

GOVERNING BOARD**PRESIDENT:**

Arnold D. King
1900 Canaveral Ct.
Granbury, TX 76048-4370
(817) 578-8177
arnoldking@hotmail.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT:

Julie MacSwain
1024 E Cascade Ave.
River Falls WI 54022
(651) 472-2453
juliemacswain@gmail.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT:

Cheryl K. Simmons
1055 Hazeltine Rd
Moscow, ID 83843
(817) 542-2725
cksoil@aol.com

SECRETARY: *Jack R. Carlson*

2937 Garrett Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80526-6222
(970) 980-7443
pspicata@gmail.com

TREASURER: *Donna Beggs*

P.O. Box 8965, Moscow, ID
83843
(518) 524-8907
arcse.treas@gmail.com

REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS

EAST: *Melvin Womack*
10307 Scots Landing
Mechanicsville, VA 23116
(804) 803-8940
mwpocket2@comcast.net

WEST: *Bill Ward*
3029 Nikol Street
Sacramento, CA 95826
(916) 769-0280
bluegrassbillward@gmail.com

SOUTH: *William Kuenstler*
79 Gulf Winds Way
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
(817) 845-65158
bkuenstler@gmail.com

MIDWEST: *Rebecca Fletcher*
15 Danridge Drive
Danville, IN 46122-1342
(317) 371-6944
becky_fletcher@sbcglobal.net

SUPPORT MEMBERS**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:**

Paul Benedict
190 Nittany South Way
Stephens City, VA 22655
(202)-578-8226
soilwarden@verizon.net

EDITOR: *Jerry Bernard*
15 Apple Blossom Ct.,
Stafford, VA 22554
(540) 720-5644
jbernard.nrcsret@gmail.com

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC:

Craig Derickson,
7100 S 31st Place,
Lincoln, NE 68516
402-560-5804
craig.derickson@yahoo.com

SWCS LIAISON

Cheryl K. Simmons
1055 Hazeltine Rd
Moscow, ID 83843
(817) 542-2725
cksoil@aol.com

**SR. CONSERVATIONIST
CHRONICLER:** Vacant

WEBMASTER:
David V. Buland
720 Lake View Drive, Crowley,
TX 76036-3956
davidbuland@gmail.com



NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired Conservation Service Employees

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Arnold King

The ARCSE annual board meeting will be at the Des Moines, Iowa convention center on August 7th. During the meeting, I will transfer the gavel to **Julie MacSwain** who has served as president elect during the past two years. She will do a great job and is full of ideas to improve ARCSE in various ways. Being sustainable is a major concern, which is directly related to increasing memberships. We have made some progress in that area and are developing innovative ways to assure that retirees are aware of ARCSE and that they are the key to our continued success. Two recent developments will help accomplish that end. Both the strategic plan and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NRCS are in the final stages of being completed and will be reviewed with those attending the annual meeting. We will include links to those documents when they are finalized.

NRCS chief, **Terry Cosby**, plans to meet with us again this year as we begin to make plans for ARCSE to actively help NRCS with their recruiting and mentoring efforts of up to 4,000 new employees. At the very minimum, we believe our newsletter can be used to locate job opportunities for retirees who might want to work part-time or full-time through the ESP and ACES programs. These programs are designed to take advantage of retiree experience and institutional knowledge.

One of my jobs as president is to tabulate the results of our bi-annual election of officers. This cycle we voted on and elected **Mary Podoll** as our next president elect. The four regional vice-presidents were eligible to be re-elected and all agreed to take the job again for two more years. They include **Melvin Womack** (East VP), **Bill Ward** (West VP), **Bill Kuenstler** (South VP), and **Rebecca Fletcher** (Midwest VP). Mary Podoll is a recently-retired STC (ND), and we are thrilled and honored to have her on board. More introductory information about Mary will be included in the next newsletter.

As I transfer my presidency to Julie, I find it hard to express how much I appreciate and respect the dedicated work of the ARCSE Board and support people. They work together as well as any group I have ever worked with. I could write a long paragraph about each one describing how motivated, dedicated, spontaneous, and devoted they are. So, I will just say "Thank You." Most retiree organizations are struggling in today's society, but I see nothing but good things ahead for ARCSE.

ARCSE and SWCS

Julie MacSwain

In May, **Sarah Wright** joined the SWCS staff as the Student Leader Project Intern. Her focus during the internship will be planning a student and early career professional networking session and assisting with operations and logistics for the 78th SWCS International Annual Conference, as well as assisting ARCSE, the intern sponsor, on website and communication development. Sarah is studying Environmental Science at Iowa State University and will be graduating in the spring of 2024. Growing up in Southwest Louisiana, she developed a passion for soil and water conservation as she witnessed floods, coastal erosion, and the effects of the hypoxic zone. We are excited to have Sarah as part of our team here at SWCS this summer and hope you get the opportunity to meet her at the conference in August.

-Courtney Allen

Event and Prof. Dev. Director/Executive Assistant to the CEO
Soil and Water Conservation Society
945 SW Ankeny Road
Ankeny, IA 50023 courtney.allen@swcs.org



Sara Wright, intern

Outgoing ARCSE Past-President to be SWCS Liaison

– Cheryl Simmons

A big thank you to ARCSE President **Arnold King** for a great year!

Moving on from Past President, the ARCSE Board asked me to continue on in an advisory position as a Liaison to the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The future for the retirees' group is looking great, and as new retirees join, some fun is on the calendar.

For my final communication as Past President, I want to highlight how easy it is to contribute to the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees. Web maestro, **David Buland**, added a **PayPal** button to the webpage that can be used to pay dues. It can also be used to contribute to support the retirees.

Go to <https://arcsecommunications.wordpress.com/> and click “**Give**” under the “**Get Involved**” heading. It will take you to the **PayPal** button where you can re-up your dues or contribute to the organization. We are a 501 C4 organization and NOT tax deductible, but we can accept money support and use it toward our educational purposes.



– Signing Off...and Signing Back On

Cheryl Simmons (and wife Donna)

DEADLINE FOR THE SEPT/OCT 2023 NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS AUG 25TH, 2023.

ARCSE Annual Meeting

Editor's Note: The following was recently transmitted by email from Mark Jensen to Iowa retirees, amjens1@gmail.com.

This year we are having a summer meeting of our retirees combined with the annual Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees Annual Meeting (ARCSE). Each year ARCSE holds its annual meeting at the site of the SWCS International Conference. Remember that "save the date" message from a few weeks ago? That was for this meeting which will be held in Des Moines on Monday, August 7th. The meeting will be at the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center located at 833 5th Avenue in downtown Des Moines. The SWCS website link shown below has a map to the Convention Center.

The ARCSE/retirees meeting will be from 3pm to 5pm in Boardroom 2 on the Mezzanine Level. This meeting is for all ARCSE and non-ARCSE members to attend at NO cost. A copy of the agenda for the meeting is attached. Chief **Terry Cosby** has been invited to attend. The feeling is that he will be there but has not been confirmed yet. I know many of you knew and/or worked with Terry when he was here in Iowa. While sometimes, based on my experience, discussions on Memorandums of Understanding and Strategic Plans can help cure insomnia, believe me, these presentations will present some interesting ideas and opportunities for any of you who may want to get involved.

The Awards presentations will also have a little Iowa flavor. However, the highlight of the meeting will be a presentation by **Lyle Asell** and **Kevin Kuhn** on the history of agriculture in Iowa and some discussion on where we may be headed. These guys both have a lot of knowledge and expertise about our agriculture – past, present, and future. Remember, there is no cost to attend this part of the meeting.

Now for part 2. From 5pm to 7pm SWCS is having an Exhibitor and Poster Reception. This will be held on the Main Level Grand Concourse in Rooms 308-310 and 318-320. SWCS has invited our retirees to attend this session. This will provide a great opportunity for more "catching up" with each other as well as discussing conservation with conference exhibitors and poster presenters. There will be hors d'oeuvres provided at this session. You must register to attend this session. Following are three scenarios for registering:

1. If you are an SWCS member and have or will register for the SWCS conference, this session is included in your registration.
2. If you are an ARCSE member and not attending the SWCS conference, there is a \$35 fee for attending this session. To register, use the following steps:
 - a. Visit <https://registration.socio.events/e/swcs23ac>
 - b. In the box that says "Enter Access or Discount Code" type in **23ARCSEMEMBER** and select apply. Note: This box is at the very beginning of the list of the types of Tickets.

- c. Scroll near the bottom until you see the “Guest Ticket(s) for Exhibitor and Poster Reception” at the \$35 rate and select the number of tickets you need.
- d. Select “Get Ticket” on the right side of the screen and continue with the registration process.

3. If you are not an ARCSE member and are not attending the SWCS conference, there is a \$50 fee for attending this session. (Note: this could be a really good time to join ARCSE!). To register, use the following steps:

- a. Visit <https://registration.socio.events/e/swcs23ac>
- b. Go to the list of Tickets and scroll near the bottom until you see the “Guest Ticket(s) for Exhibitor and Poster Reception” at the \$50 rate and select the number of tickets you need.
- c. Select “Get Ticket” on the right side of the screen and continue with the registration process.

If you plan to attend only the ARCSE/retiree meeting (3pm to 5pm), you do not have to register. However, to help make sure there are adequate facilities, like chairs, etc., please respond back to me so I can provide the ARCSE Board and SWCS with an estimated number of folks who will be there. For this number, I'll also need to know of others coming with you, for example, a spouse or friend.

Courtney Allen with SWCS said that she will make sure the registration for the Exhibitor and Poster session remains open until the July 26th registration deadline at the same costs of \$35 for ARCSE members and \$50 for non-ARCSE members as it has been through the early bird registration period. There will be late registrations allowed after July 26th, but the cost will be at the full price of \$75.

If you have any questions, please email me or call me at 515-224-0380. I think this will be an interesting and informative meeting – with the added benefit of getting to see you all!

More on the Annual ARCSE Mtg. From Jack Carlson, ARCSE Secretary, pspicata@gmail.com

We've firmed up plans for our upcoming ARCSE at SWCS session Monday August 9th in Des Moines. The program agenda is shown below. ARCSE members not planning to register for the full SWCS conference can purchase a discounted ticket to the Exhibit and Poster Reception immediately following our session at the SWCS registration page: <https://registration.socio.events/e/swcs23ac>. See Mark Jensen's further instructions above. Our session will be a great opportunity to learn about the new ARCSE/NRCS MOU, new ARCSE Strategic Plan, and Iowa agriculture/conservation history. And of course, network with fellow retirees and those still carrying the banner in NRCS and the conservation effort. Hope to see you there!

ARCSE at SWCS Program Agenda
Monday, August 7, 2023, 3–5pm

- 3:00 pm: Meet and Greet
- 3:20 pm: Call to order
 - **Earl Norton**, Alabama ARCSE State Representative
- 3:25 pm: Iowa NRCS Leadership Remarks
 - **Neil Dominy**, Acting Iowa State Conservationist (invited)
- 3:30 pm: NRCS National Leadership Remarks
 - NRCS **Chief Terry Cosby** (invited)
- 3:45 pm: ARCSE/NRCS Memorandum of Understanding
 - **Julie MacSwain, Craig Derickson, Gayle Berry, Becky Ross, Sanaz Arjomand**
- 3:55 pm: ARCSE Strategic Plan
 - **Mary Podoll, Julie MacSwain**, ARCSE Strategic Plan Committee
- 4:05 pm: ARCSE Awards and Senior Conservationist Recognition
 - **Mary Podoll**, ARCSE President-Elect
- 4:15 pm: Iowa Conservation and Cropping History
Featured Speakers
 - **Lyle Asell**, Retired NRCS Assistant State Conservationist
 - Iowa NRCS Representative
- 5:00–7:00 pm: SWCS Exhibit and Poster (Networking) Reception
 - Included for those having SWCS full conference registration
 - Discount ticket option (\$35) for ARCSE members not registered to SWCS conference
 - Non-discount ticket option (\$50) for non-ARCSE members

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

–Craig Derickson, retired USDA-NRCS

Debt Ceiling Crisis Resolved

After weeks of heated negotiations, **President Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy** reached agreement on a deal to raise the debt ceiling limit days before the June 5th, 2023 deadline. President Biden signed H.R. 3746, the “Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023,” two days before the fiscal deadline.

According to a New York Times article dated June 2nd, 2023, the bipartisan deal suspends the nation's \$31.4 trillion borrowing limit until January 2025. The agreement suspends the debt limit for a period of time, but it does not set the debt limit at a new fixed level. The deal essentially gives the Treasury Department the latitude to borrow as much money as it needs to pay the nation's bills during that time period, and a few months after that date to allow the department to use accounting practices to continue payments.

The White House estimates that the agreement will yield \$1 trillion in savings over the course of a decade from reduced discretionary spending.

Following are some of the key components of the bill.

Lifting the debt ceiling. The deal reached by **President Biden** and **Speaker Kevin McCarthy** will suspend the nation's debt limit until January 2025. This will allow the government to keep borrowing money so it can pay its bills on time.

Spending caps and cuts. In exchange for suspending the debt ceiling, Republicans demanded a range of concessions. Chief among them are caps on some spending over the next two years. The deal also claws back \$10 billion in I.R.S. funding.

Food stamps. The legislation places additional work requirements on older Americans who receive assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), but it also expands food stamp access for veterans and homeless people.

Student loans. The legislation will officially end Biden's freeze on student loan repayments by the end of summer. It will also prevent the president from issuing another last-minute extension, as he has done several times.

Environmental impact. Both sides agreed to new measures to get energy projects approved more quickly. The deal includes a win for **Senator Joe Manchin** of West Virginia, a Democrat who strongly supports fossil fuels, by fast-tracking the construction of a contentious pipeline.

For more information see

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/29/us/politics/debt-ceiling-agreement.html#:~:text=Lifting%20the%20debt%20ceiling.%20its%20bills%20on%20time.>

Leaders of Agriculture Committees Issue Joint Statement on Next Farm Bill

On May 11th, 2023, Ag Committee Chairman **Glenn "GT" Thompson** (R-PA), Ranking Member **David Scott** (D-GA), **Senator John Boozman** (R-AR), and **Senator Debbie Stabenow** (D-MI), issued the following statement.

*"Today, the four leaders of the Agriculture Committees had a conversation with President Biden and **Secretary Vilsack** on the importance of passing a bipartisan Farm Bill this year. The Farm Bill is a jobs bill. It is a safety net for farmers and consumers, and it is an investment in our rural communities and the health of the American people. The Agriculture Committees have a long tradition of bipartisan cooperation, and we look forward to continuing that tradition through our work on the 2023 Farm Bill."*

For more information see:

<https://agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=7626>.

Nebraska Delegation Discusses Work on New Farm Bill

U.S. Representatives Don Bacon, Mike Flood, and Adrian Smith and U.S. Senator Deb Fischer met with University of Nebraska agriculture researchers on Monday, June 19th, 2023, in Lincoln, NE.

The Nebraska Examiner news reported on June 20th, 2023, that **Senator Fischer**, who serves on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, said "the need to negotiate an agreement that addresses both rural and urban concerns could push the new bill into 2024. She said it might take months to hammer out the specifics of a deal that will meet the needs of multiple interests."

Republicans in the House and Senate have been pushing for discretionary spending cuts during and after recent debt ceiling negotiations. Some critics of the budget deficit situation have focused on the cost of the current 2018 farm bill, which cost taxpayers an estimated \$800 billion over a decade, according to some estimates.

Much of the expense of the Farm Bill is used to pay for nutrition programs, including school lunches and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, which help secure urban support for farm programs. All five members of Nebraska's delegation were asked how they square their support of spending cuts with support for farm programs. Several said that while they want to cut federal spending, they would prefer to cut programs that they consider less effective.

Congressman Mike Flood said the Farm Bill has helped keep food costs lower for Americans and boosts the ability of U.S. exports to compete for international customers. "Sometimes we take our food security for granted," said Flood. "Sometimes we take the fact that we use less than 10% of our annual income to pay for our food, which is a lower number than almost any other country on earth." For more information see

<https://nebraskapublicmedia.org/en/news/news-articles/nebraska-delegation-hears-from-farmers-ranchers-researchers-on-the-next-farm-bill/>

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

New Life Members

Kay Joy Barge – Salinas, California
David W. Beck – Urbandale, Iowa

New Members

Mary Evitch – Weslaco, Texas
Joseph E. Williams – Vero Beach, Florida
Clifford E. Jones – Auburn, Alabama
Jesse C. Bush – Opelika, Alabama
Kelly Lewiston – Fairfield, Iowa
Bruce Wight – Ames, Iowa
Larry Beeler – Indianola, Iowa
Thomas Sewell – Strasburg, Ohio

ARCSE MEMBERSHIP DUES Due by January 1st

Member	\$18 per year (1 st year free)
Affiliate	\$18 per year
Life (One-time payment)	
Age 64 or younger	\$250
Age 65 thru 74	\$200
Age 75 or older	\$125

*NOTE: Dues payment includes receipt of the bimonthly electronic newsletter only. All members (both life members and those who pay annual dues) who desire a hard copy of the newsletter must pay an additional fee of \$12.00 per year.
Please submit Dues to ARCSE at P.O. Box 8965 Moscow, ID 83843*

ALABAMA

Earl Norton, ARCSE Representative

Email: earl.norton@charter.net

Local retirees in the Auburn area continue to meet monthly for breakfast, and the number of participants continues to increase. Twelve retirees met on Monday June 5th on the back porch of **Earl and Julia Norton's** home and were so engrossed in visiting that no one thought to take a picture.



Bill Puckett, Executive Director of the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee and past NRCS State Conservationist for Alabama is shown during the SWCS Field Day explaining how the Alabama Irrigation Initiative will help expand the acreage of irrigated cropland in Alabama through cost incentives for farmers to establish new energy and water-efficient irrigation systems.

The Alabama Chapter of SWCS met on June 7–9 at Joe Wheeler State Park on the Wheeler Reservoir of the Tennessee River. Approximately 45 members and guests attended the meeting. Topics included drone and LIDAR applications, cover crop/soil health research, stormwater successes in Alabama, streambank stabilization, streamside management zone benefits, and Alabama's irrigation initiative.

Current and retired NRCS/SCS staffers crossed paths on June 15th, as they attended a day-long school provided by the Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Alabama Association of Conservation Districts at Lake Point State Park on the Lake Eufaula Reservoir of the Chattahoochee River.



Gathered after lunch at the school (L-R): Jeff Thurmond, NRCS State Wildlife Biologist, Alabama; Earl Norton, retired State Resource Conservationist, Alabama; Floyd Wood, retired National Resources Program Manager, HQ; Steve Musser, retired Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, Alabama; John Curtis, local District Conservationist, Phenix City, Alabama; Tim Albritton, NRCS State Forester, Alabama.

ARIZONA

Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative

Email: ckcookson@aol.com

The last several months have been different than any we have ever experienced. Last October my wife was diagnosed with a skin cancer and underwent surgery.

We go to Illinois in early December to visit family for an early Christmas. A day before we were to have left, we went to Urgent Care for some medical attention and was diagnosed with COVID. We have no idea where we got it but had to cancel all plans immediately. Fortunately, it was a mild case.

Then in February my wife had a repeat surgery for the skin cancer. She is now going through radiation treatments and immunotherapy infusion treatments.

We have a River Cruise with Viking on the Seine River in France planned for late July. One of the stops will be at Normandy. This will be our third attempt to make this trip. The doctors we have been working with all encourage us to go, and we are more than ready. The calendar has never been more important to us than it is now in helping us to keep things straight.

We are taking things one day at a time and maintaining a positive attitude. We have much to be thankful for and try to enjoy each day to the fullest.

CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

Email: bluegrassbillward@gmail.com

Our most recent retiree Zoom meeting included the group shown below. One of the individuals in the upper left is **Lowell Kennedy**, an ARCSE member from the State of Washington. The State of Washington is in the process of trying to fill the now vacant position of State rep after the passing of **Ken Kaul**.

I had invited Washington ARCSE members to join our "California" NRCS retiree Zoom group to demonstrate the value these regular Zoom meetings have in keeping their states' retirees connected, as well as the enjoyment their fellow retirees experience seeing and hearing from each other first-hand. While Lowell was the only Washington retiree able to join us, he was able to share his experience with his fellow Washington retirees and recommended it would be a good practice for their retirees.



June 7th NRCS California Retiree Zoom Meeting participants. Top: Lowell Kennedy, Bill Ward, Mark Cocke. 2nd: Chester Bush, Harold Honeyfield, Carlos Velasquez. 3rd: Walt Sykes, Al Cerna, Ed Schmidt. Bottom: Bob Slayback, Tom Wehri.

As part of our June 7th Zoom meeting, **Carlos Velasquez** shared with all of us details of a wonderful trip he and members of his family took, with extended time spent in Japan, Thailand, and Singapore. It sounded like a fantastic trip! Thanks, Carlos for putting together this nice summary along with just a few of your many wonderful photos for me to share in my California report.

From Carlos Velasquez: "There were four of us in our trip: my wife **Teresa**, Teresa's sister **Gabriela**, and Teresa's cousin **Guillermo**, and me. Gabriela and Guillermo both lived in Mexico, but they flew to Sacramento and joined us here for the trip.

We first flew to Japan where we stayed for 10 days. We were on a tour and visited Osaka, Nara, Kyoto, Takayama, and Tokyo. After Tokyo we all flew to Thailand where we stayed eight days on a different tour. In Thailand we visited Bangkok, Sukhothai, Chiang Rai, and Chiang Mai. And finally, after Thailand, we flew to Singapore for another three days where we just were on our own.



The trip was wonderful, and we all had such a great time. We would love to go back to Japan again in the near future. Here are a very few pictures of the many we took.





Three Generations in the Ward Family – Father, Daughter, and now Grandson – share our family tradition, passion for and love of music and playing it.

And here is one of the first songs Our three generations recorded to mark the beginning of this exciting new chapter in the Ward Family tradition, passion for and love of music and playing it!

<https://youtu.be/ZiP1pReCzXg>

“Walking after Midnight”

–Jennifer and Aaron Reeves with Western Lights Bands

Well, that is about all from California this time folks. Until next time, best Wishes to all!

Bill Ward, CA ARCSE State Rep, ARCSE West Region VP

COLORADO

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Representative

Email: pspicata@gmail.com

Richard Porter, long-time ARCSE member and native Coloradoan, passed away earlier this spring in Longmont (see In Memoriam). We crossed paths in the Spokane, Washington state office in the late 1970s, where he was Assistant State Conservationist and was New Hampshire State Conservationist when he retired some years later.

With copious precipitation this spring, Colorado is enjoying no significant areas of drought for the first time in years. Frank Geter and Ken Rojas trekked north for fishing at Glendo, WY in June, now having a leaky boat tale to tell. I missed the May and June breakfast club meetings in Fort Collins keeping up with grandkids, but will catch up in July on retiree activities this summer. This topic and others were at the May and June Fort Collins breakfast club meetings, the latter including Terry Buettgenbach, Chuck Hart, Frank Geter, Ken Rojas, Phil Smith, Bernie Shafer, and Dennis Lytle. Ken and Frank subsequently trekked north for walleye fishing at Glendo, WY and now have a leaky boat and fuel management tale to tell.

IOWA

Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative

Email: amjens1@gmail.com

Thanks to Brian Peterson for an update on Kathy and his activities: “Kathy and I still live in Corning. I am a Rotarian, and Kath is a member of PEO. We are both active in our church and a variety of activities in the community. As with many retirees, we do a lot of travelling. We travelled

- To Pocahontas to see our grandkids’ 4-H projects and watch them show their dogs and pigs
- To Dallas Center for grandkids’ winter concerts and again for spring concerts
- To Des Moines to see grandkids perform in their Christmas concerts, and then go back to see their spring concerts
- To Adel for the Dallas County Fair where we get to see grandkids show their calves and see their other 4-H projects
- To Des Moines to see our grandson show his calves at the State Fair and at the Beef Expo
- To Des Moines to watch grandkids in dance contests and recitals
- To Des Moines, Grimes, and Waukee to watch grandkids play softball and soccer

So Kath and I do a lot of travelling, but we don’t normally get more than 2 – 3 hours from home! I guess you could say Kath and I put a lot of miles on – we just don’t get very far!”

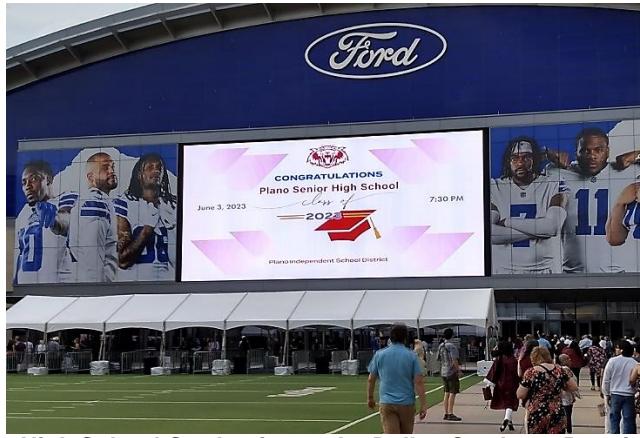
In the last newsletter, the northeast Iowa retirees' group mentioned that they had a moment of silence in remembrance of **Mark Habiger** at a recent breakfast gathering. That triggered another memory of Mark. Thanks to **Lyle Asell** for the following: "Mark Habiger was also an intarsia artist. Intarsia is (1) a mosaic of wood fitted and glued to a wooden support, popular in 15th century Italy, and (2). the art or process of making such work. One of our discussions resulted in providing him with a variety of Iowa woods such as Black Walnut, White Oak, Red Elm, American Basswood, etc. from our farm. He surprised me at my retirement from NRCS with the beautiful horse picture made from some of the wood. Such skill and patience it must have taken!"



Intarsia art work by Mark Habiger

Thank you to **Dave and Kay Breitbach** for the following: "We were honored this year to have two graduates. Our youngest granddaughter, **Jessica Matulac**, was one of over 300 graduates from Ames High School on May 28th. We attended this ceremony in person. Jessica graduated with honors and will be attending Iowa State University in the College of Design this fall semester. On June 8th, second son, **Daryl Breitbach**, received a master's degree from the National Defense University, Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy in Washington DC. As one of 630 graduates, Daryl received a MS Degree in National Resource Strategy. **General Mark Milley**, Chairman of The Joint Chiefs of Staff, gave the Graduation Address. Each graduate received a coin from General Milley as he congratulated them. We watched a live stream of the ceremony. Daryl is a civilian employee of the Department of Army/Department of Defense in Colorado Springs, CO and is a Lt. Col. in the Army Reserve."

While on the subject of graduations, let's keep going with this update from **Marty and Carol Adkins**: "We are having a really good summer so far. Our oldest granddaughter graduated from high school in Texas. It was a night to remember as her class was so large that the ceremony was held at the Dallas Cowboys' practice stadium so they could accommodate the 1,274 graduates and 12,000 or so people attending. The jumbotron screen made it possible for everyone to see **Olivia** and her classmates get their diplomas. Our oldest son, **Nathaniel**, also recently graduated from Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque. Nathaniel and his family will soon be moving to Fairfield where he will be serving as Pastor to First Lutheran Church.



Plano, Texas, High School Graduation at the Dallas Cowboys Practice Stadium

The rest of our crew has been good and busy with work, softball, theatre stuff and volunteering. I have also been doing mighty battle with weeds in the flower beds. I'm holding my own so far, but we'll see how things look in August. I'm not feeling confident as I am greatly outnumbered." We can probably all relate to that!

Thank you to **Ernie Aust** for the following: "Greetings to all. We are still in Shenandoah doing many of the same community activities. I did have a heart valve replaced in January and still do some rehab for that. This summer will be active again with family activities. Our 60th wedding anniversary, grandchildren – First communions, two high school graduations, and our first two grandchildren weddings, in Ohio and North Carolina.

We will be celebrating with family at Kings Point Resort, Storm Lake, Iowa the weekend of June 24th. We were married June 22nd, 1963, at St. Mary's in Storm Lake. It's Interesting that my parents were married at St. Mary's in Storm Lake in 1922. They were lucky to be in the USA as they were immigrants through Ellis Island from Germany in 1920 and 1921. Germans were considered

undesirable immigrants at that time and had to have a blood relative to vouch for you and to insure you would not become a burden to the state, etc. Luckily, my father had a brother as a citizen here that could vouch for them.

Things are much different today to say the least. They were very patriotic, and we have some newspaper clippings where **Otto Aust** was featured as a patriotic German immigrant raising crops and livestock, supporting the WW II war effort. The flatland farming conservation plan included a corn – soybean – corn – oats – meadow – meadow rotation and tile drainage. The livestock included a purebred Aberdeen Angus herd which grew out of a 4-H project. For my 4-H project we decided to raise some purebred Angus heifers; went to buy two and came home with six. That began growing the herd.

My SCS career started in 1955 while I was attending Iowa State College as an SCS student trainee in Storm Lake, and from there: Osceola, Chariton, Army, Oakland, married, Hampton, Shenandoah, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Council Bluffs, and Retirement. When I started, **Frank Mendell** was the State Conservationist, the first in Iowa. The first Chief, **Hugh Hammond Bennett**, retired in 1951 and was still talked about a lot. Having our 60th anniversary celebration back in Storm Lake brought back some old memories. Have a great summer – Ernie and Pat."

During the past few months, we have been saddened by the passing of four of our retirees. These include: **Lyle Luedke**, a long time Soil Conservation Technician in O'Brien County, passed away on March 8th. **Jackie Langford**, an Engineer in southern Iowa and later on the State Office staff, passed away on March 30th. **Joe Ausan**, an Economist on the Watershed Planning and River Basins staff in Des Moines, passed away on May 5th. **Ron Petersen**, a long time Engineer in southwest Iowa, passed away on May 31st.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative

Email: rlull2@cox.net

It seems summer has arrived in Salina, and the wheat harvest has started. Kansas remains dry, and yields vary throughout the state. Over the last several months, Kansas has had very unusual weather patterns. Everyday pop-up storms have been occurring here and there. These are small, local storms with thunder, lightning, wind, and sometimes hail and rain. The pattern in the Salina area has been that all of the previous occurred, but we received just enough sprinkles to wet the sidewalks. However, recently, Salina did receive several nice rains.

In Mid-June we attended our River Festival. We enjoy the arts and crafts, the fine art, and the music. This year we had beautiful weather to be in the park, however, Ron and I decided we have to admit that we are getting older. We did not enjoy the music as much this year. Most of the performers sang songs that they had written, which we have never heard, and will likely never hear again. We like to hear traditional festival music that we recognize.

Kathy Razak, a very active member of Salina's NARFE Chapter, was recognized with two national awards at the Kansas' NARFE 2023 State Conference for her work as the chapter's Alzheimer's Chair.

There really is not much news from Kansas. The Kansas Annual Meeting was held on June 23rd, 2023, at Martinelli's Italian Restaurant in Salina. There were thirteen retirees and spouses in attendance – **Harold and Paula Blume, Dennis and Vera Brinkman, Glen Creager, Duane Evans, Ron and Deanne Lull, John and Linda Ourada, Mary Shaffer, and Baron and Dee Shively**. Our speaker was **Larry Schieferrecke**, State Conservation Engineer in the Kansas State Office, who provided an update on dams being constructed in Kansas under the PL 566 watershed program.

We had two retirements. **John P. Jacquinot** retired on May 6th, 2023, as a Soil Conservation Technician, from the Erie Office, in the Columbus Management Unit. **Jess A. Biddle** retired June 3rd, 2023, as a Soil Conservation Technician, from the Winfield Office, in the Howard Management Unit.

We have had several deaths. **"Bill" William Jack Frankie Rich** passed away April 9th, 2023. Bill retired in 2005 as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Ashland Field Office. **Peggy**, his spouse, died in 2018. **Francis Sherman Hoopes** died April 23rd, 2023. Francis retired in 1988 as Civil Engineer (Water Management Specialist) in the Kansas State Office in Salina, KS. His spouse, **Francis**, preceded him in death. **Wilbur F. Neaderhiser** passed away June 4th, 2023. Wilbur retired in 1978 as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Lyons Field Office. **Twila**, his spouse, passed away in 2009.

MAINE

John Simon, ARCSE Representative

Email: jjhorseshoe39@icloud.com

WE had a lively group of 10 retirees that blessed our gathering on May 9th. **Bruce and Karen Champeon** were back. Bruce is still in recovery from his heart attack but is now up and around. Welcome back Bruce and Karen! **Mary Thompson** mentioned how **Judy Boothby** passed away on April 11th (the day of our breakfast!) Wow! I did not notice that. Judy and Charlie were steadfast in attendance at our breakfasts over the years. Karen and Bruce Champeon are still among the small core of steadfast attendees.

Art Taylor is in rehab from his shoulder operation but is coming along good with only minor pains. **Tom and Connie Smith** drove up from Portland for our breakfast. They will stop at their farmland on the way back.

As some of you remember, I bought a new car and traded in my 21-year-old Taurus, boo-hoo. I miss it a lot already! The new Nissan Rogue Sport is a fun car to drive but is much different. It has so many buttons and warnings that it drives one to distraction! The car likes to go like a bat out of hell! What I love about it is its ease of entry, as it is much higher than a sedan and I don't bang

my head on entry! When I turned over the old car, I felt like I was losing an old friend. When we pass over and leave our mortal self behind, we probably feel the same!

Shown below is a photo of the breakfast group of 10 in May of 2023, Enjoy!



Starting on the left and going clockwise are shown the 10 retirees in attendance: Dan Baumert, Tom Smith, Kyle Bolduc, Karen Champeon, Bruce Champeon, Mary Thompson, Art Taylor, Connie Smith, John Simon, and Robert Lagassey.

Art Taylor and I will be going to the bi-annual loggers convention in Bangor this weekend to see all the latest wood processing gizmos! The show is at the Cross center and race track.

2023 June Picnic in Maine: The summer picnic was held at **Art Taylor's** residence - at his suggestion - followed by a tour of his unique house and its multiple "systems" to heat, cool, and secure his place. As one who followed most of his progress, I can say as an engineer that his place is a unique habitation! It deserves a whole hour on "this old house!" In Addition to his house, they now have a hybrid car which is charged by the solar panels on his roof! Awesome! Art's house has a standby generator powered by propane as is his hot water system. Art produces more than enough electricity annually to power his own use and sells the remaining power to the Versant Power Company. Art is on a gravity operated septic system and drilled well. The walls and ceilings have eight inches of Styrofoam, sandwiched between two layers of 2x4s (a special arrangement for sure).

In attendance at our June picnic were **Art and Linda Taylor, Bob Lagassey, Brian Stuart, Chris Jones, Dan Baumert, Ray and Kay Voyer, and Tom Smith.**

Art gave the group a tour and review of all the "systems" of the house and reviewed the building processes it took to completion. I do not know if Art talked of all the decisions he made and the ones he regrets. The house may be a physical entity, but it really represents (to me) a work of the human spirit! A fulfillment of dreams, imagination, determination, and planning – all human attributes. I am attaching a few of the many photos sent to me by Art, Chris, and Bob. Enjoy!

For those of you who enjoy Google Maps, type in 44°56'40.53"N, 68°37'07.56"W, and enjoy seeing his place.

Of the three meetings I have missed in my 25 years here in Hampden, this is the one I regret missing the most! I will not go into the details, but I was in duress.

See you on July 11th. Peace.

John



Linda, Dan, Tom, and Chris listening attentively at Art's explanations of his air-to-air heat exchanger!



Art showing his air-to air heat exchanger



Art showing his multiple valves to some of his water systems

MIDATLANTIC STATES

Ken Carter, ARCSE Representative
Email: duckheadone@gmail.com

From Carl DuPolt

Meet the beagles protecting American agriculture

Detector dogs have the ability to single out and target specific odors, making them an invaluable tool in detecting prohibited agricultural items hidden from view.

The nose of **Ozcar** the beagle and those of nearly 200 other detector dogs know best when it comes to keeping prohibited fruit, vegetables, plants, and meat products from high-risk countries from entering the United States.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, a detector dog can scan a piece of luggage for smuggled or forgotten fruits in mere seconds — making them a key tool for screening passengers and cargo to prevent harmful plant pests and foreign animal disease from entering the country.

More at

<https://www.dl-online.com/news/meet-the-beagles-protecting-american-agriculture>.



From **Barbara Osgood**: I'm so proud of my granddaughter, **Dana Osgood**, newly graduated from Penn State. At the end of the month she begins her career as a meteorologist at News Center Maine, station WCSH in Portland, Maine.



This was received as we went to press: Rudolph "Rudy" Chlonda (73), geologist, of Amherst, Massachusetts, passed away June 20, 2023, after an illness. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

MINNESOTA**John Brach, ARCSE Representative**Email: jcb1153@yahoo.com

Fred Kollman organized a bike ride from Fargo ND to Stillwater MN, which is a distance of approximately 240 miles. Greg Yakle and Scott Swanberg participated in the ride. John Brach hosted the riders at his farm near Stillwater at the end of the ride.



(L to R): Scott Swanberg, Greg Yakle, Fred Kollman, and Diane Romness.

MISSOURI**Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative**Email: daverastorfer@aol.com, moarscse@aol.com

The Columbia area retirees met for their quarterly breakfast on May 10th. Those in attendance were Dwaine Gelnar, Larry and Bonnie Pollard, Jerry Edwards, Troy Chockley, Gena Michelson, Maurice and Gloria Davis, Jean Herman, Bob Hummel, Odie Swanegan, Dennis Hoffman, Gail Sallee and Dave Rastorfer. The next quarterly breakfast will be on August 9th at 8am at JJ's Restaurant. All are welcome.

Craig King: Hello from Northeast Missouri. It's been dry to say the least. Rains have been very spotty. At our place, the suburbs of Taylor, MO, we had 1.3 inches from the middle of March through April, and 0.23 inch so far this month. Some nearby areas a little more, some less.

Andrea has been taking her chemo treatments every two weeks for her colon cancer. They found it on a routine colonoscopy in February. The Pet Scan then showed some spots on her perineum (stomach lining) and spot on her liver. She's getting along pretty good, but the side effects are mounting. She can't drink or touch anything cold. Her face, hands, and feet are dehydrated, so she has to use a lot of lotion. Her doctor and surgeon are in Columbia, but she is fortunate to be able to go to Hannibal for her fluids.

The good news is that the treatments are working, and the Tumor Markers are back close to normal. **Andrea's** dad also passed away this spring, so that added to our life. He was a fine man.

Candra finished her junior year in fine fashion. She is the Class 3 Missouri State Champion for throwing the discus and the shot put. The event was held at the Jeff City Jays High School. Her grade point is now over 4.0. I wasn't aware it went that high. She is doing school basketball and fitness/weightlifting. Not much rest really.

Weston just finished his sophomore year at UCM. He is following in Mom's and my footsteps for now. He is a co-op student in the Warrensburg NRCS Office. Plans are to work next summer also, then we'll see what the future holds. He loves coaching, but doesn't want to be a teacher, so maybe he'll be able to do both.

I'm still helping the neighboring farmer. Been hauling grain and hay at times. I'm blessed for the job – just takes a lot of money these days. Also lets me be around the Ag world.

I hope all of you are doing well. God Bless!

Bill Pauls: Things at the lake are splendid: very busy, very happy! Still running, although I've switched to half marathons rather than fulls. It was taking waaaay too long. Following kids and grandkids' lives that are super busy take more time now. Lots of sports (speaking of sports...how lousy are the Cardinals!). – the families are coming here for Father's Day as one of the grandkids has a tourney here at Ball Park National. We have a tennis player, softball, basketball, and baseball. We added a new deck to the cabin with a screened-in-room to keep out the bugs. Strawberries were awesome this year. Tomatoes are just starting to come into their own. Very busy with church and church cemetery activities. Nothing like a retired soil scientist going into the grave digging business! I do have a great deal of experience digging holes in the ground – just not putting people in them – a new twist; but people are dying to get in!

I hope everyone is enjoying retirement as much as **Kris** and I are! I can't believe they are still paying me to do nothing and have since 2008. CRAZY! But beautiful for me. Stop by the lake and see us ANYTIME! Either at the lakeside cabin or our "Mountain Estate." Ok, ok, it's just a medium-sized 20-year-old ranch, but it does have a great view of Old Kinderhook and the lake. Later, SCS/NRCS gang.

Mike Blaine: We are dry, dry, dry on Blaine Hill. I am trying to save our tomatoes and our peaches, but everything else is turning brown. Seems we are in a trough that never gets the predicted rain. It is already a busy summer. I'm replacing old gates and posts that were past-serviceable years ago. It's hard work, but I enjoy it. I set a gate post on June 14th. That post hole was dry and hard to three feet deep. Our hay looks like it is making about half what it should. But maybe we'll get a second cutting if we ever do get a little rain. Enough complaining! We have several trips planned this summer and are looking forward to them. The first one will be to Ireland. I am really anticipating a good time there. Later in the summer we have a reunion of all my descendants and their families planned for Hilton Head, SC. We do that every other year. A great time! Best wishes to all!

Alton Taylor: Just got back from a week on a floating city – 4,400 passengers and 1,400 employees. That thing could not get closer than five miles of Belize. Caught a respiratory bug also. Leaving for Alaska on July 5th. Driving and site seeing all the way there and back. Staying at air BNBs each night.

Jim Rickman: Our garden has produced a lot of stuff this year. I picked tomatoes, spinach, and cucumbers today. Fruit trees are also loaded, and I am picking them. Still traveling and have a trip to Turkey and the Baltic countries in September.

On a more somber note, I expect some of the retirees didn't learn of **Rex Hamilton's** passing. He had colon cancer and went quickly. He was a very thoughtful and hard worker. I view the decision to have more professionals and fewer technicians as one of the worst decisions our agency made. Probably worked out for the better for Rex, as he established a very successful seed business, but a big loss for us. Hope everyone is in good health.

Bob Harryman: Greetings from Bethany, MO. I just had my 86th birthday on June 15th and our 61st wedding anniversary on June 16th. We are slowing down a bit. I had to cut my gardening back to nine tomato plants in containers and a few strawberries and blackberries. I still enjoy mowing our two lots in Bethany. We enjoy our family of three children, five grandchildren, and two great granddaughters.

We spent last Jan. and Feb. in the Villages of Florida. We enjoyed Fort Myers Beach, FL more the year before where we rented a house just two blocks from the Gulf and enjoyed sitting on the beach and watching the water, the birds, and the people., but the hurricane ended that opportunity.

We still own a part of the home farm on Elk River in McDonald County, MO. The whole family meets there once a year for a float on Elk River and a cookout. It's great fun.

Frank Miller: I'm getting better after a round with pneumonia. On oxygen and physical therapy and **Kay** keeping good care as a nurse and doing all the chores. We are looking forward to a six-day trip to Garden City, KS to the Miller Family Reunion. Will catch up on a lot of family news.

Terry Hill has completed an aggressive and difficult treatment for a cancer of his spine. His brother has been his faithful caregiver during the ordeal and continues to provide Terry much-needed assistance. Terry is slowly regaining strength and stamina. With some help to get on his zero-turn lawnmower, he is able to mow the grass (praise for small steps). Note: Thanks to **John Turner** for this update.

MONTANA

Lori Valadez, ARCSE Representative

Email: valadez226@gmail.com

Gooby Ranch Report:

The other day I was out hunting gophers. I had shot several but hadn't picked them up yet. All of a sudden, a hawk came flying in and lit on a gopher I had shot. It's amazing that the hawk could see the gopher several hundred yards away.

I kept on getting one gopher whenever I took a shot. In the meantime, the hawk didn't care that I was shooting near him. He just sat there and ate the whole thing. When he was done with the first one, he went over and started eating another one.

Every day now when I go out to hunt gophers the hawk comes. Several times I have noticed he would fly in a circle and by watching him I would see a gopher. The hawk was serving as my gopher guide. Of course, he gets a delicious meal every day. When he eats one gopher, he can fly; but when he eats two, he can't fly.

When I told **Mary Ann** about the hawk, she said she was proud of me for feeding him.

The next day there were two hawks. They were making a nest on top of the hay stack. It looks like I won't be able to help Mary Ann around the farm this year since I will be busy feeding the hawks so they can feed their soon to have family.

The other day Mary Ann and I had to go to town early. We had several stops to make, so it took all day. When we got home, it was about 8 o'clock. While Mary Ann was getting supper ready, and I was getting the baseball game on TV, someone knocked on our door. That's odd. The only person who knocks on our door is the bill collector.

Mary Ann finally opened the door, and our neighbor was standing there with his hired man. That was a shocker. He told Mary Ann that our yearling calves had went down to his place looking for free food. Mary Ann said she fed the yearlings before we headed for town. We went out and looked, and sure enough they were gone.

I told the neighbor that we were tied up for three days, so he would need to feed them. He said since that's what we did the last three times our cattle went over to visit him, they loaded up the yearlings and had them in their trailer parked in our yard. He asked where we wanted them unloaded. We had him unload them in a safe corral. We thanked them for bringing the yearlings home, and when they left, I accidentally left the gate open. And the next morning the neighbor called and said after the yearlings are done eating, they will bring them over again. It's sure great to have nice neighbors.

NEBRASKA

Norm Kempf, Jim Culver, ARCSE Representatives

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

The May 17th meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson **Doug Christensen**. Attending were **Harold Klaege, Dave Camper, Gary Muckel, Bob Engel, Doug Christensen, Dana Snyder, Steve Scheinost, Gus Dornbusch, Norman Kempf, Richard Bolli, Steve Stover, Mike Kucera, Norm Helzer, JoAnne Thiele, and Donna Dornbusch**.

Harold Klaege gave an update on LB-38. The bill was out this morning for a final reading by the Legislature before a vote will take place. Harold thinks it will pass. The bill would exempt Federal annuity payments from Nebraska state income tax. The bill included other items such as changes in childcare, etc., to enhance its passage by the Legislature. If passed, the bill would take effect on January 1, 2024. At that time CSRS and FERS payments would be exempt from state taxable income. Harold suggested that you write a thank you to your state senator if you had contacted him/her before the bill was passed.

The **National SWCS meeting** will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, August 6-9 with the ARCSE get together on Monday August 7. The **Nebraska SWCS** meeting will be held in Nebraska City June 28-30.

Bob Engel stated that tomorrow is the 43rd anniversary of Mount St. Helen's eruption.

Gus Dornbusch said that people are still contracting COVID-19 and that all of us need to be careful.

Norm Kempf said his youngest brother had passed away and he, his sister from Australia, and his brother and wife from Ohio had traveled to the Black Hills National Cemetery in South Dakota for his burial.

Craig Derickson and his wife **Kate** are in western Nebraska and plan to visit Crescent Lake in Garden County and the Sandhills in Sheridan County.

Gus Dornbusch said he and **Donna** plus daughter and granddaughter will be traveling to Oklahoma Memorial Day. Donna's extended family members live or have lived in Oklahoma.

Norm Helzer and his wife **Linda** went on a Sandhills bird safari. His wife saw over 100 different kinds of birds.

Doug Christensen and Cindy just returned from a trip to the Eastern capitals of Europe, visiting Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania. One highlight was touring Transylvania and visiting the castle of Vlad the Impaler (Dracula).



Doug and Cindy Christensen in front of their cruise ship on a trip to Central America to explore the Mayan ruins.

Mike Kucera and wife have been traveling to attend high school graduations of nieces and nephews. **Harold Klaege** will be spending three weeks in Arizona and will be attending his grandson's graduation. **Bob Engel** will be traveling to Spokane and Portland, Washington, to attend his grandchildren's graduations from high school and college.

Dana Snyder and his wife will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. **Norman and Sylvia Kempf** will be celebrating their 60th anniversary on June 30th. **Ed and Dottie Svendsen** will also be celebrating their 60th anniversary on June 30th.

Steve Stover said he had five extra German heirloom tomato plants to give away. He has been planting this type for three years from seed given to him by his cousin. The original seeds were brought back from Germany by a doctor 60 years ago. The largest tomato he has grown weighed 1 lb. 12 oz. Steve saves seed from tomatoes each year and starts the germination process about April 1st. This year he ended up with 30 plants to give away.

Norm Kempf said that eight people, including him, went to Ontario, Canada to fish in Lac Souel. They caught a lot of fish and enjoyed calm days with temps in the low eighties. Norman had to leave a day early to attend his grandson's high school graduation in Bozeman, MT. From there he traveled to Rapid City, SD to visit his wife's sister and returned home.



Norman Kempf had another successful Canada fishing trip this past May on Lake Lac Suel.



Left to right: Steve and Sandy Scheinost, along with Jay Wilson, recently experienced some excellent Walleye fishing at Lake McConaughy, NE.



Rob Lawson, State Conservationist, presented an excellent overview of the NRCS Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) during our June meeting. Brad Sonckson, Assistant State Conservationist, also provided some of the details of this new NRCS program. Left to Right: Bob Engel, Doug Christensen, Rob Lawson. Standing: Gerald Montgomery.



Our Lincoln Retirees Club attendance and activity was great during our June breakfast meeting.

NEW JERSEY

Nancy Paolini, ARCSE Representative

Email: npaolini@comcast.net

NJ Retiree Virtual Meeting Scheduled – Sunday, July 23, 2023 at 8pm to 9pm. Send an email to npaolini@comcast.net if you want to attend, and you will receive a “google meets” invitation. We can plan an in-person lunch for sometime in the fall in Central NJ for those who can attend.

The New Jersey NRCS State Office has moved and is now co-located with FSA in Hamilton Square, NJ. The new address is USDA-NRCS, 200 Clocktower Drive, Suite 101, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

Back in October, 2020, two NJ retirees, **Kent Hardmeyer** and **Tim Dunne**, travelled to upstate NY to visit **David Smart**, retired NJ State Resource Conservationist. David moved home to NY with his wife, **Julie** to farm and raise thoroughbred race horses (Fall Fire Farm). It's a rather windy farm just east of the Finger Lakes.

Gary Casabona, NRCS retired State Biologist from Rhode Island and formerly GIS Specialist from NJ, passed away this month at the age of 63. See the In Memoriam section for more details.



Left to right in the photo are Tim Dunne, David Smart, and Kent Hardmeyer.



May 2023 two retirees and two active employees met for lunch to catch up on things at La Strada Cafe in Neshanic Station, NJ. Left to right are Nancy Paolini, retired; Lauren Lapczynski; Barbara Phillips, retired; and Gail Bartok. Great food and conversations. Let's keep that up.

NEW YORK

Nancy Lee, ARCSE Representative

Email: mlee0006@rochester.rr.com

Just a reminder that our annual SCS/NRCS picnic will be held Wednesday, July 19th at the pavilion in Chapman Park, 1463 Route 31, Bridgeport. The park is located in the Town of Sullivan, in Madison County. Bring a meat to BBQ (if you want), drink, and plates and utensils. Fires will be lit for BBQ about 11am. Hope to see you there!

OKLAHOMA

Randy Freeland, ARCSE Representative

Email: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net

The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on April 28th, 2023. Twenty-nine people were in attendance: **Laurie Bogle, Tony Boeckman, Steve Chessmore, Larry Coppock, Fred Fortney, Harry Fritzler, Ron Goedecke, Chuck Grimes, Sandra and Terry Hough, Terrell Howard, Shelley and David Hungerford, Nick Lambeth, David McKay, Kevin Norton, Phil Perryman, John Pewthers and guest Eyvonne Hart, Fredia and Stan Rice, Greg Ritzman, Dan Runnels, J. Kirk Schreiner, Brenda and Michael Sheik, Lillie and Ed Stinchcomb, and Darol Wilson.**

President **Steve Chessmore** welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Stan Rice** provided the blessing for the meal, and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

First-time attendee, **Greg Ritzman**, retired in December 2022 from the Vinita Field Office where he served as the Conservation Technician. His career took him through the Perry Watershed Survey, Miami FO, and Vinita FO.

Secretary-Treasurer **Sandra Hough** read the list of those retiring since October 2022: **Greg Ritzman**, SCT, Vinita, 12/3/2022; **Mary Stoll Podoll**, State Conservationist, North Dakota, 12/31/2022, formerly DC at Frederick FO, went to North Dakota in 2003; **Kevin Shotts**, SCT, Chickasha FO, Team 12, 12/31/2022; **Jennifer Mosteller**, SCT, Pauls Valley, Team 14, 20 years' service, 1/27/2023.

Editor's Note: Mary Podoll is the new ARCSE President-Elect.

Sandra also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2022: **Raymond Alvin Lee**, 87, retired watershed construction inspector, retired in 2007, passed in Shawnee 8/26/2022; **Bonnie Perryman**, wife of **Fred Perryman** and mother of **Phil Perryman**, 10/31/2022; **Otho Lamar**, 87, retired DC, Duncan FO, 11/22/2022; **Gayle Fortney**, 88, wife of **Fred Fortney**, 11/22/2022; **Allen Messenger**, 63, DC for Team 1, Guymon, 11/30/2022 (in service); **Seth McCool**, 40, Range Conservationist, Lawton, 12/12/2022, went to work 2017 (in service); **Mark Habiger**, ASTC (FO), came to Oklahoma in 2000, left for Texas 2008 and retired in 2018, passed in late 2022; **Loretta Bourlier**, wife of retiree **Bob Bourlier**, 1/19/2023, Pawhuska; **Carol Diane Miller**, 74, widow of **Glen Miller** (passed in 2017), 3/6/2023; **Sammie Williams**, retired watershed survey team, Chickasha, 38 years' service, retired in late 1990's, 3/27/2023; **Johnny Davis**, retired SCT, Chandler, 36 years' service, 4/4/2023; **Bob Gaines**, 83, retired CET, McAlester AO, 4/15/23; **Roberta Elder**, 88, wife of **John Lee Elder**, retired watershed construction inspector, 4/17/2023; **Bobby Smith**, 86, retired DC, Medford, 4/20/2023, 31 years' service.

Sandra also read the minutes of the October 2022 meeting and provided the treasurer's report. There were 82 notices mailed and two returned for incorrect address.

Randy Freeland was unable to attend the meeting, as he is attending the NARFE State Meeting but had received information about retirees he wanted to be shared. **Sandra Hough** told the group about **Lester Brockman** who has attended several of the meetings. He was involved in a vehicle accident a year ago and had neck and back surgery, and sons do not think he needs to be driving in OKC anymore. He wants to remain on the mailing list. **John Lee Elder**, retired watershed inspector from Clinton is currently staying with his eldest daughter in Owasso, OK. **Johnny** is 92 years old. His wife **Roberta** recently passed on April 17th, 2023.

Stan Rice provided the group an update of the activities of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS) in its sixth year of operation. **Stan Rice** and **Harry Fritzler** (newest board member) serve on the nine-person board. **Tom Lucas** helped secure a \$5,000 grant to create a museum and traveling photo exhibit, highlighting the importance of conservation in Oklahoma. He reminded the group that if they are involved in any local activities related to conservation, that six museum-quality pop-up banners are available for loan. The banners can be used to promote the oral history collection, the conservation photo collection, the National Land and Range Judging Contest, Oklahoma's watershed program (two banners), and the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society.

Ben Pollard and **Larry Caldwell** recently attended the History Symposium at the History Center. Larry presented the program about the oral history project and photo digitization project. Currently, 50 oral histories and 12,000 photos are on-line. Through an agreement with NRCS, four additional oral histories will be funded with work starting in 2023. Another 8,000 photos are being processed with a goal of having 20,000 photos in the collection by June 2023. Many of the photos have unknown names. Should you be able to identify any of the faces, with the picture open, click on the url for that picture and identify the person(s) in the photo. It will go to those at the Historical Society, and additions can be made. **Harry Fritzler, Stan Rice, Larry Caldwell** or **Ben Pollard** can also be contacted with the information. Oral histories which were gathered can be accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu//digital/>. Several conservationists who have provided oral histories are now deceased, emphasizing the need to obtain as many as possible before it is too late. The photos may be accessed at <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>

The website can be accessed at

<https://www.oklahomaconservationhistory.org>.

Stan has 2023 Membership forms for those interested in becoming members or renewing their memberships. Memberships for 2023 with the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society are being accepted in the following categories: General (\$25), Family (\$40), Organization (\$50), Sustaining (\$100); Corporate Bronze-\$500, Silver-\$750, and Gold-\$1,000. Checks should be made payable to: OCHS, and mailed to Larry Caldwell at 3312 Cypress Mill Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074. The SCS/NRCS Retiree group became a member in October 2018 and continues to renew its membership each year.

Forms were passed around for retirees to provide their retirement activities (i.e., volunteer work, travel, part-time work, activities, etc.) This information is used for the National and Oklahoma Retired SCS/NRCS Employees Association Newsletters. Here are a few received at this meeting:

Greg Ritzman is still working with producers, cutting wood, and studying God's word. **Sandra** and **Terry Hough** stay busy assisting their church food pantry, providing groceries for those in need. They have two married daughters, three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren, all within about three hours from them. One grandson is completing his freshman year at Southwest Oklahoma State University. In August, they will celebrate 55 years of marriage. This fall they will have enjoyed 20 years of retired life. **Ed and Lillie Stinchcomb** are both retired and have homes in both Hollis (their hometown) and Mustang. The reason for two homes is that they have 11 grandkids (some at both locations). In February, they took a 10-day trip of a lifetime to Israel. They have been quoted as saying "We will never read the Bible the same way again." Both are active in First Baptist Church in Hollis. In addition to managing family farms, Ed is an Associate Board Member for the Harmon County Conservation District.

Carolyn Webb said: "Thanks Randy. I appreciate you keeping us in contact with fellow coworkers and friends. To me, our coworkers are like family. I keep in touch with **Larry Wright** and **Steve Elsner**. And I miss being in touch with **Bartolina** and **Les Conner**. Was so happy for the information on the **Connors**. I was so lucky to have had about five different ACs. We can't make the luncheon today. I'm still planning on making the 5K race here in Bristow in a couple of weeks. We have so many first-place trophies in our age division from the last 20 years. Think about it, who else 73 and 74 are going to enter! FYI **Charles Noyes** is still living here in Bristow. His son lives with him. His wife and daughter have both passed away. **Bob** and I went to **Lester Liggon's** retirement party."

Ron Hilliard wrote: "Randy, thanks for the email, but I will not be able to make the meeting. **Edith** and I will be in our 14th day of our Panama Canal Cruise that begins in Galveston, Texas on April 14th and concludes in San Francisco on April 30th. Edith and I will be celebrating our 56th wedding anniversary on the cruise. Prior to this trip, Edith and I were volunteering at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo from February 10th – March 19th, living in our RV during that period of time. Our volunteering kicked off with the Ranching and Wildlife Committee hosting the three- day 10th annual Young Guns FFA and 4H trap and skeet event. This year we had 570 participants from all over the State of Texas

The following week we worked the Archery Competition attended by about 350 FFA and 4H participants. Then we transitioned to the World Championship BBQ contest for the week of February 19th – 25th where our team, Texas Cowtown Cookers, placed 10th in ribs out of over 200+ teams entered. With all those preliminary events out of the way, Edith and I moved over to the NRG event center to work on the Commercial Exhibits Committee of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Here we assisted the 440 exhibitors/vendors organize, move in, and set up then during the 19 days of the rodeo and worked with all the vendors to ensure smooth operations. Then at the end we assisted with organizing tear down and move out.

So, for the last three weeks we have been resting, cleaning up the RV and preparing for the upcoming cruise. We did have one incident after returning absence. Our rural water line ruptured and 44,000 plus gallons of water flooded the pasture above the house, so after a very muddy repair we had water again. Other than those few items, I celebrated 10 years of retirement in January. Tell everyone Hello and Welcome to come visit us in Texas."

Several of us who drink coffee on Friday mornings at What-a-Burger in Stillwater wondered about **Odos Henson**. Just recently ran into him and **Diane** at a bank here in Stillwater. They both looked good and said they were just enjoying life. If you want to contact them, they still live on the farm at 1615 S. Vassar Rd., Orlando, OK 73073.

Please feel free to send something similar to those above that can be used in the October 2023 Newsletter. Do it now before you forget! Send it to: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net

Many retirees have expressed their appreciation for the information presented on the website www.joepad.com. When they are not able to attend the meetings, the website provides minutes of meetings, pictures, list of attendees, etc. **Joe Freeland**, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

An election of officers for the Oklahoma SCS-NRCS Retired Employees was held. Officers serve a period of two years and will assume their duties in October 2023. **Kirk Schreiner** has volunteered to serve as President, and **Ed Stinchcomb** has volunteered to serve as Vice-President. **Sandra Hough** is willing to continue to serve as Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations were open to the group. Since there were no other volunteers, **Kirk Schreiner** will serve as President; **Ed Stinchcomb** will serve as Vice-President; and **Sandra Hough** will continue to serve as Secretary-Treasurer. **Steve Chessmore** and **Harry Fritzler** both served as President/Vice President since being elected in April 2019. The meeting held in October 2019 was the last meeting until resuming in April 2022. No meetings were held in 2020 or 2021. Thank you, Harry and Steve, for your service during the last three years.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 27, 2023, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30am so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30am.

PENNSYLVANIA

ARCSE Representative: vacant

Following is an excerpt from *The PA Bugle*, submitted by Tim Murphy.

Fred Bubb recently celebrated his 90th birthday. He shared these thoughts: "Speaking of old age, my daily question – why am I here? In the past 25 years I had Stage 3 Alpha 1 COPD, three melanoma surgeries, two prostate surgeries, two heart attacks, three stents to correct LAD blockages of 100, 90, 95%, a pacemaker, and Afib. And now with congestive heart failure I eagerly await each day, still asking 'WHY?' I have my own house – cook, clean, outside warm weather stuff -- my oldest son lives next door. No complaints, but 'WHY?' Thanks for our retirement health program! God is good."

Don McCandless reports that he and **Shirley** have made the difficult decision to sell the farm and move to assisted living in State College. They have owned their Butler County farm since 1960. Their son and his family will be a couple miles away. Their other ties to State College are Don's alma mater, and they were married there in 1953.



Gary and Anne Smith found a place to rest while walking on Jekyll Island during a March trip to Savannah, Charleston, and the barrier islands.



Tim Murphy's 2020 Niagara wine recently won Best of Show honors at the Susquehanna Winemakers Guild 17th annual wine competition, from among 59 entries. This is Tim's third time winning the top prize.

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

Email: don.stettler@comcast.net

Marsel Tingey reported that he is still living with his eldest daughter in Salt Lake City. He still gets around okay with a cane and some helpers in his ears. His five children and their families including his thirty-seven great grandchildren are doing well.

Ken Pfeiffer wrote that summer weather at his home in Southwest Montana is late in coming this year. In mid-June there were four days with heavy frost and two days with rain that turned to snow. However, the 4½ inches of rain during June should mean a low fire danger. Ken is hoping that he can put away his winter coat by the fourth of July.

Stefanie Aschmann is looking forward to a trip to the Azores late this summer and volunteering for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games being held in Portland from July 4–9, 2023. The games will feature more than 400 veterans competing in 23 events.

I recently took a drive to Keizer, my hometown. Keizer is just north of Salem and has a population of about 40,000. The city is now celebrating its 50th anniversary of incorporation. New to me were the two-story poles that front the city hall. They are chainsaw-carved fir tree stumps. One pole tells the story of the town's heritage and the other the story of its agriculture heritage.

The story poles are in addition to the statue of **Thomas Dove Keizur**. The town is named, incorrectly spelled, in his honor. Keizur was the first captain of the Oregon Rangers, the first militia unit organized in Oregon.

The summer quarter retiree lunch is scheduled for July 26th at Elmer's Restaurant, 1933 NE 181st Ave. Watch your email for further details.



Story Poles



Statue of Thomas Dove Keizur

TENNESSEE

ARCSE Representative: **Dana D. Ensor, DBA**

Email: dyork818@yahoo.com

We met at the Log Cabin Restaurant in Hurricane Mills on Thursday, June 15th, 2023.



Tennessee Retirees

In attendance were:

Odell Poyner, Anna and Jack Chidester, Laura Lee, James Sims, Patty Lane, Allen Persinger, Faye Floyd, Traci Horne, AnnSue Wattenbarger, Shirley Childs, Will Nesby, Naomi Hamilton-Johnson, Allen Crowe, Bobby Moore. I heard from these folks who wanted to come but were unable to be there: **Donald Dotson, Dana (York) and Bob Ensor, John Harris, Debbie Brasfield, Richard Bryan, James Creasy, and Cynthia Scott (Wiley's daughter).** Due to a large crowd in the dining room, we were unable to do our normal round robin share, but instead just visited with each other. The food was excellent (with extremely generous portions), and the company was even better!

Naomi has asked for prayers. Many of us did not know, but she lost her oldest granddaughter in a horrific car crash back in February. She lived with Naomi, and Naomi is struggling with this loss as she continues to miss her deeply. Please take a moment to lift her up in prayer in the coming days for comfort and peace for Naomi and the rest of the family in their loss.

Our next meeting will be September 21st, 2023 in Cookeville. It will most likely be at the Golden Corral. I hope to see you all there!

–Traci Horne

TEXAS NORTH

Mike Bogard, ARCSE Representative

Email: mbogard41@gmail.com

From Ron Hilliard: Since our meeting in New Braunfels, **Edith** and I have been on an ocean-to-ocean cruise through the New Panama Canal. I had hip replacement surgery on May 10th, then a fishing/beach trip to Port Aransas with our son **Jason** and his wife **Heidi** and three granddaughters. Our final trip for June is the Red Raider Weekend in Ruidoso Downs June 23–25. We are staying home in July to rest up for our trip in August to London, Ireland, Greenland, and finish with Iceland. Then September 1st will kick off hunting season with dove season. Enjoy the rest of the summer. Stay safe and, above all, cool.

Karen (Rucker) Garner passed from this life on Monday, May 15th, 2023. She was born in Sweetwater, Texas and retired from the NRCS in 2015. See the In Memoriam section for more details.



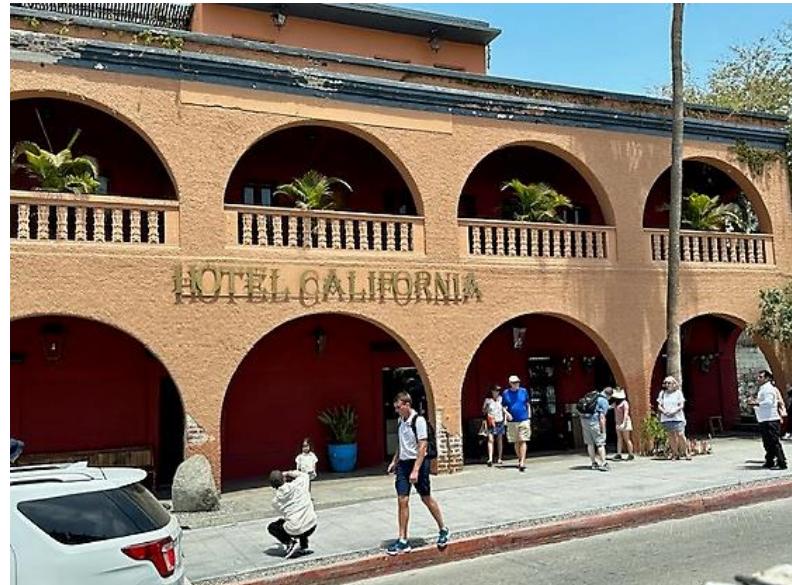
Our 56th Anniversary Dinner on the Cruise Fort in Cartagena, Columbia.



In the first lock Navigating the new Panama Canal on our ship the Ruby



Visiting sloths in Costa Rica



Hotel California in Cabo.



Edith sampling the Hotel California margarita.



Two of the granddaughters waiting on a bite in the bay at Port Aransas Bingo



Granddaughter Olivia with 24 3/4" Redfish

A Dream Come True a World Away / Natural Resources Conservation Service, March 14th, 2023

Many years ago, and in a land far away from Texas, a young girl lived with her parents on a small farm in Kenya, where they ran a small herd of cattle. She was raised taking care of those cows, with the charge of feeding and milking them daily.

"I had strong desire to one day own land and raise cows of my own," said **Elizabeth Thinwa**, sharing the seeds of her lifelong dream first in her native Swahili language before carefully and delicately translating each and every word to English.

In 2014, she explains, her dream came true and Thinwa was able to buy 142 acres of land, now known as Beth Ranch in Waco, Texas.

Thinking back to her days on her parent's farm, Thinwa explains her parents' cows helped the family economically.

"I liked cattle right from when I was little because they provided money for me to go to school. So, I knew it was a good business," she said.

It was her experience there and that dream of owning her own land and her own cows that would eventually bring Thinwa from Kenya nearly 9,000 miles across the world to the United States. Welcome to Texas.

"I migrated to the United States here in Texas in 1995, and at that time I was working in a formal employment, still pursuing my dream and my desire to one day be able to secure a piece of land for myself and raise cows, especially beef cows."

It wasn't until Thinwa sought information through the local McLennan County Extension Office that she gained a sense of what direction to take. She was referred to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) whom she was told would come out to help her implement a conservation program to improve the ranch and her herd. Of the 142 acres on Beth Ranch, 136 acres are being used for the operation of raising beef cattle. NRCS would provide guidance on how to manage that plot of land, and in turn, raise healthy cattle.

She recalls meeting with NRCS District Conservationist **Clete Vanderburg** for the first time, whom she describes as being very eager to provide technical assistance, as well as help build her a conservation plan. He went through the different conservation practices, identifying the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as an appropriate program for her land. They met at Beth Ranch and talked through what needed to be done, and he designed a plan for Thinwa in terms of brush management to improve the grass as well as to improve her water system to make it more efficient. Cross fencing also came up, so Thinwa could improve her pastures for rotation.

As far as she has travelled in life thanks to some big dreams as a small child, it seems as if Thinwa is just getting started. And like her dreams, the possibilities that lay ahead seem endless.

"Truly, I want to be an inspiration to many people. Not just my family, but to other people out there," she said. "They'll be inspired by a little girl dreaming and having the dream come true."

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/texas/news/a-dream-come-true-a-world-away>

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

Email: pegreesewv@gmail.com

West Virginia University will host the next annual Southeastern Region Collegiate Soil Judging Contest in early October. If you would like to volunteer your services for the event, contact Coach **Jim Thompson** at james.thompson@mail.wvu.edu.

Judith Lyons is the new executive director of the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA). As part of her mission, she plans to strengthen partnerships with conservation districts, State Conservation Committee, WV Department of Agriculture, and NRCS. Prior to her promotion, Lyons served as the assistant director of watershed projects for WVCA.

West Virginia is the first state to meet the 2025 water quality goals to protect the Chesapeake Bay and the only state to achieve its goals with voluntary conservation implementation. All the other Bay states mandate conservation via regulation.

The 2023 West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame (WVAFHF) inductees will be honored with a banquet on Saturday, July 22nd, at Jackson's Mill. The 2023 banquet and reception will start at 5pm with a dinner to follow at 6pm. Chartered in 1974, the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame honors West Virginians who have made outstanding contributions to the establishment, development, advancement, and improvement of agricultural and forest industries in West Virginia and around the world. Although none of the inductees are retired from SCS/NRCS, many of you will recognize some of the winners as they have been part of the WV Conservation Partnership for decades. The 2023 honorees are:

- **Arthur and Anna Mouser** (Preston County, WV)
- **James "Jim" Foster** (Doddridge County, WV)
- **Jewell Plumley, DVM** (Hardy County, WV)
- **Jim and Enid Crawford** (Marion County, WV)
- **Joseph McNeel, PhD** (Fayette County, PA)
- **Howard 'Larry' Six** (Mason County, WV)

Tickets to the banquet can be obtained by contacting **Rebecca Williams** at (304-825-6983) or rebecca.j.williams@wv.gov prior to June 30. Tickets cost \$40/person.

WISCONSIN

Deb Legear, ARCSE Representative

Email: deb.legear@gmail.com

Some Wisconsin retirees met up in the northeast area at the Launching Pad in Shawano, WI on May 11th, 2023. A mix of retirees, recent and veteran, had a fine time getting reacquainted and shared many fond memories. Twenty-one participants were present on a beautiful spring day.



Standing L-R: Keith Widdel, Dean Sylla. **Sitting L-R:** Dave Gruber, Vic Price, Pete Lindgren



Standing L-R: Joe Waukechon, Sue Van Hulle, Lori Van Hulle. **Sitting L-R:** Leon Janowski, Greg Rebman



Standing L-R: Gary Stanke, Mary Evitch, Susan Gundlach, Joe Waukechon. **Sitting L-R:** Howard Gundlach, Bill Kowalski

Submitted by: Julie MacSwain

Keeping in touch with NRCS friends can sometimes be a challenge. Recently I traveled to New Hampshire to spend time with **Becky Ross**, NRCS New Hampshire State Conservationist, and her spouse **Julie VanHorn**.

Over 25 years ago I met Becky at an Annual SWCS Conference. She and I have kept in touch over the years, and to this day I consider Becky to be one of my closest friends.

I also made it a point to connect with **Jade Neld**. Jade and I met through the Women in NRCS (WiN). Interestingly enough, I had never met Jade in person. The connections we made through WiN was through Zoom meetings, email, and phone calls!

Keeping in touch with friends is important. Hopefully as an ARCSE member you find ways to get reconnected with former NRCS employees and certainly our ARCSE members!



Standing L-R: Deb LeGear, John Hoephner, Bob Wilson. **Sitting L-R:** Steve Kellermann, Larry Decker



John Campbell bringing dessert



L-R: Bill Kowalski, John Campbell, Joe Waukechon



L-R: Jade Neld, Julie MacSwain, Becky Ross, and Julie VanHorn

Keeping in touch with NRCS friends can sometimes be a challenge.

Another luncheon was held in the southeast part of Wisconsin at the golf course in Green Lake on June 15th, 2023. There were 13 people in attendance, and I am always happy to see new faces. That's why we plan these get-togethers!



L-R: Steve Prissel, Mike Sundquist, Deb LeGear, Howard Gundlach, Susan Gundlach



L-R: Jim Enlow and John Enlow



L-R: Mary Evitch, Gene Nimmer, Mary King, Erv Lesczynski, Judy Marter-Womack, Larry Decker

SENIOR CONSERVATIONISTS

Senior Conservationists have reached the minimum age of 83 years and have completed the Senior Conservationist Questionnaire (download at <https://arcsecommunications.wordpress.com/senior-conservationists/>). 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.

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist
John F. Rice, P.E.

Senior Conservationist **John F. Rice** was born December 10th, 1932 in Grundy County, MO. He currently lives at 1200 Homelife Plaza, Rolla, MO 65401. He graduated with a BS in Agricultural Engineering at the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1962.

He married Margaret in 1954, and they have one son, three daughters, six grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. He was in the US Navy for 4 years before starting work for the SCS as an Area Engineer in Missouri from 1964 to 1972. He was the Assistant State Conservation Engineer in North Carolina from 1972 to 1984 and the Drainage and Water Management Engineer at the Midwest National Technical Center in Lincoln, NE from 1984 to 1992 when he retired.

After retiring from the NRCS he worked as a consulting engineer, farmer, and Grundy County SWCD Supervisor in Missouri. His hobbies are traveling, fishing, hunting, and gardening.

He is currently a church Deacon and Sunday School teacher. He is a board member for a local county museum. He has worked on short-term mission projects with a team to plan and design water supply facilities in three West African countries. He was elected to serve on his local SWCD Board of Supervisors from 1994 to 2022.

You can reach John at jmrice3839@gmail.com or by phone at 660-339-2952.

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist

Neil Sampson

Neil Sampson was born 11/29/1938 in Spokane, WA. He earned his BS degree in agronomy in June, 1960, at the University of Idaho. He earned his MPA in June, 1974, at Harvard University. He has been married to **Jeanne Louise Sampson** from 1960 to present. They have three sons, Robert, Eric, and Christopher; daughter Heidi; and seven grandchildren.

He started work with the SCS as a soil conservationist in Burley, Idaho i960 to 1962. He held the following positions: District Conservationist, Orofino, Idaho, 1962-1967; Dryland Agronomist, Idaho Falls, Idaho, 1967-1968; State Information Specialist, Boise, Idaho, 1968-1972; Program Manager, Land Use, Idaho Planning Agency (on IPA loan), 1972-1973; Soil Conservationist, Land Use Division, Washington, DC, 1974-1976; and Acting Director, Environmental Services Division, Washington, DC, 1976-1978, when he retired. He received the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award from the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

After retiring in 1978, he held the following positions: Executive V-P, National Association of Conservation Districts, Wash. DC 1978-1984; Exec V-P, American Forests, Washington DC, 1984-1995; President, The Sampson Group, Alexandria, VA, 1995-2000; and President, Vision Forestry, Salisbury, MD, 1999-2018.

He is the author of over 100 book chapters, journals, and popular articles, including Farmland or Wasteland: A Time to Choose (1981) and For Love of the Land (1985).

You can reach Neil at 5209 York Road, Alexandria, VA 22310; 703-971-8238; neilsampson38@gmail.com.

OBITUARY INFORMATION

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

When you receive word of someone passing, with little other information provided to you, obituaries can often be found by doing an advanced search using Google, using the full name of the deceased. If you do not have access to the internet, Paul Benedict will be glad to do the search. PLEASE SEND DEATH NOTICES AND OBITUARY INFORMATION DIRECTLY TO PAUL BENEDICT AT soilwarden@verizon.net. Always include the position or the spouse's position with SCS/NRCS.

Surname	Year	<i>In-Memoriam</i> (Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see www.arcse.org)
Ausan	2023	Senior Conservationist Joseph "Joe" F. Ausan (94) of Ankeny Iowa, formerly of Baltic, South Dakota, passed away on May 5, 2023, surrounded by his family. Joe was born April 23, 1929, to Joseph and Clara (Solbak) Ausan at the family farm near Baltic, South Dakota. Joe enjoyed growing up on the farm and farming with his dad and his brother. He attended South Dakota State University where he was an avid member of the track team. Joe married Sharon Junker of Howard, South Dakota on March 3, 1961. Joe worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as an Economist on the Watershed and River Basin Planning Staff in Des Moines, Iowa prior to his retirement. Joe is survived by his wife, Sharon Ausan ; his children, Joel Ausan, Julie (Terry) Ware, Lori (Kyle) Ellingson, and Lisa (Tim) Moose ; and grandchildren, Amanda Cohoon, Allison (Kory) Gioffredi, Abbigail Ware, Emily Ellingson, Austin Ellingson, Caleb Ausan, Ella Ausan, and Cameron Moose ; and great granddaughter, Mylee Davis . There was a funeral service at West Nidaros in Crooks, South Dakota, on May 11, 2023 followed by burial at Pioneer Cemetery in Renner, South Dakota.
Bourlier	2023	Loretta Jayne Jones Ashurst Bourlier (88) of Norman, Oklahoma, passed away January 19, 2023. Lorretta was the wife of retired soil scientist Bob Gene Bourlier who worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Lorretta was born May 18, 1934, to Evelyn Dora Jones and Winfrey Ashley Jones in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. She married Bob on February 14, 2000. She was employed by the Osage County Assessors' office, the former Wright's dress shop and other businesses. Besides her husband, Bob Bourlier, she is survived by daughter, Vickie Epperson (Mike) of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, son, Steve Ashurst of Pawhuska, Oklahoma, stepdaughters, Marilyn McAuliffe (Tom) of Norman, Gina Harmon of Norman and Lora Bourlier (Richard) of Moore, Oklahoma; nine grandchildren, three great grandchildren and other relatives
Casabona	2023	Gary Casabona (63) of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, passed away June 18, 2023, at Bayberry Commons, Pascoag, Rhode Island. Gary was born in Clifton, New Jersey, the son of the late Anthony and Dorothy (Donnelly) Casabona . He had a bachelor's degree in environmental sciences from Rutgers University and a master's degree in Wildlife Biology from Virginia Tech. He worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service for 14 years in New Jersey, much of that time as a Geographic Information Systems Specialist. He moved to Rhode Island in 2011 to be the State Biologist there. His most recent work involved habitat projects for New England cottontail, native pollinators, shrub land nesting birds, wetland restoration, fish passage and oyster restoration. He had recently retired. He is survived by a sister, Donna Dobkowski (Ron) and their son Daniel , of Tucson, Arizona. He was predeceased by a brother, Thomas Casabona .
Childress	2023	Charles Eugene "Gene" Childress (88) of Hope, Arkansas passed away May 17, 2023. Gene was born in Mineral Springs, Arkansas, on February 20, 1935. He was a graduate of the University of Arkansas. He spent 38 years with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in Arkansas, starting as an engineer and retiring as an area conservationist in the 1990s. He was a member and deacon of Garrett Memorial Baptist Church. Throughout his life, he

		organized and served in numerous community and church programs. Gene was a man of gratitude, optimism, faith, and always thankful for his blessings. Nothing pleased him more than to be surrounded by family, friends, animals, and cheering on the Razorbacks. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Barbara Childress ; three children: Laurel McCarter (Mike) , Randy Childress (Kate) who is the current Assistant State Conservationist (Easements) in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Gary Childress (Patti) ; seven grandchildren: Miranda, Walt, Megan, Wade, Seth, Anna Kate , and Olivia ; and nine great-grandchildren: Zane, Mayleigh, Weston, Gabriel, Michael, Everett, Isaac, Nathaniel, and Parker .
Chlanda	2023	Rudolph "Rudy" Chlanda (73) of Amherst, Massachusetts, passed away June 20, 2023, after an illness. He was born March 13, 1950. He received a degree in geology from The State University of New York – Cortland. He worked as a Geologist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service stationed in Amherst, retiring in the late 2000s. Survivors include his wife, Kathleen Chlanda and sons Trevor S. Chlanda of Healdsburg, California, and Tory J. Chlanda (Lauren) of Hadley, Massachusetts.
Duncan	2023	Richard "Dick" Noel Duncan (83) of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania passed away on May 12, 2023. Dick was born on December 18, 1939, in Fort Fairfield, Maine, to the late W. Stuart Duncan and L. Louise (Atwater) Duncan . Dick graduated from the University of Maine Orono and was a veteran of the United States Air Force Reserve. He married his wife, Margaret, on October 20, 1979, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Boonville, New York. He retired from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service after 32 years of service working as a conservationist. He was the State Conservationist of Pennsylvania from the late 1980's to mid-1990's. Dick enjoyed anything aircraft related and even started his own business, "Wings 'N Things", located at Capital City Airport, where he maintained and repaired aircraft. Dick's survivors include his wife of 43 years, Margaret (Law) Duncan ; his three daughters: Lori Schnedler (Randal) of Spring Branch, Texas; Lynne Duncan of Irving, Texas; and Stephanie Duncan of Arlington, Texas. Contributions in celebration of Dick's life can be made to Hospice of Central Pennsylvania, 1320 Linglestown Road, Harrisburg, PA 17110, www.hospiceofcentralpa.org/giving-and-donations ; or Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 122, Capital City Airport (CXY), Hangar 2 HQ, 204 Airport Road, New Cumberland, PA 17070, https://chapters.eaa.org/eaa122 .
Durrett	2023	Joseph Stephen "Steve" Durrett (68) of Campbellsville, Kentucky, passed away May 11, 2023 in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Steve was the son of the late Rev. Ancil "Bug" Durrett and Wilma Hall Durrett , born on June 29, 1954 in Louisville, Kentucky. He was a retired Conservation Technician for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and was a farmer. He sang bass and played guitar for the Gospel Singing Durrett Family and loved to hunt and fish. He was a deacon and member of the Oak Forest Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Tammy Larimore Durrett on June 20, 2000, having united in marriage on April 2, 1983. He later united in marriage on December 27, 2008, and is survived by his wife Stella Curry Durrett . Other survivors include his daughter Andrea (Ashley) Shuffett of Greensburg, Kentucky; a son Stephen (Whitney) Durrett of Hodgenville, Kentucky; step-children Cecile and Kyle Bloyd of Greensburg; and Josh Wright and fiancé, Deidra of Elizabethtown; seven grandchildren: Corbin Shuffett, Mollie Shuffett, Edison Durrett, Ren Durrett, Kynslee Bloyd, Kree Bloyd, and Kaden Bloyd .
Eddleman	2023	Patricia (Pat) Mary French Eddleman (86) of Indianapolis, Indiana, passed away in early June of 2023. Pat was the wife of ARCSE Life Member Robert (Bob) Eddleman . She was born on January 9, 1937, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Thomas and Mary Lyons . She was later adopted by her aunt and uncle, John and Amelia French . She attended Western Reserve University and graduated from Purdue University in 1960 with a degree in Home Economics Education. She met Bob, the love of her life, at a Cooperative House President's Council meeting when she served as president of Shoemaker Cooperative House, and he served as president of Circle Pines Cooperative House. Bob and Pat moved numerous times with his career with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Pat taught home economics, kindergarten, substitute taught in numerous grades, and served in additional education roles. While Pat served as a 4-H club leader for nearly 50 years, her most significant 4-H work began in 1983 when she became the Wayne Township 4-H Director. Pat is survived by her husband, Bob, and their daughters Mary Beth Brown (Nicholas), Susan Gregory (Kevin), Julie Eddleman (Diane), and Donna Sweeney (Paul) and by her grandchildren Geoffrey Brown, Katie Brown Spurgeon (Cody), Matt and Annie Gregory, Sydney and Logan Keil, and Lizzie and Eli Sweeney .
Elder	2023	Roberta Elene (Schimmels) Elder (88) of Arapaho, Oklahoma, passed away on April 17, 2023, in Owasso, Oklahoma. She was the wife of retired watershed construction inspector John Lee Elder for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Roberta was born August 2, 1934, near Arapaho, to Claude Sherman and Ina Ruth (Smith) Schimmels . On June 5, 1954, she married John. Roberta was a long-time elementary school teacher in Arapaho after teaching two years at Clinton Sherman Air Force Base. She loved her students and worked hard to provide enrichment in her classes, especially in science. After retirement she traveled with her John and often with additional family members. Roberta is survived by her husband, John Lee Elder ; her children, Peggy (Geoffrey) Alexander, Kathy (Fred) Laurens, Doyle (Jo Lynn) Elder, Lee Elder ; five granddaughters and seven great-grandchildren.
Fleming	2023	USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee Shawn David Fleming (51) of Tecumseh, Oklahoma passed away May 13, 2023. Shawn was born August 17, 1971, to David and Judy (Capehart) Fleming in Shawnee, Oklahoma at Mission Hill Hospital. He earned his associate degree in 1992 from Connors State College and in 1994 he earned his Bachelor's in Agricultural Education from Oklahoma State University. He married Shelley Grantham on May 11, 1996, in Bethany, Oklahoma. Shawn worked for the NRCS for almost 30 years. After college he worked in Muskogee and Chandler before moving back to Tecumseh in 1998, where he has lived ever since. He was a Resource Conservationist in Shawnee at the time of his death. He was very active in the local community. He served as President of the Tecumseh School Board and was a member for 20 years, Beef Superintendent for Pottawatomie County Livestock Show and the Pottawatomie County Free Fair and volunteered for many years in any way needed for Tecumseh Future Farmers of America. He loved hunting and fishing. He is survived by his wife, Shelley Fleming ; daughter, Katelyn Fleming ; son Kyle (Isabella Brooks) of Earlsboro, Oklahoma; grandson, Kayce Fleming ; and his parents, David and Judy Fleming of Tecumseh. In lieu of flowers the family has requested that donations be made to Tecumseh FFA, 901 N. 13th Street, Tecumseh, OK 74873 or Pottawatomie County Junior Livestock Show Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 234, Tecumseh, OK 74873.
Fortney	2022	Gayle Ashley Fortney (87) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away November 22, 2022, in Stillwater at the Legacy Village after an extended battle with breast cancer. She was the wife of Honorary ARCSE Member Fred J. Fortney , retired Assistant State Conservationist in Oklahoma for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Gayle was born to Cecil and Anna Olivia Ashley on November 11, 1935, in Altus, Oklahoma. She attended Oklahoma State University (OSU), receiving a

		<p>degree in Elementary Education. At OSU she was an active member of Future Teachers and served as President of the Organization. She was also very active in the Wesley Foundation activities. Gayle was a proud lifelong member of the Methodist Church. At OSU she met the love of her life Fred, and they married after graduation in 1957. She taught school at Altus, Duncan, Tulsa and worked towards her Master's Degree at Tulsa University. She followed Fred in his career with the US Department of Agriculture living in several Communities before returning to Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1971. Gayle leaves behind her loving husband Fred; her children Kevin Fortney of Stillwater; Brent Fortney (Amy) of Tucson, Arizona; grandson Josh Fortney (Taylor); and great grandson Elijah of Lawton, Oklahoma.</p>
Gains	2023	Bob Gains (83) of Henryetta, Oklahoma, passed away April 15, 2023. Bob was born January 28, 1940. He was a retired employee of the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. He started in watershed surveying, then transferred to the Okmulgee, Oklahoma field office as a Soil Conservation Technician and from there he was promoted to the Civil Engineering Technician position in the McAlester, Oklahoma Area Office. An obituary for Bob was not published.
Garner	2023	ARCSE Member Karen (Rucker) Garner (63) of Weatherford, Texas, passed away May 15, 2023. She was the wife of ARCSE Member Steven Garner . Karen was born in Sweetwater, Texas on August 20, 1959. Karen began her USDA-Soil Conservation Service career as an Administrative Trainee in Texas and worked as a Human Resources Specialist in Missouri and California before going to work for the Veterans Administration in Louisiana. After getting married to Steven Garner she left the United States to accompany him on an assignment to Italy, and there she went to work for the United States Department of Defense as a Human Resources Officer. Their new family then returned to the west coast of the United States for Karen to work once again for the Soil Conservation Service in California as a Human Resources Officer. Her next position was as the Budget Officer in Louisiana and then when the agency changed its name to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, she moved over to the Human Resources Officer position. The next move was to Colorado, and she worked there as the NRCS State Administrative Officer. From there it was back to Louisiana as the State Administrative Officer, and then then finally back to where her career started in Texas as the Administrative Officer for the NRCS National Centers Servicing Unit in Fort Worth, Texas. She retired in 2015 after a thirty-three-year career to spend more time with family and support her children's education. She was also a member of Southcliff Baptist Church. Karen is survived by her father Senior Conservationist Harry S. Rucker, Jr. of Heber Springs, Arkansas; brother Cliff (Judith) Rucker of Lufkin, Texas; brother Roger (Linda) Rucker of Edgemont, Arkansas; husband, Steven Garner of Weatherford, Texas; son, Nathan of Fort Worth, Texas; son Luke of Galax, Virginia, and daughter Sarah Beth of Weatherford, Texas. Funeral services were held at Southcliff Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and a private internment will take place at a later date.
Habiger	2022	Mark J. Habiger (61) of Salado, Texas passed away in late 2022 due to complications from diabetes. Mark was born July 8, 1961. Mark started with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) as a student trainee in Idaho in 1981. He was a Soil Conservationist in Idaho and Colorado before being promoted to District Conservationist in Marianna, Arkansas in 1987. In 1989, he was promoted to the District Conservationist position in Piggott, Arkansas before moving to Fayetteville, Arkansas as District Conservationist. In 1996, he was promoted to the Area Conservationist position in West Union, Iowa with responsibility over northeast Iowa. Then, in October 2000, Mark accepted the position of Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations for Southwest Oklahoma. In 2002, he switched zones to Northeast Oklahoma. In June 2008 he was selected as the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs in Texas. Mark held that position until he retired in 2018. At Mark's request there was not a memorial service, and his passing has not been published. Mark's father, James N. Habiger , also worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service and retired as State Conservationist of Kansas in 1997. Mark's survivors include his wife Jan and children Rachel and Jace .
Hamilton	2023	Paul Wayne Hamilton (77) of McAlester, Oklahoma, passed away May 3, 2023, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Paul was born to Forrest Columbus and Juanita Thelma (Green) Hamilton on November 26, 1945, in Decatur, Illinois. Paul attended Eastern Oklahoma State College and Oklahoma State University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in agriculture education in 1968. He remained a lifelong Oklahoma State fan. He served in the United States Army in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970. He married Nancy May Brown on March 17, 1973. After military service, Paul went to work for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. He retired as an area conservationist after 25 years. He then became a full-time cattle rancher and loved to check his cattle. Paul was a lifelong member of Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church. He is survived by his wife: Nancy Hamilton of the home; son: Jerry Hamilton of Indianola, Oklahoma; daughter: Jamie Duncan (Brad) of Chickasha, Oklahoma; and grandchildren: Clara Duncan, Ellie Duncan, Carter Duncan , and Norah Duncan .
Hoopes	2023	Francis Sherman Hoopes (90) of Anthony, Kansas passed away April 23, 2023, at the Hospice House in Hutchinson, Kansas. Francis was born June 19, 1932, on the family farm near Anthony, son of Rollie and Flossie (Helmbold) Hoopes . Francis enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1952 after attending two years at Kansas State University School of Engineering. He spent four years in the air force security service as a radio operator serving in England and Germany. After his discharge in 1956, he re-enrolled at Kansas State in the School of Engineering. He graduated in 1959 with a bachelor's degree in agriculture engineering. On June 2, 1957, Francis was united in marriage with Pauline Frances Gerberding at the First Baptist Church in Anthony. They lived in Scott City, Kansas for a short time before settling in Garden City, Kansas where they lived for 19 years. During this time Francis worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as a licensed professional engineer until being transferred to the State office in Salina, Kansas as the SCS Water Management Specialist for Kansas. After he retired in 1988, they moved back to a farm near Anthony. Francis was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Pauline, in 2022. He is survived by his children: Debbie Hilst (Kent) , and Roger Hoopes (Katrina) ; grandchildren: Keaton Hilst (Brooke) , and their daughters, Bella , and Annie , who will be arriving soon, Kinsley Riggs (Cody) , and their children, Kalloway and Kaffrey , and Kalen Hilst and companion, Meg . Graveside services were held April 29, 2023, at Forest Park Cemetery in Anthony with Pastor Warren Stanton officiating.
Langford	2023	Jackie David Langford (80) of St. Joseph, Missouri, passed away March 30, 2023. Jack was born in Long Beach, California, to David and Reva (Coffey) Langford . He married Mary Jane Pierschbacher in Lucas County Iowa in 1965 at the Christian Union Church. He served in the United States Marines. He started his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Technician. After getting his Civil Engineering degree at Iowa State University, he worked as an engineer in southern Iowa and later as an engineer on the Iowa state office staff. Jack was also a preacher for many years at Christ's Church in Saint Joseph. He enjoyed cooking, woodworking, doing remodeling projects, and church rallies. Jack was a graduate of Midwestern School of Evangelism in Ottumwa, Iowa. Survivors include

		his wife Mary Jane; children: Darrin (Lisa) Langford of Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, Sue Personett (Fiancé Steve Cleary) of Green Bay, Wisconsin, and Nathan (Mandy) Langford of Pleasantville, Iowa; grandchildren: Krista, Jessica (Daniel), Collin (Starr), Theo, Bianca, Monique, Briquelle, Brock, Layla, Anthony (Dusti), Brooke (Zach), Katelynn (Mark), Kolbie, Makaela, Dillon, Maverick , and Jaxon; and great grandchildren: Allea, Penelope, Brantley, Ember and Aspen . Jack was preceded in death by his son, Todd Langford . A graveside service was held on May 27, 2023 at Zion Cemetery near Williamson, Iowa.
Luedke	2023	Lyle Lee Luedke (89) of Primghar, Iowa, passed away March 8, 2023, at Mercy Hospital in Sioux City, Iowa. Lyle was born at home in Hartley, Iowa on December 10, 1933, to parents, Julius Henry Luedke and Mabel (Gosch) Luedke . He had been a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Hartley since 1947. After high school, he farmed with his father for several years and then attended Iowa State College to receive a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science. Following college graduation in 1962, he began work with the USDA as a commodity food grader, inspecting seasonal crops such as oranges, peanut butter, cherries, sweet corn, and dates and traveled to all parts of the United States. In a snowstorm on December 27, 1969, he married Kathlynn Raye "Kathy" Adam at the Methodist Church in Farnhamville, Iowa. He returned to O'Brien County to take over the farming from his dad and also began work with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service as a conservation technician. This later became a full-time position from which he retired on January 3, 2005. Many terrace structures and waterways that were designed by him throughout the county during this time and remained a source of pride. Lyle served as President of the O'Brien County Farm Bureau, President of the O'Brien County Extension Council, President of St. Paul's Congregation and as an elder. He enjoyed reading from his extensive book collection, acquired computer skills in his later years, looked forward to watching college sports especially the Cyclones, and learned many things from YouTube. He is survived by his wife, Kathy; sisters-in-law: June Luedke, Diane Adam, Cynthia Peterson ; and 13 nephews and nieces.
Miller	2023	Carol Diane Miller (74) of Moore, Oklahoma, passed away on March 6, 2023, in Troy, Illinois. She was the widow of Glen Burrow Miller who worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, retiring in 2009 as the State Geologist in Oklahoma. Glen preceded her in death in 2017. Carol was born on March 1, 1949, in Amarillo, Texas to Millard and Dollie (Johnson) Currie . She married Glen on June 22, 1973, at the First Baptist Church in Tulia, Texas. She received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at West Texas A&M University. She worked as a kindergarten teacher until her retirement in 1977. After her retirement she had her own in-home daycare. She is survived by daughters Brittany Miller of Troy, Illinois and Trevi Holland of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and her grandsons – Asher, Beau, and Timmy Holland .
Myers	2023	David Louis Myers (82) of Vienna, Texas (southeast of Hallettsville, Texas) passed away peacefully June 17, surrounded by family at home. He was born to David A. and Cecile Myers , May 3, 1941, at Fort Sam Houston United States Army Post near San Antonio, Texas. He grew up on several army posts, including in Alaska, until 1952, when he came to live in Vienna, Texas with his grandparents, Lee and Elenora Cheney . David attended Vienna country school, where students walked to school with shotguns and fishing poles so they could try to provide dinner on the way home. In fifth grade, he noticed Patricia (Pat) Roth at school and – finding a resemblance to Doris Day. David accepted an athletic scholarship to Texas A&M where he played football for two years and wound up working on the college farm. He married Pat in 1962, at First Baptist Church in Hallettsville, then graduated in 1964 with a Bachelor of Science degree in agronomy. He was commissioned into the army as a second lieutenant being posted to Ft. Hood, Texas, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, and Ft. Bliss Texas. In 1966 he transitioned into the Army Reserves and the National Guard until retiring in 2001 as a Lieutenant Colonel. After active duty, David accepted a variety of positions with the USDA- Soil Conservation Service, in Taylor, Alice, Bartlett and Houston before retiring in 1996, as the Harris County district conservationist. David pioneered several innovations in Harris County that are now standard conservation practices: using flood-prone areas for parkland, improving concrete-lined drainage channels by adding vegetation to slow runoff and encouraging developers to control runoff and prevent flooding by installing aesthetically pleasing detention ponds to hold excess water. In 1997, he retired to his beloved ranch in Vienna that has been in the family for 192 years. For the next 26 years, they both kept busy with family, traveling and helping out in the community, leaving it better than when they came. David is survived by: wife of 61 years, Patricia "Pat" Myers; sons, Mark (Fonda) Myers of Hallettsville and Kevin (Natasha) Myers of Austin, Texas; daughter Julie (Reagon Clamon) of Castroville, Texas; grandchildren, Erika Myers, Caroline Clary, Kristen Valdivia, Jacob Myers, Raetsch Myers, Luke Clamon, Molly Clamon, Emory Myers and twins Lera and Sasha Nikashova ; great-grandchildren, Layla Bossie, Abigail and Brianna Myers, Cameron King, Landon and Olivia Clary , and twins Aaron and Aidan Valdivia . David was preceded in death by daughter-in-law, Karen Myers .
Neaderhiser	2023	Wilbur F. Neaderhiser (99) of Lyons, Kansas, passed away June 4, 2023, at the Sterling Village, Sterling, Kansas. He was born October 1, 1923, near Niles, Kansas to Fred and Nellie Blachford Neaderhiser . Wilbur was raised on a farm in Ottawa County, Kansas. He served in the United States Army from October 21, 1944, to December 2, 1946, stationed in the Philippines, both on the front lines and the military police force as a corporal. On June 12, 1949, he married Twila Irene Luthi at the First Christian Church in Hutchinson, Kansas. In 1947, Wilbur went to work for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Technician. Wilbur worked 17 years in Hutchinson, Kansas for Reno County and transferred to Lyons, Kansas in 1962. He worked 17 years in Rice County before taking early retirement. He then started the Neaderhiser Seed Farm business with wife, Twila, raising exceptional certified seed wheat. The business also included performing custom seed cleaning for Kansas farmers. Wilbur came from a family of great music ability, playing in a dance band with his dad, sister and two brothers. He had natural ability, playing music by ear, both violin and saxophone in the Neaderhiser Band of Ottawa County, Kansas. He was a member of the Soil & Water Conservation Society (Arkansas Valley Division), the Kansas Crop Improvement Association, the American Legion Post 0129, as well as the First Christian Church, Lyons, Kansas. Survivors include: three daughters, Barbara McAllaster , McKinney, Texas; Janet Vann , Denton, Texas; Robin Carlson (Max), Sterling, Kansas; six grandchildren, Chad McAllaster, Amy McAllaster, Jennifer Akers, Brigette Billups, Lora Carlson Ryan Carlson ; and eight great-grandchildren, Evan McAllaster, Hunter and Tanner Schmitz, Annelise, Ivey Rose and Oliver Akers ; and Beckett and Brady Billups . Wilbur was preceded in death by his wife, Twila Neaderhiser in 2009.
Perryman	2022	Bonnie Perryman (95) formerly of Duke, Oklahoma, passed away October 31, 2022, at Bellarose Senior Living in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Bonnie was the widow of Fred Perryman , former district conservationist for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (now Natural Resources Conservation Service) and mother of Philip Perryman , retired District Conservationist

		who also worked for the agency. Fred passed away in 2016 and Phil survives. Bonnie was born October 27, 1927, in McQueen, Oklahoma to Hugh and M.E. Foreman . She attended beauty school in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Bonnie married Fred, her childhood sweetheart, on April 6, 1947. In addition to her son Philip Perryman (Lana) of Apache, Oklahoma, she is survived by three other children: Fred Perryman (Lillian) of Edmond, Oklahoma, Freida Beall (Charles) of Bixby, Oklahoma, and Dale Perryman (Sezen) of Carrollton, Texas; seven grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren, and one great-great grandson.
Petersen	2023	Ronald Lee Petersen (75) of Harlan, Iowa, passed away May 31, 2023, at Salem Lutheran Home in Elk Horn, Iowa. Ron was born on November 21, 1947 to Raymond and Annabelle (Maxwell) Petersen in Harlan. He grew up on the family farm near Jacksonville, Iowa. He went to Iowa State University and received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Engineering. Following his college graduation, he worked in various engineering roles in central and southwest Iowa for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. In 2007, Ron retired from professional engineering. Ron purchased the family home in 2008. He enjoyed raising cattle and more recently wild turkeys and peacocks. He took great pride in fixing up the land, making sure he left it better than when he acquired it. He is survived by his sisters: Beverly Petersen and Marlene Wahl and their children; many great-nieces and great-nephews. Ron never married or had children of his own, but his nephews and niece held a very special place in his heart.
Porter	2023	Richard Lewis Porter (96) of Longmont, Colorado, passed away at the TRU Hospice Care Center in Longmont on March 31, 2023. Richard was born January 3, 1927, in Lewis, Colorado to Charles and Sonora (Lewis) Porter . Eager to become a part of the military effort in World War II, Rich was accepted in an Army Reserve program available to select high school grads. At age 17 he entered college at Brookings, South Dakota, for an intensive two years of training in specialized communications. As he finished and was ready to be assigned for active duty, the war ended and there was no need for all his training. However, his service time did provide him with the benefit of the GI bill for which he was forever grateful. He first attended Fort Lewis College, then following his love of agriculture he finished with a degree in Science with special emphasis on Agronomy at the University of California, Berkeley. While attending school he married the love of his life, Betty Lou Downen , also of Lewis, Colorado. Betty was not only his love but his support through college. They became the parents of two daughters, Jana and Lori . Immediately after graduation Richard found employment with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service and that became his profession for the next 31 years. He served with a state survey team, then as an Area Conservationist. He then served as an Assistant State Conservationist in Spokane, Washington. Then his appointment as the State Conservationist resulted in his move to Durham, New Hampshire, moving from one coast to the other. After six years in New Hampshire, he and Betty decided it was time to retire and move back to their beloved state of Colorado. But he never retired. After trying several enterprises, he ended up as the highly acclaimed volunteer landscaper for the flower beds at the complex where they lived, and the golf course where they played in Longmont. After losing Betty in 2014 following 63 years of marriage, Rich managed independent living with the assistance of Sammy, his 3-legged cat. Sammy was his boss and his constant companion. He is survived by his two daughters, Jana Stoltz of Loveland, Colorado, and Lori Bradford (Bill) of Estes Park, Colorado; two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Rich is predeceased by his wife and son-in-law Bob Stoltz . As a summary of his long and productive life, in his own words, Rich said: "I would like to be known as a steward of all natural resources, particularly soil and water." All who knew and loved Richard, with his kind and gentle nature, know that he truly lived this motto.
Selvia	2022	William "Bill" Derick Selvia (86) of Bella Vista, Arkansas, passed away December 5, 2022. He was the husband of retired USDA-Soil Conservation Service employee Phyllis J. Selvia who worked in the Salina State Office and retired in 1994. Bill was born on October 19, 1936. An obituary for Bill was not published
Slowik	2023	USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service employee Victor William Slowik (56) of Burleson, Texas, passed away unexpectedly at his home on May 8, 2023. Victor was born on February 14th, 1967, to Viktor Adalbert Slowik and Rosario Lozano Slowik in El Paso, Texas. He attended the University of Texas A&M, where he earned his degree in Agricultural Engineering in May of 1991. While at A&M, Victor joined the student-led Corps of Cadets in appreciation of the structure and discipline it provided. Later, Victor also completed 40 hours of graduate coursework at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Victor worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service as an engineer, first in Clinton, Oklahoma and then Woodward, Oklahoma. In 1996 he transferred to Design Staff at the Oklahoma State Office. Between 2009 and 2016 he served as Multi-State Design Engineer (MSDE). He provided design support services to Kansas and Nebraska NRCS and supported design activities in Oklahoma. He served as the CADD contact for Oklahoma and aided Kansas and Nebraska as needed. He served on a team preparing national policy and guidance for LiDAR data usage. In 2019 he became a Supervisory Civil Engineer at the Soil Mechanics Lab in Fort Worth, Texas. There he oversaw a team that conducted various tests and prepared reports with results, interpretations, and recommendations as appropriate for the planned construction. He was committed to his position and gave it his all, despite declining health in the last few months. Victor is survived by his mother, Rosario L. Slowik and brother, Paul Slowik . Services were held May 15, 2023, at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in El Paso, Texas.
Smith	2023	Bobby Joe Smith (86) of Medford, Oklahoma, passed away peacefully on April 20, 2023, in Wakita, Oklahoma. Bob was born December 12, 1936, to Wilbert and Lella Smith at their home in Lexington, Oklahoma. He went to Oklahoma A&M in Stillwater, Oklahoma in the fall of 1955 and graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1959. If you noticed, the university changed names while he was there, and this was always a big deal to Bob. He met his future wife, Milly , in 4-H while attending high school, and they married on June 13, 1958, in Maguire at the Baptist Church. Bob started his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Anadarko, Oklahoma in 1959. He later worked in Carnegie and then in Medford, Oklahoma, where he was the District Conservationist. He retired in 1990. In addition to his government career, he worked in ministry beginning in 1970. After his government retirement he served full time at Nash, Medford, and Wakita, Oklahoma. He was affectionally known as Bro Bob all over Grant County and beyond. He even had it on his license plate. He is survived by Milly , his wife of 64 1/2 years; his two boys and his two girls, Vicki Nachtigall (Paul) of Pampa, Texas, Alan Smith of Coweta, Oklahoma, Mark Smith of Ruston, Louisiana, and Gina Lambillotte (Daniel) of Jenks, Oklahoma; grandchildren, Candice, Chandra, Charity, Chasity, Joshua , and Hannah ; fifteen great grandchildren; and two great-great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by one grandchild, Alexa .
Smith	2023	Hugh Allen Smith (89) of Temple, Texas, passed away June 16, 2023, at Baylor Scott and White Hospital in Temple. Hugh was born January 31, 1934, in Jarrell, Texas, to Bernard Carl Smith and Laura (Olive) McWilliams Smith . He attended Texas A&M College and graduated in 1955 earning a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering. While

		<p>attending Texas A&M, he met the love of his life and married Jo Annabeth Everett at the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods on the campus of Texas Woman's University on June 16th, 1956. They were reunited in Heaven on their 67th anniversary. Jo Annabeth passed away in 2011. They lived in many places, including Ft. Benning, Georgia, Tulia, Texas and Waco, Texas before settling in Temple, Texas. Where he worked as a professional engineer with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). He retired from the SCS in 1994 and started a professional engineering and land surveying business. He took great pride in planning, designing, and supervising the construction of agricultural projects such as ponds and terraces. He retired from all professional work in 2004. Hugh also served in the United States Army, Army Reserves, and Texas National Guard. These activities took him to places across the United States. At one point his unit served as support for the 82nd Airborne Division and Hugh was required to qualify and make a number of parachute jumps with his unit. Once when asked what he thought about doing this, he replied, "I didn't much think about it. I was doing my duty." He retired from military service with the rank of full colonel. He was a St. Paul United Methodist Church in Temple member for over 50 years. Hugh had many interests including coin collecting, coaching ball teams, woodworking, history (especially military), camping, enjoying the antics of his dogs, and working in the yard and Temple Wildcat Football. Hugh is survived by his sons, Dennis A. Smith (Debra Koslan) of Seadrift, Texas, Bryan C. Smith (Karla) of Marlin, Texas, Bruce K. Smith of Houston, Texas, and Hugh H. "Buck" Cueni-Smith (Colleen) of Independence, Missouri, and his daughter, Susan E. Smith of Temple; grandchildren Brandi Smith, Jacob Smith, Rachel McNally, Reagan Smith, Kendall Smith, Joshua Smith, Annika Cueni-Smith, Elizabeth Cueni-Smith, and Benjamin Cueni-Smith; and three great-grandchildren: Alison Young, John Luke McNally, and Lyla Kate McNally.</p>
Spofford	2023	Sharon Mae Spofford (79) of Soap Lake, Washington, passed away May 21, 2023. Sharon was the wife of ARCSE member Thomas "Tom" L. Spofford , former Irrigation Engineer at the National Water and Climate Center in Portland, Oregon. Tom retired in 2006. Sharon was born June 13, 1943, to Lois Lorraine and Alan Rood in Clearfield, Iowa. She worked for various financial companies such as a teller at Security Bank in Ephrata, Washington, Branch manager of Washington Mutual in Quincy, Washington and teller at Chase bank in Ephrata. Her career led to various bookkeeping jobs in the Ephrata area as well as in Vancouver, Washington. Sharon and Tom saw much of our country and history through the years. Her favorite break away was the Oregon coast and northern Nevada. Of all the historic sites and parks visited throughout the nation her favorite was Bryce Canyon in Utah. Besides her husband Tom, she leaves behind four children: Mike Beavers (Traci) , Ephrata; Lori Davis , Yakima, Washington; Amy Kaizerman , Salem, Oregon, and Cory Voss (Mark) Princeton, Idaho; as well as eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A Celebration of Life will likely be held around the end of July
Tracy	2023	ARCSE Life Member Rex Orr Tracy (85) of Cary, North Carolina, passed away on April 25, 2023. He was born March 27, 1938. Rex was a soil conservationist for the USDA-Soil Conservationist Service (SCS). He served as State Conservationist in Massachusetts and later was a Management Analyst at SCS national headquarters in Washington, DC. He retired in 1996. He is survived by his wife Marcia Jean Tracy (Jean) and daughters.
Voss	2023	Senior Conservationist and Lifetime and Honorary ARCSE Member Earl E. Voss (95) of Champaign, Illinois, passed away peacefully May 13th at home. Earl was born on June 25, 1927, in Paris, Illinois to Earl H. Voss and Comaleta Gwendolia (Jones) Voss . In 1928, they moved to Voss' homeplace at Milan, Indiana. He joined the Navy after high school, serving in World War II. He was discharged in 1946. As a WWII veteran, he took part in the Honors Flight in October 2011. Earl attended Purdue University from 1947 to 1951 and majored in Soil Science. Earl married Barbara Ann (Waters) Voss in Versailles, Illinois, on June 4, 1955. They enjoyed nearly 68 years of happy marriage. She lovingly cared for him after he was diagnosed in December 2022 of Acute Myeloid Leukemia. He farmed with his dad in Milan Indiana from 1951 to 1956. In May 1956, he began employment with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Scientist conducting soil surveys in southern and central Indiana. He transferred to Champaign, Illinois from Greencastle, Indiana in 1968 and served as Assistant State Soil Scientist until 1972. He was the State Soil Scientist from 1972 until his retirement in 1988. After his retirement, he provided consulting services for septic system soil evaluations for another 17 years until the age of 88. Earl and Barbara are long term members of St. John Lutheran Church in Champaign. Earl was an active member of Kiwanis. He was also a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, The American Society of Agronomy, and The Soil Science Society of America since 1960. He was also a charter member of the Illinois Soils Classifiers Association established in 1975. Earl had a passion for the outdoors that included many fishing trips, family vacations to the beaches of Florida and the mountains of the American West, and his work in his own yard and garden. Earl and Barbara also enjoyed many cruises with family and friends, including a special cruise to the Holy Land. They were dedicated Illini football, basketball and volleyball supporters and attended Rebounders as well as many tailgates with friends. Earl is survived by his wife, Barbara Voss of Champaign; son, Todd Voss (Elizabeth) of New York City; daughter Tina Wolf of Dallas, Texas; and grandchildren Katie Wolf, David Voss, and Nicholas Voss . Memorials may be sent to St. John Lutheran School or the St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.
Wade	2023	John Edward Wade (89) of Gilmer, Texas, passed away February 20, 2023. John was born in Kelsey, Texas on November 30, 1933, to Jasper Clifford Wade and Lola Ault Wade . He was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On April 9, 1958, he met Francis Jane Wade and married on August 29, 1958. They were sealed in the Dallas Temple on August 28, 1999. They were married for 63 ½ years until her death in 2021. After high school, John joined the United States Army where he served in Korea as a helicopter and Aircraft mechanic. After serving for three years John attended the University of Southern Arkansas where he graduated in 1961 with a degree in Petroleum Engineering and Geology. Upon graduation, John went to work at Magnet Cove in Arkansas where he worked in the mines. Later he became employed by the Texas Department of Food and Drug Inspector where he traveled across Texas. While living in Plainview, Texas John received a call to help design and build the dam at Millwood Lake in Arkansas. After completion of the Lake Project, John went to work for Arkansas Oil & Gas in El Dorado, Arkansas. Four years later John was asked to come back to the family farm by his father due to an injury he had. John came home and took over the dairy farm with his three sons for 19 years. After selling the farm John went to work for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in Groesbeck and Gilmer, Texas where he was employed for 33 years. John retired on June 28, 2019, at the age of 85. John is survived by his sons Steve Wade (Sandy), Alan Wade (Debbie), and Chad Wade all of Gilmer; seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his wife Jane Wade. A graveyard service was held February 24, 2023 at Kelsey Cemetery with Bishop Dennis Means officiating.

Wall	2023	Joyce Matous Wall (90) of Temple, Texas passed away June 8, 2023, in a Temple hospital. Joyce was born December 8, 1932, in Ballinger, Texas, the daughter of Frank and Dolly (Hamilton) Sharp . She married William (Bill) Matous in 1951. He preceded her in death in 1995. She married LeRoy Wall in 1996, he preceded her in death in 2010. Joyce worked many years for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service at the Texas State Office in Temple. She was a long-time Baptist. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Belton, Texas. She was an accomplished artist and enjoyed playing Canasta. She was the Contributing Editor on travel for a local newspaper. Survivors include one daughter Cathy Stewart (Randy) of Bryan, Texas; two sons Michael Matous (Mary) of Ft. Worth, Texas and Bruce Matous (Ann) of Belton, Texas; eight grandchildren, Todd Stewart, Tyson Stewart, Jordan Matous, Madison Matous, Morgan Matous, Matt Matous, Kate Richter, and Suzanna Richter ; five great-grandchildren, Haley, Lily, Ian, Ellie and Charley ; and one great-great-grandchild, Carter .
Williams	2023	Sammie Joe Williams (84) of Alex, Oklahoma, passed away peacefully March 23, 2023, after a brief battle with stage 4 lymphoma, in his home with his son and nephew lovingly by his side. He married Wilma Rodgers on May 13, 1962. Sammie worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service for more than 38 years. His survey team was responsible for many flood control projects on most creeks and tributaries across the entire state. He was extremely proud of their work and had a story to share when crossing every bridge while traveling with his family. Sammie's true passion was on the farm. Upon retirement and taking over the Rodgers family farm, Sammie "relaxed" by growing wheat and alfalfa and operating an Angus cow/calf herd. Sammie was preceded in death by his wife, Wilma. He is survived by his son Timothy Jay Williams of Alex; grandchildren Jayma Lively of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Jordan McArthur also of Oklahoma City; JaCoby Williams ; great-granddaughters Rowan and Britta ; and Daughter-in-law Kelly Williams of Edmond, Oklahoma.