purple Heart, was on Iwo Jima when the flag was raised, and the quilt's design with the flag is a wonderful tribute to Jack's service in WWII. Jack is still fit and trim and is proud of the country he served.

WASHINGTON, DC, NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

John Peterson, ARCSE Representative

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The Washington Nationals baseball team recognized John Peterson on his 81st birthday. "Last night I celebrated my 81st birthday with the Washington Nationals as they played (and lost to) the Milwaukee Brewers. That was certainly an appropriate opponent on my birthday. The Nats announced my birthday on the scoreboard (thanks to Blanche), and gave me a cake, some T-shirts, and two bobbleheads. The grandchildren will like some of the loot. Fun night. The Nats still lead the division by 12 games. I hope their bullpen gets straightened out before the playoffs."

HOW TO BECOME AN ARCSE MEMBER?

APPLICATION AT

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

Out of love for the land, 18 men founded the National Association of Soil Conservation District Governing Officials on July 25th, 1946 (on my 10th birthday). They added fresh vitality to our American republic and launched an enduring campaign to elevate concern for the nation's natural resources. Seventy-one years later, we would like to thank our conservation district members, partners, friends, and leadership for their unwavering dedication to conservation.



Doug Helms reports "I have now seen two total eclipses. When I was a graduate student at Florida State University, Sterling and Linda Southern, lifelong friends from Marshville who were living near Niceville (Eglin Air Force Base), picked me up on March 7th, 1970. We drove to the path of totality at Perry, Florida. It was cloudy but we experienced the darkness and the birdcalls. Sterling

(now a retired professor of entomology at North Carolina State University) Linda and two of their friends drove to my sister's house outside Simpsonville, SC. My two sisters, Flora Griffin and Martha Cooley, had six of their children and grandchildren there. My nephew and his two children flew in from Los Alamos, NM, where he works at the laboratory. It was a beautiful day with clear skies so that we could sit in the shade of the oaks until we walked a few steps to view the eclipse."



In July, **Jerry Bernard** helped the WV NRCS office teach the Soil and Water Conservation Merit Badge at the recent National Boy Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve near Beckley, WV. This is a permanent high adventure facility for the BSA and is developed on reclaimed strip-mined land for coal.



NRCS tent on the Boy Scout National Jamboree Conservation Trail

Collectively, we helped over 300 scouts earn their merit badge. Additionally, we had many more leaders and adults come through. Emphasis was on the hands-on approach, while still adhering to the requirements of the merit badge. This was my 7th Jamboree.



Stream table demonstrating land use, erosion processes, and conservation practices.

Retired NRCS volunteers included myself, **Tom Iivari**, and **Barry Kintzer** from NHQ; WV volunteer **Cecil Springer**; and currently employed WV NRCS people, **Gary Redden** (leader), **Debbie Dorsey**, **Sue Ward**, **Alan Kerns**, **Aron Sattler**, and **Jeremy Bennett**.



Soils table demonstrating soil characteristics, soil profiles.

John Peterson recently attended the SWCS's 72nd International Annual Conference in Madison, WI. "At the ARCSE Luncheon on Monday, I managed to get a copy of a book entitled ***Nothing But Conservation*** by **Roy H. Dingle**. I did not know Roy, but I did know many of the people he mentions in his book, **Les Goke** being just one. Roy was a forester from the U of Minn. He started his career at LaCrosse, WI in 1935 as SCS was being established in USDA from the SES in Interior. He did some early training at Caledonia, MN, one of my district offices when I was the area engineer in Rochester, MN.

After that training he started at a CCC Camp near Cochrane, WI, and then transferred to another CCC Camp at Ontario, WI, and then to a camp at Platteville. When Conservation Districts were formed he found himself in Richland County, WI as a soil conservationist in 1941. I believe he stayed there for his career, ultimately becoming the Work Unit and later District Conservationist. He was there when State Conservationists were established, and someone I knew was the first STC in WI, **Marv F. Schweers**. I was in MN when we got our first STC, **Herbert Fleuck**. Any retiree would love reading Roy's book. He kept meticulous diaries I could tell. We all did in those days. His description of the farms, soils, and practices we were encouraging, reminded me of my early days, although he and I are about 20 years apart in age. Roy graduated from the U of MN in 1935 and retired from SCS in 1968. He and his family lived in ND during the dust bowl. I guessing he was born about 1913. He met HHB, and his story reflects the memories of a true conservation pioneer. He also reflected on Farm Bills and SCS political leadership from his retirement. ***Nothing But Conservation*** was a joy to read. The book was published by Hynek Printing, Richland Center, WI 53581. It may have been **Roy's** son who had the books at Madison. I wish I had taken more to give to others. Maybe **Ron Marlow** can lead you to a copy. This book brought many fond memories. If you can get a copy, you will enjoy it."

Ron Marlow adds: Stanley O. Dingle, Roy's son, who lives in Verona, Wisconsin brought the books to the meeting. He had a big box of them. Jim Enlow or I will contact him by the next newsletter to determine how copies might be best obtained.

Warren Lee sent the following: **Warren and Barb Lee** joined up with **Gordon and Betsy Klofstad** in Regina, Saskatchewan, for a road trip across the Canadian prairies, Jasper and Banff National Parks, the Okanogen Valley, and Crater Lake. Along the route we visited many friends, including retired SCSers **Galen Bridge and Erwina**, and **Larry and Karen Lenz**.

Ron Marlow reports that he and **Ann** had an exciting road trip to the ARCSE annual luncheon and board meeting in Madison, WI. Here are some of the highlights. They spent nearly eleven hours at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, OH and loved every minute of it. Visited the Notre Dame campus in South Bend and completed the Three Dune challenge at the Indiana Dunes State Park. These sand dunes are nearly 200 feet high and covered in trees. They set on the edge of Lake Michigan which looked like an ocean with big waves hitting the beach the day of our visit.



Ron and Ann at Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

In Wisconsin, Ron and Ann did a one day driving tour (mostly county roads) through the Western Uplands and Driftless Area, Central Plains, and Eastern Ridges and Lowlands. We expected to see lots of beautiful dairy farms and were not disappointed.

Our surprises were tobacco fields, very large irrigated potato fields, a delicious fish fry at the VFW in Reedsburg, and the largest concentration of water parks in the world -- the *Wisconsin Dells*, with 28, makes it the world's undisputed water-park capital.



Cambrian sandstone rock formations of the Wisconsin Dells



Wisconsin Dells

We also found Madison to be a neat city (easily traversed by foot) with great food and the beautiful University of Wisconsin campus.



Ron and Ann at Witches Gulch (Wisconsin Dells)



National Museum of the United States Air Force

On our trip home we visited the National Museum of the United States Air Force – four very large hangers of aircraft dating from WWI to the Space Shuttle. The visit included walking through several presidential aircraft.

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

Email: pegreesevw@gmail.com

Skip Bell, Soil Survey Office Leader for the Eastern Allegheny Mountains and Plateau in Morgantown, WV has retired. His co-workers gave him a great send-off at Coopers Rock on July 15th.

Jim Cooper gave the following tip: "Safety item. People with wet feet, should not step on bathroom tile. I did and am very lucky that I don't have a broken hip; just sore and black and blue; just hurt the ego."

WISCONSIN

Jim Enlow, ARCSE Representative

Email: ljenlow@att.net

The Wisconsin retirees met for lunch and fellowship on August 10th, 2017 at Gordos Grill & Pub, Eagle River, WI. **Dan Lynch** was the gracious host. Those in attendance included **Dan and Monica Lynch, Kim and Sue Georg, Dave and Jean Omernik, Howard and Sue Gundlach, Duane and Ceil Simonson, Ken and Joanne Lubich, John Campbell, Gene and Anne Nimmer, and Jim Barnes.**

The group enjoyed great food and camaraderie. After the meal, the group gathered at **Dan and Monia's** home and played the popular Wisconsin card game, Sheephead.

The next retiree luncheon is scheduled for October 12th, 2017 at Monona Garden Family Restaurant in Monona, WI. **Jim Enlow** will be the host.

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

David G. Unger

Castine, ME

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

by Marc Safley, Chronicler, Senior Conservationist

Ralph A. Mashburn, Senior Conservationist

Senior Conservationist **Ralph Mashburn** was born March 24, 1934, in Little Rock, Arkansas. He grew up on his family's farm where they raised cotton, soybeans, and some cattle. He graduated from Lonoke High School in 1951 and later entered the University of Arkansas. At the university he studied agricultural engineering; Ralph was an SCS Student Trainee in 1955 and 1956. In 1956 Ralph married **Nancy Brickell**. He completed his university studies in 1957 graduating with a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering. He went into active service through the U.S. Army ROTC in 1957 and 1958 and was honorably discharged from the Army Reserves in 1965 with the rank of 1st Lieutenant.

His first position with SCS was as agricultural engineer in Lonoke and Marianna, AR, field offices from 1957 to 1963. From 1963 to 1965 Ralph served as civil engineer for a watershed project and was based at Morrilton, AR. From 1965 to 1970 he worked as a civil engineer doing river basin and watershed planning work at East Aurora and Syracuse, NY. In 1970 he was promoted to Planning Staff Leader for River Basins and Watersheds at Saint Paul, MN, where he worked until 1973. He then took the job of River Basins Specialist at National Headquarters and worked there until 1976 when he moved to Portland, Oregon, as Water Resources Specialist and Programs Staff Leader at the West National Technical Center. While in Oregon Ralph pursued graduate studies in public administration at Lewis and Clark College in Portland. Ralph led that regional work until 1986 when he accepted the position of Assistant State Conservationist at Little Rock, AR. Ralph retired from SCS in 1990, but returned as a re-employed annuitant and contractor. In this capacity he provided management analysis and worked in the National Instructor Cadre.

Following retirement from SCS, Ralph has been busy with a number of activities. He manages the rental of his family farm (cotton rice, and fish). From 2000 until 2011 he was an Adjunct Instructor for John Brown University where he taught "Organizational Management: Principles of Leadership and Business Ethics." From 1990 through 2010 he was a private management consultant. As a consultant he taught topics of meeting facilitation, coping with conflict, and teambuilding. He authored his teaching materials.

Ralph and **Nancy** have two sons and one daughter. They have seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. They have been and continue to be active in their church. Together they have led evangelistic seminars and retreats in Virginia, New York, Minnesota, and Oregon. Ralph was Minister to Adults in his church in Oregon and currently is a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Lonoke (AR) Baptist Church. He and Nancy also are active in The Gideons International. Ralph has been on the Executive board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention since 2015.

Ralph enjoys fishing, traveling, family gatherings, and being with friends. He writes that he considers his years with SCS a blessing. He writes, "Our mission was noble and helping each other was common. The SCS provided me the unique opportunity to earn a decent living, see the whole USA and meet and help thousands of farmers and ranchers. I am forever grateful that the Lord led me to the career, the locations and the lifelong SCS friends I have."

OBITUARY INFORMATION**Ron Marlow, Secretary-Treasurer**

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

Surname

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

- Andersen** Senior Conservationist **Gilbert M. Andersen** (94) passed away peacefully at the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon, North Dakota, on August 11, 2017. In April of 1944, Gil entered the U.S. Marine Corp, serving in WWII and stationed in California and Hawaii. He served in Iwo Jima Volcano Islands in 1945, and received the Navy Unit Commendation for service in Iwo Jima. He was discharged on June 7, 1946. Gil worked as a technician for the Soil Conservation Service in the Jamestown District office from 1949 until retirement in 1986. Gil is survived by sons, **Rodney (Phyllis)** of Grand Forks, ND, **Randy** of Gainesville, FL, and **Jeff (Shelly)** of Jamestown; daughter **Sue (Butch) Forester**, Jamestown and daughter-in-law **Julie Andersen**, Naples, FL; five grandsons, two granddaughters, and two great-grandsons. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife **Ruth**, and two sons (**Gary** and **Gregory**).
- Barker** **Stan Eugene Barker** (87) passed away on July 11, 2017 in Boise, Idaho. He was born in Morning Sun, Iowa. He attended Parsons College, majoring in history and education and later attended Drake University, Des Moines, IA. His first career was teaching elementary education at Grinnell, IA. In 1959, he had an opportunity to change careers, and started working for the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Iowa City, Iowa. He retired from the SCS in 1988, as Personnel Officer for Idaho, with 31 years career service in Iowa and Mississippi, before being transferred to Idaho in 1978. During this time he spent four years in the Air Force during the Korean conflict, obtaining the rank of Staff Sergeant. Early in 1979, he met the love of his life, **Lorene**, in a Sunday school class at Whitney United Methodist Church in Boise. Stan and Lorene were active members of Whitney UMC their entire married life and church was very important to them. Stan became an Idaho Freemason and a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in 1980. He also joined the Order of the Amaranth and was a York Rite Mason. He joined El Korah Shrine in 1980. He held many offices at the local and state level in all of these Fraternal Organizations throughout the remainder of his life, receiving numerous awards. For all his lifetime dedication to the fraternity, Stan is the only person to be awarded the title of Honorary Past Grand Master, an honor he received in 2013 from the Freemasons of Idaho. Stan is survived by his sister, **Twyla Wells (Arthur)** of Grinnell, Iowa; two step sons (Lorene's sons), **Jerry James (Sarah)** of Boise, ID and **Thomas (Lisa)** of Portland, OR; two grandsons, one granddaughter, and four great grandchildren. Stan was preceded in death by his wife 36 years, **Lorene**, in February of 2016. In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to Shriners Hospital for Children, Fairfax Avenue & Virginia Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84103; or Whitney United Methodist Church, 3309 Overland Road, Boise, ID 83705. Memories and condolences may be shared with the family at www.summersfuneral.com.
- Billips** **Layton Carl Billips** (65) of Bogue, Kansas passed away July 3, 2017 in Hill City, Kansas. He was born in Norton, Kansas. Layton attended Fort Hays State University graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Zoology in 1973. In February of 1985, he began his job with the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service). He served many locations in Kansas, ending in Sheridan County where he became the District Conservationist in 1988. He retired from that position in 2011. Layton enjoyed hunting, fishing and many other outdoor activities. He was a true outdoorsman and an excellent marksman. He especially enjoyed deer hunting with his black powder gun. Surviving are his wife of 42 years, **Linda Billips** of the home; parents **Donald** and **Mary Billips** of Hill City; two brothers; and two sisters along with several nieces and nephews.
- Bohnenblust** **M. Joyce Bohnenblust** (94) of McPherson, Kansas, passed away on July 4, 2017 while in the company of family members at McPherson Hospital. Joyce was the spouse of **Gene** who passed away in 2008 and closed out his career as a Civil Engineer for SCS on the Technical Staff in the Hutchinson Area Office. Joyce was born in Alden, Kansas. She then attended Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas and Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas. Joyce taught elementary school at Macksville and Buckeye county schools. She was a lifetime member of McPherson Church of Christ and served her church in many capacities through the years. She is survived by her four children, her 10 grandchildren, her 12 great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to McPherson Church of Christ or the McPherson Opera House and they can be sent in care of the Glidden-Ediger Funeral Home; 222 West Euclid Street; McPherson, Kansas 67460.
- Burton** **Paul Lee Burton** (75) of Wynnewood, Oklahoma passed away on July 30, 2017. Paul married **Susan (Smith) Burton** on June 14, 1974 in Sulphur, OK. He was a watershed inspector for the Soil Conservation Service and the Technician in Sulphur, Oklahoma when he retired. Paul was a member of the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Wynnewood, OK. He was preceded in death by his first wife - **Georgia Mae Burton** in 1973. He is survived by his wife **Susan** of their home in Wynnewood, OK; a daughter - **Sharla Lunday** (George) of OKC, OK; two sons - **John Burton (Kristy)** of Pottsboro, TX, **Todd Burton (Malia)** of Lakewood, CO; 10 grandchildren; and three great grandchildren - Please send online condolences to www.dearmanfuneralhome.com.
- Champeon** **Patricia Lee Champeon** (80) of Glenburn, Maine passed away on August 17, 2017 at Dirigo Pines, Orono, ME after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. She was born in Lewiston, ME, Pat attended schools in Hartford, CT; Old Town and Bangor before graduating from Berkeley HS, CA in 1956. She married Alfred J. LeClair of Orono in July 1956 and they had three children. That marriage ended in 1978. She married ARCSE member D. Bruce Champeon in November 1983. In 1997, after a 25 year career in personnel and administration with USDA, Soil Conservation Service / Natural Resources Conservation Service in ME and NH, Pat retired as Assistant State Conservationist for Administration. Survivors include three children - **Deborah J. Emero (Tom)** of MA, **Brian T. LeClair** of FL, and **David J. LeClair (Gail)** of FL; her husband **Bruce**; two stepsons - **Steven J. Champeon (Heather)** of NC and **Kenneth A. Champeon** of ME; seven grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, a brother, and a stepsister. Those who wish to remember Pat in a special way may make gifts in her memory to CurePSP, 30 E. Padonia Rd., Suite 201, Timonium, MD 21093. Condolences to the family may be expressed at www.BrookingsSmith.com.
- Choate** **James Hubert Choate** (91), of McAlester, Oklahoma passed away at a local convalescent home on July 22, 2017. Hubert was born in Luther, the youngest of twelve children. He was baptized in the First Baptist Church in Tishomingo in 1939. On August 27, 1978, he married **Jacqueline Steward** in El Reno. She had two daughters who survive: **Denise Nick (John)** of

McAlester and **Jamie Lynn Condray (Jason)** of Weatherford, Texas. He is also survived by two step-grandchildren, and six step-great-grandchildren. He retired on January 3, 1985 after working 31 ½ years with the USDA Soil Conservation Service in the El Reno office. He then worked 10 years in real estate appraising while waiting for Jacques to retire so they could travel and be with family more. He was preceded in death by his parents, seven brothers, and four sisters. <http://www.bishopfuneralservice.com/obituary/james-hubert-choate>

Ferguson

Member **Buell Milburn Ferguson** (84) of Cape Coral, Florida passed away on June 30, 2017 after several months of declining health. Buell was born in Haywood County, North Carolina and at the age of 16 Buell moved to Brevard, NC where he graduated from Brevard High School in 1950 and received the Carolina Farmer Award in Future Farmers of America. He graduated from The Clemson Agricultural College, a military college with cadet corps, (now Clemson University) in June 1954 with a BS Degree in Agriculture Engineering. After graduation, Buell was stationed at Ft. Belvoir as a 1st and 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army from 1954 until 1956. He joined the Active Army Reserve in 1956 and then served in the North Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania Army National Guard where he retired as a Major after 21 years of service. Buell joined the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1956 as a Civil Engineer in Salisbury, NC. He became engaged and married **Dolores Ray Plyler** on December 22, 1956. Buell and Dolores moved to North Wilkesboro, NC where their daughter **Stephanie Ra Ferguson** was born on August 23, 1958. The family moved multiple times due to many promotions within U.S. Soil Conservation Service. Buell held multiple positions in SCS such as Pennsylvania State Engineer and Deputy State Conservationist, Director of the SCS Natural Resource Project Development and Maintenance Mid-West Office, Indiana State Conservationist, Director of Engineering, on multiple international exchange engineering groups, and retired as Assistant Chief of the Soil Conservation Service on Jan 1, 1987 after 32 years of federal government service. He enjoyed camping and being with Dolores and Stephanie throughout the years. After retirement, he and Dolores moved to Deep Creek, MD where Buell established a successful home appraisal business. In February 2002, Buell and Dolores had a mutual consent divorce after 45 years of marriage, and stayed in touch throughout the years. On August 1, 2002, Buell Ferguson married **Jacqueline Jenkins Knight** and they resided in Cape Coral, FL. Buell is survived by his sister **Doris McGaha**, his former spouse Dolores Plyler Ferguson, daughter Stephanie Ra Ferguson, and wife Jacqueline Jenkins Knight Ferguson.

Gooch

Curtis Gooch (53) of Bolivar, Missouri passed away July 21, 2017 at his home. Curtis achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in 1981. For many years, Curtis' job as a resource conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service meant moving around the state. The family eventually settled in Bolivar. The family planted firm roots in Bolivar, and Curtis took an active role in doing so, coaching sports for his children. Curtis was an incredibly gifted handy-man. After buying the family house 17 years ago, it has been in a perpetual state of renovation. Curtis is survived by his wife of 26 years, **Vicky Gooch**, his four children and his six grandchildren

Hamilton

Stanley Max Hamilton (76) of Bozeman, Montana passed away suddenly on August 16, 2017 from an ATV accident in the mountains of Gallatin County. He grew up on a farm outside Chinook, Montana, the oldest of six children. A well-rounded education was of paramount importance in the rural Hamilton household, so when young Stan was of age, his parents sent him to live in town with family to attend Chinook High School. He went on to graduate from Montana State University (Bozeman) with a B.S. in civil engineering, and served two years in the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey - a fateful decision that eventually led him to Kansas City, Missouri where he met **Martha**, his wife. The bulk of his career was spent in Bozeman with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Recalling his own parents' values, he chose to raise his five children in Bozeman, not just for the promise of plentiful outdoor activities, but to give each child the opportunity to attend MSU. Stan is survived by his wife of nearly 50 years, Martha, his children **Cheryl (Will) Shelhamer**, **Steve (Kate) Hamilton**, **Curt (Molly) Hamilton**, **Jim Hamilton**, and **Christina Hamilton**; seven grandchildren and five siblings. Memorials may be made in Stan's name to Gallatin County Sheriff's Search and Rescue or a charity of choice. Condolences and memories may be shared with the family at www.dahlcares.com.

Kopitzke

Member **Herman W. Kopitzke, Jr.** (86) of Boone, Iowa, passed away on August 18, 2017 at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines. He was born in Culbertson, Montana and graduated from Culbertson High School in 1949. After graduation, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served during the Korean War as a Communications Officer. He was stationed in South Korea. After his service time, Herman entered college at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana, earning his degree in Agricultural Engineering. He entered the work force employed with the USDA as a Hydrologist with the Watershed Planning Party, designing flood control projects. Herman retired in 1986. While employed, he resided in West Des Moines. Herman loved flower gardening, especially growing hostas and daylilies. Herman was a member of the Russ O'Hara Hosta Society, the Iowa Arboretum for many years, joined the Lions Club in the early 90's, served as a District Governor 1999-2000, served on the Lions State Constitution Bylaws committee twice as chair and currently was club secretary-treasurer. He became active with the Iowa Lions Kidsight Program, screening over 10,000 preschool children and serving on the steering committee at the University of Iowa for many years and was a trainer and coordinator for his district. Herman also served many years on the Boone County Zoning Board and was currently serving on the Boone County Assessment Review Board. Herman is survived by his loving wife of 47 years, **Helen** of Boone; brother **Robert**, sister, **Shirley Kopitzke**, and beloved extended family. In lieu of flowers, memorials in memory of Herman may be directed to the Iowa Kidsight Program or the Iowa Arboretum.

Lunday

Berneice Schield Lunday (82) passed away August 1, 2017, at her home in Bismarck, North Dakota. She worked for the SCS briefly in the 1970's as a secretary. She is survived by her husband of 70 years, **James Lunday**; her daughters, **Marga (Lonnie) Carlson** of Bismarck, **Amy (Darrell) Hinger** of Fargo, and **Bernelda (Randy) Lehmann** of Bismarck; three grandchildren; three sisters and brothers-in-law; and many loving nephews and nieces. Berneice was preceded in death by her parents, a daughter **Noeletta Seibold**, two brothers, two sisters, and five brothers-in-law. Berniece always saw the best in others, hoped for the best, and praised God to the end of her life.

Miller

Glen Burrow Miller (70) passed away on July 23, 2017 at his home in Guthrie, Oklahoma. He was born in Lubbock, Texas and was raised on the family farm near Tulia. After high school he received his BS degree in geology from Baylor University and his MS degree in soil science from Texas Tech University. Glen worked for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Texas for many years (Bonham, Ft Worth, San Marcos and Waco) before leaving for Oklahoma. Glen joined the Chickasha Watershed Planning Staff in 1989. He came to the State Office as the State Geologist in 1991. Glen retired on April 30, 2009 after 35 years of service. In 1973 he married **Carol Diane Currie** in Tulia, Although Glen was initially diagnosed

as being terminally ill in 2008, the original few months he was given to live turned into several years largely due to the prayerful, loving support of his family and many dear friends. He truly fought a good fight and kept the faith. The last 3 years of his life he was totally bedridden, and yet all who came to visit him at our home were continually amazed at his pleasant attitude, his calm spirit, and his unwavering. Glen is survived by his wife of 44 years, **Carol**, their two daughters: **Brittany Miller** of Troy, IL and **Trevi (Ray) Holland**, and two grandsons. He remained quite certain that there is going to be a Whataburger on every corner in Heaven. He went to meet Jesus in his Donald Duck undies. Because of his love of tennis memorial contributions can be made to The Stillwater Tennis Association (PO Box 1524, Stillwater, OK 74076).

- Miller** **Patricia Ann Miller** (92), a lifelong Lincoln, Nebraska resident, passed away on August 9, 2017. She was born in York and graduated from Lincoln High School and attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She retired as a cartographer from the USDA Soil Conservation Service after 21 years. Pat was a member of the Old Cheney Alliance Church. She is survived by her daughter, **Sandra Lee Guida**, Red Wing, Minn.; son, **Michael (Sandra) Miller**, Lincoln; daughter, **Deborah Sue (J.R.) Venza**, Suwanee, Ga.; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by husband, **Wesley**. Condolences online at Roperandsons.com.
- Mullins** **Timon "Tim" C. Mullins** (93) of Arapaho, Oklahoma passed away on July 18, 2017. Tim had over a 30 year career with the Soil Conservation Service, serving as a Core Drill Specialist. He was born in Hammon, OK and attended school in Hammon. He did farm labor before enlisting in the United States Army in 1948 and served until 1950. He married **Edythe Marie Downey** on March 6, 1954 in Cheyenne, OK. They lived their entire married life in Arapaho. After his retirement he was employed at the Custer County Court House as their custodian. Tim was well known for antique collecting and he enjoyed gardening. Tim is preceded in death by his parents, wife, **Edythe**, son **Ronald Gene Henderson**, six sisters, and two brothers. He is survived by three daughters: **Ramona Lund**, Clinton, OK, **Ree Corbin**, Weatherford, OK, and **Kaye Edwards**, Oklahoma City, OK, one son: **Eddie Henderson**, Arapaho, OK, and one sister. He is also survived by nine grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren and several great-great grandchildren. DeArman Funeral Home in Wynnewood is in charge of his service. A link to his obituary and online condolences: <http://www.dearmanfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Paul-Burton-4/#/Obituary>
- Richard** **Phyllis Darlene (Hansen) Richard** (84) of Spokane, Washington, passed away on August 6, 2017 surrounded by her family. Phyllis was proud of her farming and ranching background being born in Brush, Colorado. She attended Colorado State University and Pennsylvania State University. Phyllis resided in many states and overseas because of her husband's work, some 17 moves in all. She married **Gerald Richard** in 1952. Jerry has been the ARCSE state rep for Washington State for 23 years and has just completed his 5th term (10 years) as VP for the West. Phyllis will be remembered by her radiant smile, her generous love and support and her positive can do outlook. She loved to travel with her husband, read, cook, sew, garden, golf, volunteer, hike, camp, create art work, work with stained glass, paint and play the piano. In her professional world she was multi-talented, teaching school in Spokane and Lashkargah, Afghanistan, was a Welcome Wagon lady in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, Census Bureau worker, secretary, and was a staff worker at the Tika Box Shop at USAID in Kathmandu, Nepal. Phyllis is a member of the Manito United Methodist Church. She is survived by her husband **Gerald**, her two sons, **Don (Valerie)** and **Dale (Rashel)**, her two daughters **Lori (James) Fosmire** and **Julie (Cole) Young**, two sisters and a brother, six grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations in Phyllis' remembrance may be made to Manito United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 8656, Spokane, WA 99203 or to Hospice of Spokane, P.O. Box 2215, Spokane, WA 99210.
- Roberts** **Joe Frank Roberts** (85) of Lexington, Kentucky passed away on June 30, 2017. He was born in Kingfisher, Oklahoma. He attended Oklahoma State University where he received a BS in Civil Engineering. Joe served in the US Army (1955-1958) before taking a position in the USDA Soil Conservation Service. After moving to Lexington in 1975 he was Head of the Design Section where he worked until he retired in 1990. He also worked as a consulting engineer for Bell Engineering from 1990 until 2000. Joe was a member of Southland Christian Church. Joe was a lifelong member and supporter of the Boy Scouts of America, attaining the rank of Star Scout as a youth and was inducted into the Order of the Arrow. Joe served many years as an Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 473 of Southland Christian Church. He was awarded the Silver Beaver in 2008 for work he did at Camp McKee. Joe is survived by his wife of 62 years, **Loretta**, his three children, his seven grandchildren, and his eight great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, please make all donations to Friends of Scouting Donation, Bluegrass Council, BSA, 2134 Nicholasville Rd., Suite 3, Lexington, KY 40503. Hike on.
- Shaffer** **Philip R. Shaffer** (75) of Salina, Kansas passed away on July 31, 2017. He was born in Wichita. He married **Mary Diana Soderberg** on Aug. 20, 1960. Mary Shaffer is a member of ARCSE and was a former Public Affairs Specialist for SCS/NRCS. Philip grew up in Lindsborg and served as judge of Municipal Court, as a workman's comp hearing judge and small claims court judge in Salina from 1984-2005. Phil was recognized for his generosity, unbiased spirit, and passionate political discussions. Survivors: spouse, Mary; son, **Dr. Matthew Shaffer (Rita)** of Salina; daughter, **Alison Suarez (Leo)** of Conroe, Texas; and five grandchildren.
- Smith** **Marjorie J. Smith** (98) passed away on July 12, 2017, at Good Samaritan Society, Hutchinson Village. She was born in Pittsburg, Kansas. Marjorie graduated from Pittsburg State Teacher's College in 1941. She taught home economics, math, typing, and girl's physical education. On June 2, 1946, she married Ivan D. Smith in Pittsburg. He retired from SCS as the District Conservationist in the Burlington Field Office and died August 28, 2007. Survivors include: two daughters, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandson.
- Stem** **George L. Stem** (73) of Littlestown, Pennsylvania passed away on August 21, 2017. George retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service as ASTC Programs, Raleigh, North Carolina. He is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, **Betty S. Stem**; by a daughter, **Kelly Rumbaugh (Bill)** of Manchester; a son, **Dr. Jesse L. Stem (Kristin)** of Smith Mountain Lake, VA, two brothers, and a sister-in-law. George is also survived by 13 grandchildren, 3 great grand-children, aunts, cousins, nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by brothers, **Truman** and **Charles E. Stem**. George graduated from Westminster High School where he was a star football player. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1966. He played football at Maryland and received the Outstanding Senior Athletic Award and the Unsung Hero Award. He was a charter member of the Carroll County Chargers and was a charter member of the Carroll County Sports Hall of Fame. George was a member of Redeemers United Church of Christ in Littlestown, a member of the M Club, and the Terrapin Club. He was

an avid golfer and sports fan.

- Tussing** **Gerald Tussing** (76) passed away July 8, 2017 at his Bellefontaine, Ohio home. He was a graduate of Reynoldsburg High School and The Ohio State University College of Agriculture. He retired from the USDA Soil Conservation Service as the Top of Ohio RC&D Coordinator, previously serving many counties throughout Ohio. He was a Veteran of the United States Army Reserves. He is survived by his wife, **Linda (Colby)**; daughter, **Ellie Link (Edward)**; son, **Chad**; five grandchildren, and a sister. Memorial gifts in his memory may be made to Universal Home Health and Hospice, 701 South Main Street, Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311.
- Wallace** Senior Conservationist **Charles Stephen (Bub) Wallace** (93) of Lincolnton, North Carolina passed away on July 2, 2017. Charles died just hours before his 94th birthday. He began his career working briefly in Cleveland County, N.C. He then worked the remainder of his career in Lincoln and Gaston Counties, NC where he retired from the Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Technician in January of 1984. After his retirement Charles worked part time for the Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District and then after that for the Gaston Soil & Water Conservation District. He also served as a Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor. Charles mentored and trained numerous soil conservationists and district conservationists who came through Lincoln County early in their careers. He was highly respected by his coworkers and clientele alike. He and his wife of 70 years, **Mary Helen** who died in February of this year, put out the welcoming mat for all these young conservationists by inviting them into their home for meals. Charles served in the US Navy during WWII on LST's. He ferried troops and equipment from ship to shore and returned wounded soldiers to hospital ships. He participated in North African, Sicilian, Italian and French invasions. He once got stranded from his ship and fought alongside Army troops until he could be reunited with his ship mates. Charles is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, **Mary-Charles** and **Patrick Murphy**, and one sister, **Nelle Jacobs**.
- Weeks** **Archie Daniel Weeks** (81) of Lexington, Kentucky passed away on August 22, 2017 at Baptist Health Lexington. He was born in Gilmer County, GA and attended Berry College and was a graduate of the University of Georgia. He retired from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service where he served as a civil engineer for 30 years. Archie was a former board member of the Friends of the Children at the Kentucky Methodist Home, and a member of Centenary United Methodist Church since 1965. Archie's loves were faith, family, friends, and golf. He is survived by his wife **Wenda Pritchett Weeks** and three children, six grandchildren, and one great grandson. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Kentucky Methodist Children's Home, P.O. Box 749, Versailles, KY 40383 or a charity of one's choice.
- Wilson** **Clarence Jennings Wilson Jr. (Sonny)** (85) went home to his Lord and Savior on April 5, 2017. He was a resident of Harrisonburg, Virginia, and was at the home of his son in Avon, Ohio, at the time of his passing. He was born in Terra Alta, W.Va. He was a graduate of Kingwood, W.Va. High School. While stationed at Fort Knox, Ky., he completed his U.S. Army enlistment in 1956. Following military service, Clarence earned a Master of Science degree in agronomy from West Virginia University. Subsequently, he was employed by and retired from the USDA Soil Conservation Service. Clarence attended Harrisonburg First Assembly of God Church. Clarence is survived by **Annette Benson Wilson**, his wife of 58 years. Also surviving are three sons, **David Kevin Wilson** (Vickie) of Avon, Ohio, **John Edward Wilson (Allison)** of Harrisonburg, Va., and **Joel Jennings Wilson (Paula)** of Little River, S.C; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

