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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired Conservation Service Employees

Vol. 51, No. 4 July/August 2024

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Julie MacSwain, ARCSE President

On behalf of your ARCSE Governing Board and Board of Advisors, I hope that you are enjoying your retirement with your friends, family, and community.

The 2024 Soil and Water Conservation Society International Annual Conference will be held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on Sunday, July 21st through Wednesday, July 24th. For many years, ARCSE is keeping its tradition of holding our annual meeting/board meeting in conjunction with the SWCS meeting.

This year's annual meeting will be held on Monday, July 22nd, from 1:30pm – 5:00pm at the Sheraton, 2101 N. Oak Street, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. To review the agenda for our meeting, please visit our ARCSE website at <https://arcse.org/annual-meeting/>.

After the ARCSE meeting, we are invited to attend the SWCS poster session from 5:00 – 7:00pm. Hors d'oeuvres will be available to munch on. There is no cost to attend the ARCSE meeting from 1:30pm – 5:00pm. If you want to stay and attend the SWCS poster session, enjoy hors d'oeuvres, and have the time to visit with retirees as well as SWCS members, there will be a charge of \$35.

Instructions for registering for hors d'oeuvres and poster session after June 3rd:

1. Visit <https://registration.socio.events/e/swcs2024>
2. In the box that says "Enter Access or Discount Code" type in 24ARCSEMEMBERLATE and select "apply."
3. The "Guest Ticket(s) for Exhibitor and Poster Reception" at the \$35 rate will show up at the top—select the number of tickets you need.
4. Select "Get Ticket" on the right side of the screen and continue with the registration process.

Please note that you do NOT have to be an ARCSE or SWCS member to attend. I hope to see you on July 22nd.

Since ARCSE was founded in 1974, we have enjoyed the participation of thousands of resource conservation professionals and support staff – reaching all the way back to the 1930's founding of the Soil Conservation Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps, and forward to the cutting edge of today's conservation programs.

Please join me in 2024 to celebrate our 50th anniversary of ARCSE. We at ARCSE remain committed to the future of conservation and to the people who will make it happen. I, like you, feel blessed to have worked for an agency in which people truly care about each other, and where friends continue to stay in touch as the years fly by.

Finally, please help ARCSE grow by sharing information about ARCSE and how to join (<https://arcse.org/join/>). The best way to keep our organization fully functional in the next 50 years is by growing our membership. Thank you in advance for your assistance!

If you are interested in attending these sessions, please visit the SWCS website at <https://www.swcs.org/events/conferences/2024-annual-conference/> to learn more.

Thank you! –Julie

Back to Basics Training for State Reps a Success!

The ARCSE board held its first training session for state representatives on May 17th. Twenty-four state representatives and board members participated on Zoom, where we discussed roles and responsibilities and other basic duties, such as communications and the importance of a strong relationship with the State Office and State Conservationist. **Craig Derickson** and **Bill Ward** updated us on the status of the mentoring project with NRCS and provided suggestions on helping to move forward when states are ready. Special thanks to **Mark Jensen** from Iowa for sharing his tips on

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES

how to successfully reach out to those retirees you have lost touch with and how to recruit new ARCSE members. Iowa has been one of the leading states in recruitment in the past year. ARCSE's next training opportunity will be at the SWCS Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach where we will talk about the basics of mentoring. If you have ideas for future training sessions or would like to serve on a planning committee, please contact your regional ARCSE Vice President. Much appreciation to the regional Vice Presidents, **Julie MacSwain**, and Craig for their assistance in helping to plan this training session.

—Becky Fletcher, President-Elect

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

—*Craig Derickson, retired USDA-NRCS*

As we approach the month of July, we will soon be half-way through the calendar year and almost three-fourths of the way through the federal fiscal year (FY). With that timeline in mind, we should recognize two very important legislative issues that need to be addressed by Congress before the end of the FY, including:

- Passage of a new farm bill or extend the current provisions for another year, and
- Pass twelve appropriation bills to fund the Government for FY 2025 beginning on October 1, 2024.

Neither of those policy issues will be easy to negotiate between Democrats and Republicans, and stress over the November Presidential election only make the situation more difficult. While there are three months remaining in the current FY, Congress is generally on recess most of the month of August.

This version of Notes from the Potomac will provide information on activities concerning the work of both Democrats and Republicans to pass a new farm bill, highlights on the President's Budget for FY 2025, work on FY 2025 appropriations, and finally the upcoming November election.

Setting Expectations About a New Farm Bill This Year

In a June 14th, 2024, article by **Joshua Baethge**, Policy Editor with the Farm Progress magazine titled; Farm bill barometer: Setting expectations, he examined the many variables that affect the likelihood of getting a new farm bill passed this year. See <https://www.farmprogress.com/farm-policy/farm-bill-barometer-setting-expectations>.

Mr. Baethge humorously likened his approach to assessing whether or not a new farm bill would get passed this year to the work of weather forecasters who make predictions on the weather and guess about precipitation percentages. He went on to say: "In that spirit of (somewhat) educated guessing, I present to you the **farm bill barometer**."

With this approach, the article went on to predict the odds of getting a farm bill passed this year to be about 17%. His description of the many pieces of the legislative process that must be completed before a farm bill can be passed made for a delightful reading experience.

Mr. Baethge noted that from a very simplistic perspective, eight separate functions need to happen for a new farm bill to become law:

- The agriculture committees in the House and Senate need to pass a bill.
- The full House and Senate must then approve those bills.
- When that happens, a committee will likely be created to hammer out a compromise between the two bills.
- The full House and Senate must then approve the compromise.
- The President would then need to sign the bill into law.

The author noted so far this year, Congress has completed one of those eight steps. In late May, the House Agriculture Committee passed Rep. **Glenn "GT" Thompson**'s farm bill proposal, the "Farm, Food, and National Security Act." With that action by the House being completed, we are about 12.5% of the way there.

The House bill would limit future updates to the Thrifty Food Plan, the formula that calculates benefits for SNAP. News writer **Allison Winter** from the Nebraska Examiner reported: "This would result in a nearly \$30 billion reduction in spending over 10 years, based on the estimates from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The article reported: "The committee-passed bill would put limits on USDA's discretionary Commodity Credit Corporation account and would remove climate-smart policy requirements and about \$13 billion in conservation projects funded by the Inflation Reduction Act." See more in the Nebraska Examiner at:

<https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2024/05/24/farm-bill-advances-from-u-s-house-panel-but-faces-a-tough-row-to-hoe/>.

Key elements of the House's "Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024:"

- Includes many priorities of both Democrats and Republican members. Increases statutory reference prices 10% to 20% for all covered commodities.
- By increasing statutory reference prices, the maximum effective reference price is also increased. Increasing Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) guarantees 90% of the benchmark revenue.
- Provides a one-time opportunity to establish base acres for producers who currently do not have base acres or whose average farm acres exceed the current base acres.
- Provides an opportunity to update production history on Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC).
- Increases Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan limits on Direct, Guaranteed, and Down-Payment programs (Farm Credit priority).

- Clarifies that Farm Credit is eligible to finance community healthcare facilities (Farm Credit priority).
- Increases premium support for Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) of crop insurance and increases the amount of SCO coverage available to purchase.
- Increases the crop insurance premium discount for young, beginning, and veteran farmers while extending the number of years of eligibility to 10 years (currently set at 5 years).
- Doubles funding for Market Access Program (MAP) and the Foreign Market Development Program (FMD).
- Affirms the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) is the sole regulator of the Farm Credit System (Farm Credit priority).

For more details on the House proposal visit the Ag Country news website at:

<https://www.agcountry.com/en/News/2024/June/House-Farm-Bill>.

From the other party, Senate Ag Committee Chair, Democrat **Debbie Stabenow**, released in early May a broad outline of the farm bill legislation she plans to introduce. The information released from Stabenow's committee did not include a lot of specifics of what will be in the Senate version, but it is widely suspected that it will be much different from Thompson's plan.

On June 12th, Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member, Republican **John Boozman**, released his framework for a new farm bill. While similar to Thompson's House Republican party plan in many ways, it does have a few key differences. For example, the House Republicans' proposal expands some food and nutrition programs, while the Senate version does not. The Senate bill also includes additional quality control reforms for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Stabenow, Senate Committee Chair, has been highly critical of the House Republicans' plan, citing concerns over reductions in funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and conservation funding to address climate change. She recently told The Detroit News that she's hopeful Congress can pass a farm bill before her term ends, but "not at all costs." For more information on proposed reform to the SNAP program see <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/what-farmers-want-michigans-next-us-senator>.

Comments from staff involved in drafting the Republican Senate proposal report that there are good agreements with goals held by their House colleagues. However, the Senate framework takes a different approach than the House version and offers to help farmers add base acres to their farm program benefits. Current working public versions of both the House and Senate Farm Bills contain a voluntary base acre update option for farms with fewer base than planted acres. The University of Illinois Department of Agriculture and Consumer Economics reports that a mandatory update typically causes base acres to better reflect recent plantings. Typically, mandatory updates have lower Federal outlays than voluntary updates. Adding base acres increases Federal outlays but reduces the discrepancy between base and planted acres: <https://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/2024/05/base-acre-updating-in-the-next-farm-bill.html>.

Key Takeaways for Boozman's Senate Committee Proposal

- An increase in reference prices for all covered commodities.
- Increased spending for conservation programs by pulling funds from climate legislation passed in 2022 in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
- Cost-neutral updates to the formula that calculates benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP.
- Increased crop insurance levels.
- New reporting requirements for foreign purchase and ownership of farmland.

The Boozman measure also doubles funding for land grant universities for research on topics such as fertilizer application, pesticides, and labor. Boozman said the investment in research will help with "getting agriculture into this century." He also said the framework will also boost crop insurance by increasing support for the Supplemental Coverage Option to 80% and the coverage level to 90% for more than 55 specialty and row crops. For more information on the Boozman proposal see: <https://kansasreflector.com/2024/06/11/u-s-senate-republicans-outline-their-farm-bill-framework/>.

The Farm Progress article suggested, with all these policy differences and heated debates, that many would believe the chances of a farm bill passing should be lower than 17%. The continued divide among lawmakers and political parties makes passing any legislation a challenge in this 118th Congress, which began on January 3rd, 2023, and will end on January 3, 2025.

A Mandatory Base Acre Update

The Senate Ag Committee website reports that for more than two decades farm program payments have been based on a farm's historical planted acreage, i.e., **base acres**, and not on actual planted acres. The Senate report states: "Decoupling Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) farm program payments prevents farmers from making planting decisions based on expected program payments. Instead, the current system ensures that farmers evaluate only market supply and demand signals and expected returns per acre when determining which crops to plant each year." For more information see:

<https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/newsroom/minority-blog/a-mandatory-base-acre-update-divides-agriculture>

Key Takeaways On A Mandatory Base Acre Update (from Senate Ag Committee website)

A mandatory base acre update would force farmers to update their farm's base acres to reflect a more recent snapshot of their planting history. The economic effects are significant and are conservatively estimated to result in an overall loss of \$2 billion to farmers and rural communities and economies due to a decline in farm program benefits during fiscal years 2024 to 2033.

Few in agriculture benefit from a base acre update. A mandatory base acre update would create winners and losers among neighbors, crops, counties, and states, and most certainly would complicate efforts to successfully pass a new farm bill.

The Senate website suggests: “to provide a perspective on the adverse impacts associated with a mandatory update to base acres, USDA individual farm-level information on planted acres, acres considered planted, and acres prevented from being planted were used to reestablish base acres by farm using average plantings from 2018 to 2022 – i.e., eliminate all existing base acres and create new base acres by farm and by crop using average plantings from 2018 to 2022. The change in base acres was based on the difference between recently enrolled base acres and the reestablished base acres. Then, the economic costs or benefits associated with the change in base acres were calculated at the state, county, and crop level using average program payments by crop from the Congressional Budget Office’s (CBO) May 2023 baseline for USDA Mandatory Farm Programs.”

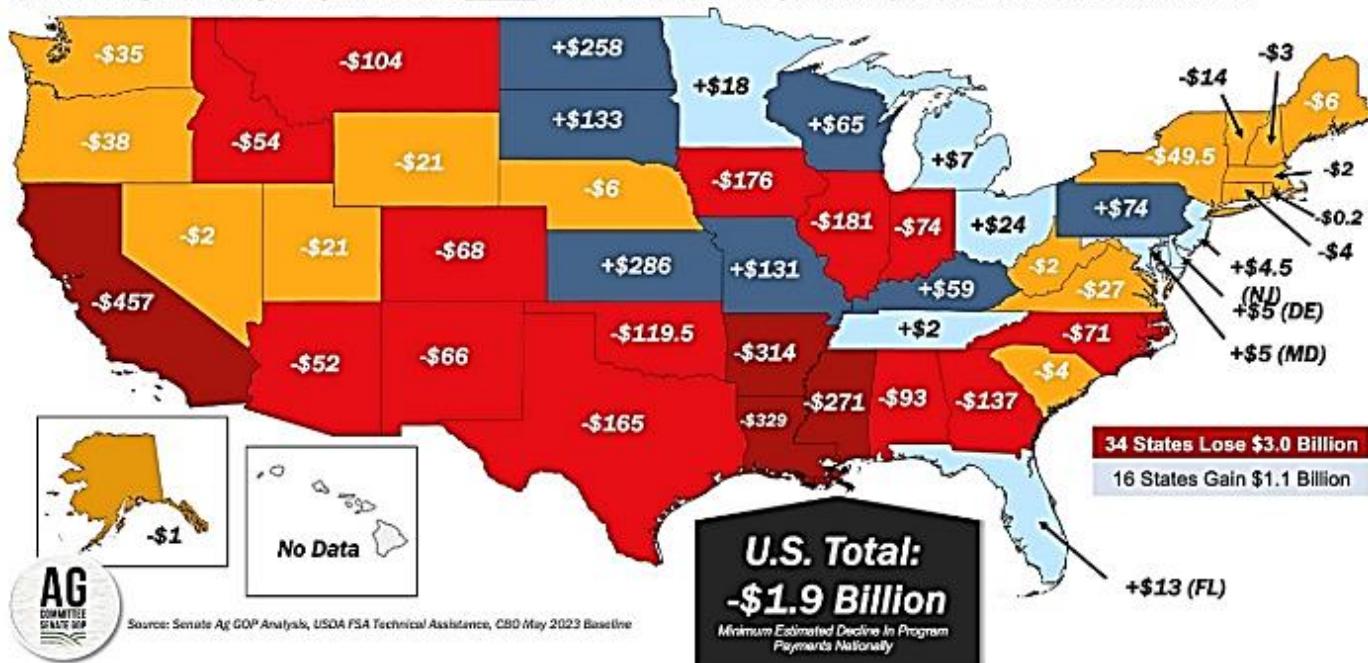
President's Budget Proposal for 2025

President **Joe Biden's** budget request for FY 2025 would continue several administration goals to lower costs for most families while raising taxes on the wealthy and corporations, spend on climate initiatives, and provide aid to US partners abroad.

The \$7.266 trillion budget request that calls for expanding the child tax credit, funding overseas partners, and increasing taxes on the wealthy proposes several new or revamped programs. It will be up to Congress in the coming months to act on or reject Biden's initiatives.

Mandatory Base Acre Update Winners and Losers

Estimated Change In Farm Program Payments Based On Enrolled Base Acres Due To A Mandatory Base Acre Update, Fiscal Year 2024 to 2033, Million Dollars



Map source: <https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/newsroom/minority-blog/a-mandatory-base-acre-update-divides-agriculture> .

The Nebraska Examiner reported that there are five main takeaways from a White House fact sheet on the budget. All of the following information on the President's Budget for 2025 is taken from an article by the Nebraska Examiner at <https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2024/03/11/five-major-takeaways-from-the-biden-budget-request/>.

Household costs

The budget calls for several policy changes and increases to social programs meant to bring down costs for most households. Some of those provisions include low-cost child care, expanded child tax credit, affordable housing, lower college costs, and health care.

Taxes

The budget seeks to lower the federal deficit, primarily by increasing taxes on the wealthy and some corporations. The proposed changes would make “the wealthy and large corporations pay their fair share,” according to the White House fact sheet. Other provisions include reduce 2017 corporate tax cut, raise the corporate minimum tax, and promotion of the “billionaire” tax.

Safety net

The budget includes a few provisions meant to strengthen the social safety net and provide protections for families, including expanded family and medical leave, sick leave for all employees, full funding for Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and programs to address homelessness.

Climate

The President's budget request includes new and continued funding to maintain a focus on climate initiatives, including expansion of climate corps, clean energy programs, and climate resilience to address the increasingly severe droughts, floods, wildfires and other disasters associated with climate change.

Repeat supplemental request

After Republicans in the US House rebuffed the administration's October request for supplemental funding for Ukraine, Israel, Indo-Pacific regional partners, and the U.S.-Mexico border, Biden included items from that request in his FY 2025 full-year budget request. The renewed request includes \$92 billion in foreign aid for Ukraine, Israel, and Indo-Pacific partners such as Taiwan. The budget also repeats a request for \$13.6 billion for border and migration programs.

Committee Work on FY 2025 Appropriations

Little information is available about committee progress on FY 2025 appropriations. However, the House Committee on Appropriations did release news on their 2025 spending bills, and passage of a proposed 1% increase to defense spending for FY 2025.

A report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) suggested that the House bill also contains many controversial amendments – known as “policy riders” – that would advance conservative priorities, which are likely a nonstarter in the Democratic-controlled Senate. For more information see: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/AppropriationsStatusTable>.

A break-down of committee work on the twelve appropriation bills is as follows:

- [Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies](#) – committee action and voice vote 6/11/24
- [Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies](#) – no action to date
- [Defense](#) – committee action and voice vote 6/5/24
- [Energy and Water Development](#) – no action to date
- [Financial Services and General Government](#) – committee action and voice vote 6/5/24
- [Homeland Security](#) – committee action and voice vote 6/4/24
- [Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies](#) – no action to date
- [Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies](#) – no action to date
- [Legislative Branch](#) – committee action and voice vote 5/23/24
- [Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies](#) – committee action and voice vote 5/21/24
- [State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs](#) – committee action and voice vote 6/12/24
- [Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies](#) – no action to date.

Cost Analysis of a New Farm Bill

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) produces cost estimates for multiyear farm bills and other changes to the federal government's agriculture programs. The CBO website states: “The agency also studies the broader effects of possible changes to agricultural policies and related policies, such as ones that promote biofuels or affect the allocation of water supplies.” For more information on cost analysis for a new farm bill see: <https://www.cbo.gov/topics/agriculture>.

The E&E News network from POLITICO reported that leaders of the House and Senate Agriculture committees have sparred over how to pay for the next five-year farm bill, after the CBO stuck with financial estimates that challenge House Republican assumptions.

E&E News reported: “In its latest budget estimates for the 2024 to 2034 period, the CBO projected that the Department of Agriculture will spend \$12 billion from the discretionary authority the secretary has over the Commodity Credit Corp. – or far less than the \$50 billion in savings that House Republicans say they can squeeze for use in the farm bill by limiting that authority.”

These budget technicalities are thought to be crucial to House Ag. Committee **Glenn Thompson**’s plan to pay for the farm bill that passed his committee largely along party lines in May; however, four Democrats on the committee supported the bill. For more information see:

<https://www.eenews.net/articles/republicans-get-bad-news-on-farm-bill-budget-savings/>.

Pressure of the Looming Election

Completing work on a new farm bill is generally considered “must-pass” legislation. Lawmakers must rewrite this comprehensive legislation every five years to set mandatory funding levels and policy related to farming, nutrition, rural communities, bioenergy, and forestry. The current farm bill, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, expired at the end of FY 2023, but most programs have continued through an extension passed in 2023. The current extension will expire again in September 2024.

As noted earlier in this column, there is skepticism about the ability of lawmakers to reach across the aisle and make compromises with the other party to complete work on important legislation, especially the farm bill and 2025 appropriation bills. The pressure created by partisan positions on major issues and those entangled in the November Presidential election only make their work more difficult. Although there is still time for Congress to come together and pass critical legislation, there is not a lot of time.

With the upcoming August recess and election campaigns heating up, it will be challenging for Congress to come together to get this work completed. Consideration of these issues that affect all Americans points to the need for lawmakers to exercise “civility.” While partisanship has always been an important component of democracy, it should not override our need to show respect for others and to be able to resolve important issues. We desperately need members of Congress to work together so our country can prosper and continue to be a champion of democracy.

DEADLINE FOR THE SEPT/OCT 2024 NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS AUGUST 25TH, 2024.

NRCS/ACES Enrollee Spotlight

My name is **Kent Reeves** and, besides my ACES/NRCS work as a Resource Conservationist, I am doing other part-time work as a Wildlife Biologist for the Tuolumne Resource Conservation District conducting surveys for Great Gray Owls and California Spotted Owls. This is for a fuel reduction project and to prevent disturbance to nesting owls that may be in the project area.

I am also doing additional part-time work for a non-profit, The Soil Carbon Coalition: Rancher to Rancher Network providing understanding of the Six Soil Health Principles for ranchers, agencies, tribes, land trusts, and interested individuals throughout California. Here is an article about the work that we do with that. We have been doing this since 2013 primarily through an ongoing grant from the Regenerative Agriculture Foundation.

<https://www.altaonline.com/dispatches/a35591750/climate-change-california-grasslands-ranching/>



Put your experience to work with the ACES PROGRAM!

Participating in the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services (ACES) Program for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a chance for experienced workers like you, age 55+ to share your knowledge and skills. You don't have to be an NRCS or USDA retiree to participate!

Who is Eligible?

Applicants must be age 55 and over and able to provide services and skills required for the jobs advertised on the web sites of the three non-profits with which NRCS has national cooperative agreement with National Experienced Workforce Solutions, Inc.

National and state budget priorities determine which NRCS offices participate in the ACES program.

How to Apply

Applicants should check the web site of the nonprofit partners for available positions:

National Experienced Workforce Solutions
(www.newsolutions.org). Link to all Job Openings: NEW Solutions Jobs - National Experienced Workforce Solutions



Position Title	Location	Option to work remotely	Advertised Wage Range	Authorized Hours (per pay period)
Appeals Review Specialists (Urgent)	Nationally	yes	\$30-\$40	open
Easement Realty Specialists	Remote	yes	\$50.00	30
Resource Conservationist	Multiple Locations	—	\$25.00	48
Soil Conservationist	Multiple Locations	—	\$24.55	32
Economist (ESC)	Casper, WY	yes	\$31.50	40

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

New Members

Thomas Sewell – Strasburg, Ohio
 Jazelle Jusino – Lake City, Florida
 Cesar C. Jusino – Lake City, Florida
 Mike Sullivan – North Little Rock, Arkansas

USDA/NRCS LEGENDS



Episode 3 – John Peterson “A Life of Service.” A gifted storyteller, this episode is an enlightened tutorial in watershed conservation and leadership.

John Peterson worked for USDA for 40 years, leading policy in watershed conservation. In retirement, he served as Executive Director of the National Watershed Coalition and championed the successful passage of the Small Watershed Rehabilitation act of 2000, the first major USDA water resources legislation passed in the previous 22 years. John is also a veteran and retired in 1991 from the US Army after a 32-year active and active reserve career as an Infantry Colonel. In recognition of his leadership, the Organization of Professional Employees of USDA established a John W. Peterson Agricultural Scholarship. Today, he continues to volunteer with his local conservation district, Northern Virginia Soil Water Conservation District.

[A Life of Service – Watch now](#)

ALABAMA

Earl Norton, ARCSE Representative

Email: earl_norton@yahoo.com

Retirees were saddened to learn that retiree Roger Hornsby and retiree Vic Payne’s wife Rosolyn passed away this spring.



Retirees of Area 3 met for lunch June 6th in Tuscaloosa to honor Steve Rohrer on his retirement as Area 3 resource conservationist. Seated (L-R) Larry McCray, Mickey Barton, Don Presley, guest David McGraw, Terry Williamson, Linda McGraw, Steve Rohrer, Kent McCray, and Milton Tuck.



Auburn area retirees meet monthly for breakfast meeting on May 6th. (L-R): George Martin, Ken Rogers, Mac Nelson, Vic Payne's son-in-law Jim Judkins, Vic Payne, Charles Bush, and Earl Norton.



NACD SE Region Chair Steven Meeks presents Dr. Puckett with Hall of Fame Plaque



Dr. Puckett surrounded by Alabama Delegation celebrating his induction into the NACD Southeast Region Conservation Hall of Fame.

Dr. William E. "Bill" Puckett, past AL NRCS State Conservationist and a lifelong champion of soil conservation and environmental stewardship, is the Alabama Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) 2024 NACD Southeast Region Conservation Hall of Fame inductee. He was recognized June 17th at the NACD Southeast Region Annual Meeting in Gainesville, Florida. Dr. Puckett was honored for his distinguished career dedicated to advancing sustainable land use practices across Alabama and the nation, including over 30 years with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in key leadership roles, and serving now as Executive Director of the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee and Alabama Agricultural Conservation and Development Commission. He has inspired generations of conservationists through his tireless advocacy, innovative thinking, and decades of leadership in preserving vital natural resources.

Perry Oakes and **Earl Norton** attended the 2024 annual meeting of the Alabama Chapter of SWCS at Foley's 500-acre Graham Creek Nature Preserve. The Wednesday 1pm through Friday noon meeting format has thrived over the past 20 years, as the meeting evolved to provide a variety of natural resources technical topics and continuing education for professional PEs, CCAs and CPESCs.

John Roger Hornsby of Franklin, Alabama, passed away on June 3rd, 2024 at the age of 77. Roger was born on April 27th, 1947, in Tallassee, AL. Roger grew up in Franklin, AL, where he has lived for the past 31 years with his beloved wife **Linda**. Roger was the oldest child of seven children born to **James Huston Hornsby** and **Marjorie McEune Hornsby**. He has left behind his loving wife **Linda Galt-Hornsby**; son **John Hornsby** (Kathryn); daughter **Rebecca Beckman** (Paul); son **Joshua Hornsby** (Elizabeth); and nine grandchildren. Roger graduated from Macon Academy in 1965 and began working for the US Dept. of Agriculture as a cotton scout and then full time for the Natural Resources Conservation Service until retiring in 2012. He was well known and respected throughout Macon County and all of Southeast Alabama through his job with USDA. Roger also farmed row crops full time. Roger enjoyed spending time with his family. After retirement, he especially loved working with Linda at their nursery, Linda's Greenhouse Lake Martin. He never met a stranger and had the ability to tell the best stories and make everyone around him smile. His family always said that he missed his true career calling which would have been Meteorology. He loved tracking the weather constantly and watching the Weather Channel. His family even called him Super Doppler. He loved Little Debbie cakes and could always be seen with a white coffee cup half-full, preferably brewed in a percolator. Roger will be dearly missed, and his legacy will continue forever through his family.

Rosolyn Jane Payne was born in Little Rock, AR, September 6th, 1940 and passed away on May 8th, 2024 at the age of 83. She was preceded in death by her parents, **Robert V. Williams** and **Rachel Crowder Williams**. Rosolyn grew up in San Antonio, TX, graduated from Alamo Heights High School, and received a BA degree in Education from the University of Texas, Austin 1961. She married her beloved husband, **Victor**, in 1962, and they remained married for 62 years. During that time, they traveled to many countries in Europe and South America. They came to Auburn when he was assigned to teach Air Force ROTC at Auburn University in 1968 and stayed. Rosolyn taught fourth grade, first at Scott Academy and then at Lee-Scott Academy, for more than 25 years, during which time she taught more than 500 local kids. She was a beloved teacher who took her students on many exciting field trips to such places as Horseshoe Bend, Westville, GA; Pioneer Park, Selma; and other places. And who could forget Christmas Around the World, where students enjoyed hearing from guest speakers from foreign countries while students had to bring a typical dessert from each country.

Rosolyn got a number of letters from students who had graduated from Lee-Scott, including some who wrote to say that Rosolyn was the best teacher they ever had. Rosolyn taught a Sunday School class for older women for over 40 years, and these ladies thought Rosolyn was the best Bible teacher ever. Rosolyn is survived by her husband, **Victor W.E. Payne, Jr.**; her two wonderful daughters: **Robin Broome** (Maxwell) and **Heather Judkins** (James); six grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A memorial service was held Saturday May 25th, 2024, at Jeffcoat-Trant Funeral Home 1500 Frederick Road, Opelika, AL 36801.

ARIZONA

Ken Cookson, ARCSE Representative

Email: ckcookson@aol.com

Ken Cookson Report: I am saddened to report that we lost two of our colleagues recently. They are **John Lowrey** on April 13th and **Ron Moreland** on May 9th. They will be greatly missed by their families and friends. Both had long, successful careers with SCS/NRCS.

—Ken Cookson

PS – Jerry, this is my last report as the AZ Representative for ARCSE. I am relinquishing the assignment at the end of this month. It has been over 7 years since I accepted this opportunity.

ARKANSAS

Ralph Mashburn, ARCSE Representative

Email: ralphmashburn@gmail.com

President **Bob Price** announces that the next annual SCS/NRCS Retirees luncheon will be on Thursday, September 19th beginning at 10am at the Whole Hog Café, 1211 W Markham St, in Little Rock. He also said that he watched the Eclipse – “I got in my lawn chair and sat in my backyard. Watched the whole thing.”

The complete Solar Eclipse was witnessed across central Arkansas on April 8th. A description: “Simply put, a total eclipse of the Sun is the most beautiful sight you will ever see in the sky. Nothing can prepare you for the amazing sight when the sky suddenly

darkens, and the Sun's corona shines in the sky. No photograph can capture the stunning beauty of a total solar eclipse – you must see it for yourself."



The Eclipse Path in Arkansas and Texas

The picture below shows **Nancy and Ralph Mashburn** with protective glasses at the festive occasion in Parkway Village in Little Rock where they now live. They were on the edge of the path – it was dark for about 2 minutes.



Nancy and Ralph Mashburn with protective glasses for watching the eclipse.

Dick and Lori Babeu watched the Eclipse from their back yard in Maumelle, Arkansas. Eclipse glasses were a must. See Dick below. Ralph Mashburn celebrated his 90th Birthday. His children came together to plan a special three days for Ralph and Nancy.



Mary Lillian Burroughs, Drew, Nancy, Ralph, David.

Ralph's family prepared a wonderful celebration luncheon for him after the worship service at Lonoke Baptist Church. About 75 guests attended. Each of his three children gave a talk about him, as well as a good number of his friends. It was a combination "Roast" and compliments. Ralph commented that now he didn't need a funeral because all eulogies were given there, and the Lord has kept him alive to hear them. He also said. "I wish I was half as good as they believe I am. My old college roommate and I got together after we retired, and he said that Nancy sure had made me a better Christian person. I replied that the Lord has made me a better person, but He sure used Nancy a lot to do it."

Below shows his old SCS/NRCS buddy, **Dick Babeu**, telling funny stories about their experiences together since 1967 working out of New York, WDC, Oregon, and Arkansas. After retirement they had many consulting jobs and fishing trips around the country. (They are still fishing together almost weekly during the fishing season, and their wives, **Nancy and Lori**, usually do shopping together while the guys fish.)



CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

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Greetings to Retirees across the Nation from California! California retirees continue to enjoy our monthly Zoom meetings. We had the group shown below take part in our June 5th, Meeting.



Top: Dave Sanden, Bill Ward, Larry Butler, Phil Hogan.
Middle: Helen Flach, Ed Schmit, Walt Sykes, Bob Snieckus.
Bottom: Chester Bush, Julie MacSwain

This Zoom meeting was extra special as we had a special guest, **Doctor Larry Butler**, Retired Texas State Conservationist, sharing about his very interesting career with SCS/NRCS, his interesting life, and activities after retirement and more. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us. Following is a brief summary of what Larry shared with us.

Larry had many positions with SCS/NRCS in his career, beginning as a GS-5 Soil Conservationist at a field office in Texas sometime around 1974. He held many different positions from there. He worked at the WNTC in Portland Oregon as a Regional Range Conservationist, providing assistance to 13 Western States. Proper Range and Grazing Land Conservation Management are his true passions.

It was during his time at the WNTC that he reached out to **Michael Martin Murphy** about doing a public service video promoting the benefits of proper management of our range and grazing lands for SCS at that time.

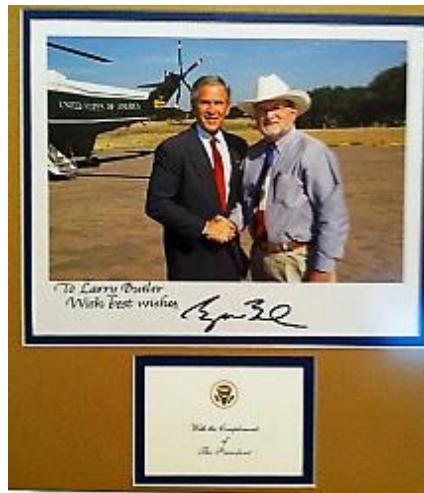
For those that do not know, Michael Martin Murphy is a popular singer/songwriter and may be best known to some for his popular "cowboy songs." What great music those cowboy songs are. I recently enjoyed refreshing my memory listening to some of these songs I had not heard in a long time. Here is one of them.

Cowboy Logic, Michael Martin Murphy
https://youtube/Zfe4y_LzWpQ

Michael agreed to help on this project, and the two of them collaborated on putting together a short video promoting the importance of proper management of our range and grazing lands. That video also pointed to our agency, SCS, at that time, as to where to get help in doing that. It was extremely successful and was well received by our agency.

A unique friendship and bond between Larry and Michael came out of that collaboration. Shortly after that collaboration, Michael became aware of Larry's talents as a cowboy poet. Over the last 35 years Michael has invited Larry up on stage – when it fit both their schedules, probably 20 times or so – for Larry to share his Cowboy Poetry with Michael Martin Murphy's audience.

As State Conservationist in Texas, Larry oversaw a state with some 250 or so field offices and some 750 or so employees. A highlight for Larry was being able to spend about 20 minutes talking to **President George W. Bush** about conservation on the President's ranch in Texas. Larry proudly shared with us this picture of him with President Bush that he received shortly after that experience.



Larry Butler and President George W Bush

Upon retiring from NRCS in 2007, Larry started his own business doing what he loved – working one on one with ranchers consulting on range and grazing land management. He did that for the next several years.

The next thing he began doing was producing a television show called "Out on the Land," and he did that for several years. Here is one of Larry's "Out on the Land" episodes:

Out on the Land – F Bar Springs Ranch

<https://youtu.be/HUzHVWEvFqI>

Larry wrote a book entitled Out on the Land, sharing conservation secrets, a series of short stories about his life and career.

We finished our meeting with Larry sharing three of his Cowboy Poems with us. What a treat and great way for him to finish his sharing with our California retiree group.

Destiny's Trail, Stanzas 1–6

1 One chance is all we have, One ride is all we'll make; Where our lives will lead us, Depends upon which trail we take.	4 The trail's long and weary, Lives may be true or fake; Our characters' shaping Depends upon which trail we take.
2 There are crossroads to choose, Decisions we must make; The outcome of them all, Depends upon which trail we take.	5 The ride can be happy, Many friends we can make, Who's our special pardner, Depends upon which trail we take.
3 The days turn into years, Years of joy or heartache; Be they happy or sad, Depends upon which trail we take.	6 Trails full of sweet success, or trails built by mistake; Know that our destiny, Depends upon which trail we take.

-Larry D. Butler, Copyright 1991

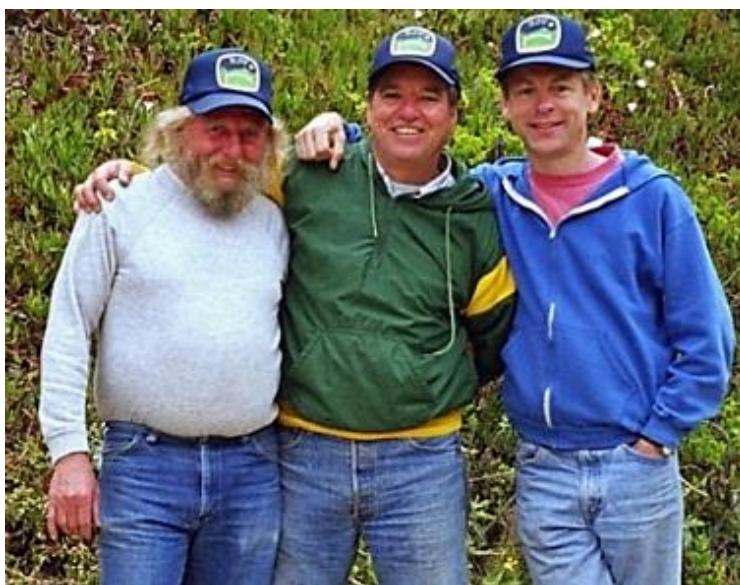
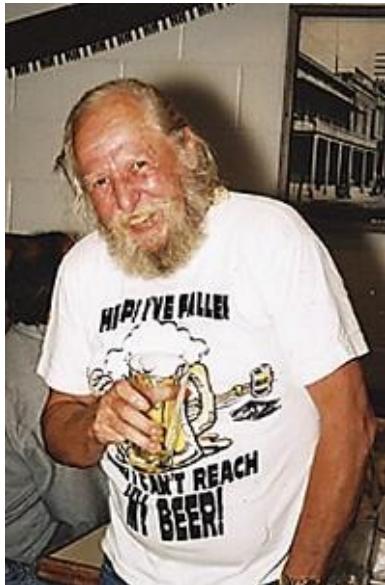
Since then, Larry has shared a half dozen or more of his cowboy poems with me. They are works of art, some humorous, some more serious – all entertaining. Here is one of Larry's poems he shared with me.

Many thanks, Larry, from me personally and from all of us California Retirees!

I am sorry to share the news of NRCS Civil Engineering Technician **Danny Maxim's** passing. No doubt all of us who worked with him would agree that Danny was a one-of-a-kind special person. He was just so much fun to work with and to be around. Most of his work was with the Engineering staff as a Civil Engineering Technician. I believe, however, that everybody in our state office in Davis, CA knew and appreciated Danny, even those who did not have an opportunity to work directly with him. He just stood out, and everybody saw what a great and fun-loving guy he was.

Cards of Condolence can be sent to Danny's daughter, Dani Maxim: Dani Maxim, 1143 Circle Drive, Xenia OH 45385

Here are two photos to remember Danny by, Just Danny, and Danny with two of his best friends, **Tom Smith** and **Bob Snieckus**.



Danny Maxim, Tom Smith, and Bob Snieckus

Well, that is about all from California this time folks. Until next time, best Wishes to all! – Bill Ward, CA ARCSE State Rep. and ARCSE West Region VP

COLORADO

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Representative

Email: pspicata@gmail.com

Steve Park and the PAP Foundation are hosting the 7th Golfing for a Cure charity golf tournament on July 13th. Ninety-two participated last year, and Steve hopes to break 100 this year. The Fort Collins breakfast club convened first Tuesday in May and June: **Frank Geter, Chuck Hart, Terry Buettgenbach, Stu Keil, Phil Smith, Tim Carney, Ken Rojas, Wendall Oaks, Bernie Shafer, Dennis Lytle, and Jack Carlson**. **Owen Unangst** reported he was in Texas during May and June with grandkids. **Phil Smith** and his wife **Claire** had just returned home after visiting his son and family in Salem, Oregon and granddaughter's graduation from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California. **Jack Carlson** and wife **Vicki** watched granddaughters in Washington, DC in mid-May while their parents were on business travel, then Jack participated early June in the Field-to-Market Plenary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and just returned from a conference at East Lansing, Michigan to grandkids arriving from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

CONNECTICUT, RHODE ISLAND, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Carl DuPolt, ARCSE Representative

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Clean Water Week –

<https://dec.vermont.gov/event-types/clean-water-week?page=6>

CT: Master Wildlife Conservationist Program

The Master Wildlife Conservationist Program (MWCP) is administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Wildlife Division. The program provides adults with education and training on the natural history, biology, conservation, management, and interpretation of Connecticut's wildlife.

<https://portal.ct.gov/deep/wildlife/mwcp/master-wildlife-conservationist-program>

NH: Working After Retirement

When members retire and receive a Service, Early Service or Vested Deferred Retirement pension from NHRS, any compensation they earn from employment in a position that is not an NHRS-covered position will not affect their pension. Note: Disability Retirement benefits may be subject to gainful occupation offsets regardless of where the retiree works.

<https://www.nhrs.org/retirees/working-after-retirement/>

RI: Behind the Scenes: The Terrapin Conservation Project

Every year in late spring, a miraculous thing happens in a remote corner of Barrington, RI. Hundreds of rare Diamondback Terrapin turtles come ashore to lay their eggs, ensuring the survival of their species for another generation. Just as remarkable are the dozens of volunteers who spend hours preparing for their arrival.

<https://dem.ri.gov/events/behind-scenes-terrapin-conservation-project>

Vermont association of Conservation Districts – <https://www.vacd.org>

Vermont Eco Events – <https://www.econewsvt.org/even.ts/list>

Vermont Outdoor Recreation Events

<https://www.voga.org/vt-recreation-event-calendar.html>

Vermont Soil and Water Conservation Society

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/410383895688058/>

Vermont NRCS Blog – <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/vermont/vermont-nrcs-blog>

IDAHO

Jim Cornwell, ARCSE Representative

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Idaho Retirees' Meeting: (L-R) Rita and Dean Kidd (a past SCD board member), Denis Feichtinger, Keri Gibbs, John Kendrick (seated), Paul Calverley, Gene Crisman, Phil Morrisey and Jim Cornwell

Idaho retirees have been meeting once a month September through May and taking a break through the summer months. Attendance has been low this past year, with attendance ranging from 2 to 9. I appreciated **Mark Jensen's** comments in the recent Zoom session in how to expand the inclusion of more retirees. Our meetings will reconvene in September.

INDIANA

Jane Hardisty, ARCSE Representative

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Submitted by Dan McCain: **Kenneth S. Pyle**, ARCSE Senior Conservationist, passed away on May 21st, at the age of 99.

IOWA

Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative

Email: amjens1@gmail.com

The northwest Iowa retirees continue to have a monthly breakfast get-together in Sioux City. Following is a picture of the group from their April 17th breakfast.



L-R: Marla Conley, Dick Hall, Dave Sage, Scott Osborn, Terri Sage, Judy Rathel, Jerri Ducommun, Sheila Cox

Lee White participated in a church mission trip to El Salvador from June 5th through June 12th. Lee provided us with the following interesting summary of the trip. "Our church in Ankeny has had a 20-year relationship with the people in the small (300+) Canton of El Corozal. Many people ask, "What did you do or build?" My reply is always something like, we continue to build relationships.



Lee White (with the white cap) and their team with a Corozal family

Just getting there was somewhat of an adventure. We flew into the capital city of San Salvador and then rode in a van about two hours on the Pan American highway to the city of Berlin', which has a population of about 12,000. This was our nightly location for the six of us who made the trip. Next morning we boarded a four-wheel drive truck equipped with a large rack made of 1" diameter pipe. All of us plus the interpreter and others crawled in the back and hung on as best we could. Corozal is only about 12 miles from Berlin' but the trip normally takes 1½-2 hours to complete. Imagine the worst mud/dirt/4-wheel drive road you have ever been on then multiply by 100, and you can get an idea of the nature of this mountainous trail. I still have bruises on my ribs to show for it. We traveled this way for three days, back and forth to Corozal.

Over the course of our 20-year history with our partners in the small Canton, we have helped to build school classrooms, a small church, and have provided huge rain barrels for many of the residents to store water from the rainy season into the dry season. When I say "build" I mean that we provided the money, and our partners did the construction. The residents are all farmers trying to provide for their families on a 1.65-acre plot of mountainous land. For several years now we have helped the farmers buy fertilizer for their crops. Last year they lost a crop due to torrential rains, only to replant and have it wither away due to drought. Due to the ongoing drought, they had not planted their corn yet because they were waiting for more favorable (wetter) weather. It did start raining so they thanked us for bringing the rain from Iowa.

The people were wonderful. The people are poor, but rich in faith with a great love for their community. Many live in hastily constructed buildings of "lamina," or corrugated roofing metal to you and me. Many of the homes had wood-fired cooking facilities, so the smoke always swirled to the nearest hole or doorway to escape. They are thankful for what they have. But they were also very thankful for us being there. Our delegation had not been there since COVID, so we were missed in our five-year absence. We gave gifts of a large bag of food and a medical kit to each of the families. How thankful they were. After a truly joyous celebration, with many pinatas being sacrificed to the delight of dozens of children, we wearily returned home."



Lee White (in green) with their team and pastoral staff at a peace memorial



Corozal children lounging in the team's pickup truck

Ernie Aust reports that he and **Pat** had a good time at their Easter Sunday dinner with 23 family members around the table. New to the table was **Oliver Paul**, their first great grandchild born three months early and weighing in at three pounds. He wasn't supposed to arrive until last December. After an extended stay in the hospital and excellent care, he is doing great. Now, at 16 pounds he is close to the weight and size that he would have been if he had gone to a full-term birth. Their family has had two weddings – one in Ohio and one in North Carolina. Eight family members are in college. Ernie says that with his new heart valve from January and Pat keeping her walker moving, they pretty well keep up with activities. Some of the activities that keep them young are grandkids' first communions and confirmations, American Legion color guard funerals, and church activities.

In June **Cheryl and Dennis Pate** visited their son and his family in El Dorado Hills, CA. While there, they took time to have a great visit and lunch with former Iowan's **Jim and Colleen Schneider**.

In May, **Eldon and Jeannie Weber** flew to Dallas to attend their granddaughter **Lauren's** high school graduation. She will be attending Denver University with a goal of becoming a medical doctor. The picture shows Eldon and Jeannie at the celebration with their seven grandchildren and one granddaughter-in-law.



L-R: Jim and Colleen Schneider and Cheryl and Dennis Pate



Eldon and Jeannie Weber with their grandkids

When I sent out a request to our retirees for newsletter items this month, I specifically asked for stories about military experiences since it was just a few days past Memorial Day. A couple of stories were passed on. The first is from **Eldon Weber**. We've heard some of his stories in the past, but he told about one military experience that we haven't heard before. Here it is in his words: "I got my Army ROTC commission on my graduation from Iowa State and began Officers Basic training at Ft. Bliss, TX at El Paso in March 1958. I had just left Iowa where it was cool in March. At Ft. Bliss one Sunday morning I decided to lay out and get a little sun. I had no idea of the burning power of the sun in the southwest! I got a horrible sunburn. The next day I had to crawl under fire in training. Bullets were being fired like 2 feet above us. To keep my sunburned legs off the ground I wore out the toes of my combat boots!"

The second story comes from **Greg Townley**. Greg is a recent retiree from NRCS. He also had a military career. I asked Greg to tell us a little about his and his wife's military and civilian careers. Following is his story: "As a recently retired NRCS employee, I

am grateful for the support that NRCS gave me in my military career as well as my civilian career. Many soldiers experience difficulty with their employer when they are called to duty, and many have lost jobs or have fallen behind in seniority or chances at better positions. A benefit of federal jobs is the support received when doing military duty.

My wife, **Janet**, and I each served 34 years in the Army Reserve and our son, **Andrew**, is currently still serving. My father also retired from the Missouri National Guard, and my brother retired from Active Duty Army.

I enlisted in the Army Reserve on April 11th, 1984 when I was a senior in high school. I attended basic training that summer under the split option program, which allowed me to attend college at the University of Missouri-Columbia that fall rather than going straight to AIT (Advanced Individual Training). My AIT was in the summer of 1985 at Ft. Sam Houston in San Antonio, TX where I was trained to be a food inspector in a Veterinary unit in Columbia, MO. I joined ROTC in August of 1986 and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in May of 1988 as a Medical Service Officer.

I transferred to the Missouri National Guard and served in a medical unit in Springfield, MO as an Ambulance Platoon Leader. In Feb. of 1991, I transferred to a Medical Battalion in the Army Reserve in Columbia, MO as a training and operations officer. In October of 1993, I transferred to the 21st General Hospital in St. Louis since it was closer to my job at the time when I was a CED at the Farm Service Agency in Perryville, MO. I became a company commander at the 1880th Medical Logistics Detachment in St. Louis in Nov. of 1996.

I also started attending CAS3 (Combined Arms Service and Support School) while I was serving as a company commander, which meant that I had duty one weekend per month at my unit in St. Louis and one weekend per month with CAS3 at Independence, MO. It was worth the trip across the state, though, because that is where I met my wife. Janet and I finished CAS3 in 1997. By that time, I had transferred to a CED position with FSA in Jefferson City, MO, but was still a company commander in St. Louis.

Janet and I were married on July 28th, 1998. Her military career up to that point had included ROTC at Drake University and then various Army Reserve units in Iowa in the Adjutant General Corps. She was currently serving in the Inspector General section of the 19th Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM) at Fort Des Moines. When I completed my company command in Jan. 1999, I transferred to the 19th TAACOM and became a Public Affairs Officer. I also had moved to Iowa and started working for NRCS as a Soil Conservationist at Guthrie Center.

Over the next few years, Janet and I served together in the 19th TAACOM. We made several trips to South Korea which was the area primarily supported by our unit. We both attended training to be certified in Public Affairs and also as Logistics officers. Janet mostly served in administrative positions and also worked full time as a civilian at the Army Reserve Unit in administrative positions and also as a Family Support Coordinator. I served as an aide to a 2-star General and in various staff positions to coordinate operations for the General Officer level operations.

In 2005, I transferred to the 3rd Corps Support Command (COSCOM) to deploy with them to Iraq. I served as a Liaison Officer (LNO) to the Marine Logistics Group and was located at Al Taqaddum, Iraq. The deployment was from Aug. 2005 to Oct. 2006. Janet stayed home with our four kids who at that time were 17, 16, 5, and 1. She was helping the older kids with their driver's license and buying cars and the younger ones with kindergarten and all of the things babies need. By the way, she did not feel sorry for me a few years later when she deployed, and I was home with only the two younger ones who were old enough to do many things on their own.

I transferred to the 103d Expeditionary Support Command (ESC) at Ft Des Moines in Jan 2007. Janet was also serving in the 103d ESC at that time. I was selected for Battalion Command and transferred to the 1-383d Training Support Battalion at Ft. Des Moines in May of 2009, which is the same unit where our son is currently serving as a Captain. I was mobilized full-time there for one year and then spent another year with that unit at Ft Hood, TX. I finished my command in 2012.

Then I transferred to the 75th Training Command in Chicago for my promotion to Colonel. In June of 2013, I became a Brigade Commander for the 416th Army Field Support Brigade in Davenport, IA which managed Army contracts. In Sep. 2015, I accepted my second Brigade command at the 209th Regional Support Group in Kansas City, MO.

By this time, Janet had also served as a Battalion Commander at a training unit at Ft Des Moines. We had also both completed the 2-year Army War College and received Masters' Degrees from the War College. Janet had also deployed to Kuwait for one year and been mobilized for one year at Rock Island, IL and one year at Birmingham, AL.

After completing my Brigade Command in Kansas City, I deployed to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar as the Forward Director of the Operational Contract Support Integration Cell from Nov. 2017 to Mar. 2018. I returned to Des Moines to finish out my last few months with the 103d ESC as a Special Staff Officer before my mandatory retirement at the completion of 30 years of commissioned service, which brought my total years of service to 34 years, including 4 years as an enlisted Soldier.

Janet completed a second deployment to Kuwait in 2019 to 2020. Her first deployment was as a commander of the 310th Human Resource Command. By the time she did her second deployment, she was past her mandatory retirement as a Colonel, but she stayed in the Army Reserve for an additional four years as a Warrant Officer, which also brought her total years of service to 34 years.

Our life was certainly busy as we both served in the Army and raised kids and worked full-time civilian jobs and took care of our farm. However, we are now able to reap the benefits. I would still encourage young people to join the military and stay in for at least 20 years to lock in their retirement. I know 20 years seems like a long time when you are 18 years old, but as all of you who are currently retired can attest, the time goes by quickly."



Greg, Andrew, and Janet at Andrew's OCS Graduation in 2018

Greg and Janet's son, **Andrew Parsons**, was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant at his commissioning service in 2018. Greg was a Colonel at that time. Janet had already reached her mandatory retirement as a Colonel and was serving then as a Warrant Officer. According to tradition, when an officer is commissioned, he is expected to present a silver dollar to the first person who salutes him. Since Janet was there in uniform as a Warrant Officer, she was lower rank than Andrew, and she presented the first salute to him. Greg said he wasn't sure if she ever received the silver dollar, but they had a lot of fun with it anyway!

Thanks to **Doug Johnson** for sending the following: "I retired for the second time in early April. I farmed and worked for the Floyd SWCD after retiring from NRCS in 2013. This time I'm retired for good. Maybe I'll do a little part-time work. I've been spending my free time turkey hunting locally and fishing in Canada. My wife of 45 years (**Roxanne**) and I are moving from Charles City to Dubuque in July to be closer to our grandkids in Madison. I've spent most of my free time in the last month getting our house ready to sell. I volunteer at our church as a trustee, and I serve on the Floyd County conservation board."

Alan Lauver, another recent retiree, also got in a little fishing in Canada. Here is his story: "On June 7th my son and I traveled to Birch Dale Lodge on Eagle Lake near Vermillion Bay, Ontario for a week of awesome fishing. We've been making this trek every year since 2012, only missing the two COVID years (2020-21). When will we be able to quit talking about COVID?"

This year was cooler than normal, and the fishing was a little slow, but we still managed to bring back eight walleye, eight pike, and five bonus perch. Most fishermen will agree that no matter the weather or how hot the fishing, the time on the water is always therapeutic. We always fish until sunset and can't wait until next year."

During the past few months, we have welcomed the following folks into our retirement community: **Roger Erickson**, Soil Conservationist in New Hampton; **Dana Holland**, District Conservationist in Fairfield; and **Gary Paulsen**, Engineering Technician in Vinton.



Doug Johnson showing why he likes to go fishing in Canada!

My son caught the biggest fish – this 40+ inch “muskie” (muskellunge). Muskie season didn’t start until June 20th, so it was released while still in the water. It wouldn’t fit in the net we had anyway.



I was stuck with catching walleye.

MIDATLANTIC STATES

Terry D'Addio, ARCSE Representative
Email: tmdaddio@aol.com



May breakfast meeting. L-R: Ron Marlow, Bill Irwin, Jerry Bernard, Dave Thackeray, and John Moore.



June breakfast meeting. L-R: John Moore, John Peterson, Ron Marlow, Bill Irwin, and Dave Thackeray. Jerry Bernard taking picture.

A few Mid-Atlantic States Members gather for breakfast at the Woodbridge, VA, Bob Evans the first Tuesday of each month. We welcomed back **John Peterson**, who has been going through extensive physical therapy related to a hip replacement. **John Moore** will be on hiatus for the rest of the summer at his Joe's Pond cabin in Vermont. The gist of the discussions was that everybody is getting older, and cars and houses are getting older, too. With that, focus was on whether or not to buy a new electric car. It was agreed that we should discuss this further.

Paul Benedict, ARCSE Membership Chair, had heart surgery at the Cleveland Clinic, but has had to return several times to solve rib problems. He seems to be in good spirits, but it has been a long haul for him.

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

Email: daverastorfer@aol.com, moarscse@aol.com

Alton Taylor: No change in plans since the last newsletter. We will be in Canada by the time you read this. We had rain and more until 10 days ago. Then our DRY, HOT July and August took an early start. Was too wet to plant most fields but some made it, and grain sorghums are headed out.

Bill Pauls: The Pauls's are blessed, busy and happy at Camdenton, the Lake of the Ozarks. I'm still running, just back from Fargo, ND. Busy at church with multiple obligations and service projects as well daily and weekly faith contributions. Four G'Kids playing. We're actually in STL right now between a tennis match, after a game and waiting for a game to start. Haven't been fairing so well in the win-loss column this weekend, but we're watching pretty high-level high school age sports. Getting ready to entertain family and friends at the Lake for the 4th of July. We hope everyone is doing well or as well as can be expected. We are also into a pickle ball fun group (taco Tuesdays after, WITH margaritas!!) Later SCS Gators. Our Door at 149 Kingfisher is always open. Come see us. We got a hot tub! (Whew, that doesn't sound all that appealing right now on a hot day, does it?! How about cold beer with that!).

MONTANA

Lori Valadez, ARCSE Representative

Email: valadez226@gmail.com

Gooby Ranch Report:

Things are pretty busy around here. **Mary Ann** has to go out and move the irrigation sprinklers on the grass every morning at 5:00 am. Then she puts the horses out to graze on one of the little pastures she has set up. Next, she gets my breakfast ready. After breakfast while Mary Ann is doing the dishes and cleaning up, it's my job to turn the TV on and catch up on the news.

While Mary Ann is doing her work during the day, making needed repairs, weeding the garden, and fixing equipment and fences, I have some serious soap operas that I have to watch.

At eight o'clock every night Mary Ann has to move the irrigation sprinklers again. I would like to help her, but that's the same time I have to watch TV movies or ball games.

One evening there was nothing I wanted to watch on TV, so I offered to help Mary Ann move the sprinklers. She was thrilled that I would help her. It usually takes Mary Ann an hour to move the sprinklers. With my help it took an hour and a half to move the sprinklers. After that, Mary Ann said she thought it was best that from now on when she works, I should watch TV because I'm so good at it.

NEBRASKA

Norm Kempf, Jim Culver, ARCSE Representatives

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

Lincoln SCS/NRCS Retirees Club

Attending the June 19th meeting were **Doug Christensen, Paul Bartlett, Harold Klaege, Dave Camper, Steve Stover, Gus Dornbusch, Richard Bolli, Steve Scheinost, Gary Muckel, Norm Helzer, Jim Culver, Gerald Montgomery, JoAnne Thiele, Donna Dornbusch, and Craig Derickson**.

The NARFE meeting will be held in St. Louis August 18–20. Harold Klaege said that Nebraska **Governor Pillen** will be calling for a special session of the Nebraska legislature to address a cut in Nebraska taxes. Craig said that the special session will be July 27th through mid-August.

Jim Culver, Craig Derickson, and Craig Romary (who works for the Nebraska Department of Agriculture) attended the Nebraska chapter of SWCS business meeting in Scottsbluff, NE. Craig also attended the NRCS retired employees meeting. The two SWCS awards were (1) outstanding SWCS chapter and (2) most significant SWCS chapter activities: the annual Legislative breakfast in January and the Dave Langemeier Memorial Golf Tournament each August.

Craig and Jim also talked about the Nebraska Chapter SWCS Foundation and the funds that are used for scholarships and occasionally a community conservation project. The Foundation has had an account balance of about \$40,000 for some time, and a few members are exploring additional fund-raising activities with help and guidance from the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF).

JoAnne Thiele announced that Loretta Russell, a secretary in the state office, died on May 30, 2024. **Joe Klameth's wife** had died.

Norman Kempf spent three weeks in Ammon, Jordan visiting his daughter, **Rachel**, and family. His excuse for going there was to attend his granddaughter's high school graduation. It was a wonderful trip.

Craig noted Juneteenth, observing the day that the slaves in Texas were finally told they were no longer slaves (after the end of the Civil War and two years after **President Lincoln's** Emancipation Proclamation). It has now been proclaimed a Federal holiday.



We had an excellent turn out for our June 19th meeting at Greenfield's Restaurant. L-R: Dave Camper, Harold Klaege, Paul Bartlett, Doug Christensen, Gerald Montgomery, Jim Culver, Steve Scheinost, Richard Bolli and Gus Dornbusch

Craig stated that Nebraska state agencies such as the Department of Energy and Environment and the Department of Agriculture are working with groups and individuals on grant proposals to submit to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for funds to work with agricultural producers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate impacts of climate change. The Nebraska Soil Health Coalition is trying to get information introduced that would promote soil health management systems as a good way to sequester carbon and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Norm Helzer is taking care of his raised beds of new soybean plants at his new home at Eastmont Towers in Lincoln. Norm says no more snow blowing removal and no more mowing grass!



Our great hostess bringing delivering our orders of quality food to from left to right – Harold Klaege, Paul Bartlett and Doug Christensen

NEW JERSEY

Nancy Paolini, ARCSE Representative

Email: npaolini@comcast.net

NJ ARCSE held a virtual meeting on April 26th, 2024. Nine retirees attended. As a little incentive, attendees were sent a NJ Scratch-Off lottery ticket. One person won \$20. It was nice catching up with everyone present online, and we discussed an in-person meeting later this year. More details coming soon.

On a sad note, several of us did meet in person up in Newton, NJ to bid farewell to **Shirley Hardmeyer**, wife of retiree, **Kent Hardmeyer**. Shirley passed away June 2nd, 2024.



NJ Virtual Meeting April 26, 2024: Janice Reid, Thornton Hole, Ronnie Lee Taylor, Linda Peterson, Carl DuPoldt, Carol Parker, Doug Kauffman, Irene Lieberman, and Nancy Paolini

NORTH CAROLINA

James Canterbury, ARCSE Representative

Email: jhcanter@bellsouth.net

On May 9th, thirty-eight North Carolina SCS/NRCS retirees, spouses, and guests gathered for their annual picnic at Lake Crabtree Park near Raleigh. Lake Crabtree is part of the Wake County Park system and is one of the structures in the Crabtree Creek P.L. 566 Watershed Project.

Senior Conservationist **Ed Helmey**, who is 96 years old, was recognized as the oldest retiree in attendance. Among other guests were **Ron and Ann Marlow** from Fairfax Station, VA.

Attending the picnic were Assistant State Conservationist, **Kim Poteat, Sharyn Alvarez, Paul Boone, Jim and Becki Canterbury, Albert and Susan Coffey, Tommy Cutts, Betty Dickens, Ray and Debra Dorsett, Frank and Loretta Evans, Dick and Carol Gallo, Tim and Lynne Garrett, Bill Harrell, Boyce Harvey, Ed Helmey, Hank Henry and Ed Holland**. Also attending were **Rodney and Joy Johnson, Wanda Locklear, Ron and**



Ann Marlow, Duncan McGregor, Phyllis Pate, Lane and Merry Price, Clara Raynor, Cecil Settle, Wilson Spencer, Greg Walker, Sam and Pam Warren, and Rodney Woolard.



People attending the May 9th North Carolina Retiree Picnic

OHIO

Mike Monnin, ARCSE Representative

Email: mike.monnin427@gmail.com

John Firebaugh passed away on June 5th at the age of 90.

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 26th, 2024. Twenty-three people were in attendance: **Laurie Bogle, Larry Caldwell, Larry Coppock, Fred Fortney, Brenda and Dennis Fowler, Bonnie and Randy Freeland, Shelley and David Hungerford, Steve Kelley, Nick Lambeth, George Moreland and guest Betty Gilbert, Cheri and Kevin Norton, Phil Perryman, Brent Reavis, Stan Rice, Greg Ritzman, Dan Runnels, J. Kirk Schreiner, and Ed Stinchcomb.**

President **Kirk Schreiner** welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Fred Fortney** provided the blessing for the meal, and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Our only first-time attendee was **Steve Kelley**. Steve retired in 2018 after 42 years of service. He started as a student trainee in 1976 and after graduation spent time as a soil con in Clinton, Mountain View, and Claremore. His first DC job was Blackwell for a short time and back to Mountain View in 1980 as the DC and was there for 10 years and then to Clinton in 1990 until retirement. Currently he is working ACES in Clinton a few days a week. They live on their farm 20 miles NW of Clinton and have a small cow-calf operation. They have five grandkids that they love to spend time with, from ages 10 to 22. As far as activities, Steve is a diehard quail and pheasant hunter and loves to train and work dogs. He enjoys working with cattle and fixing stuff on the farm. In his spare time, he does quite a bit of fishing, especially when the kids are out. Steve and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last month, and he stated, "we have a good life." His contact information is: 22128 East 900 Road, Arapaho, Ok 73620, email: P.S.Kelle@gmail.com and Phone: 580-819-0812.

In the absence of long time Secretary/Treasurer **Sandra Hough** (absent due to family needs), **Kirk** read the list of those retiring since October 2023: **Charlie Colvin**, Resource Engineer, Clinton TSO, 11/30/2023; **D'Ann Peterson**, Resource Conservationist, Guthrie, 12/30/2023; and **Clay Horton**, Ada, 4/19/2024.

Kirk also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2023: **Clifford Williams**, 90, Agronomist, never worked in Oklahoma but was born in Berlin, OK; **Roger Mills County**, graduated from Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) worked in several states and retired to Sayre, OK, attended some retiree meetings, passed 8/10/2023; **Joann Leaverton**, 91, widow of **Erwin Leaverton**, Watershed Planning Staff, Chickasha, 12/12/2023; **Janice Haggard**, 76, wife of retiree **David Haggard**, passed on 12/13/2023; **J. C. Spitzer**, 91, worked in Guymon, Chandler, Holdenville, Ada, Tahlequah, and Talihina, left Oklahoma in 1976 to serve as the State Agronomist in Pennsylvania, retired to Sayre, OK, passed 1/18/24; **Bob Reed**, 94, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Alva, 32 years' service, passed 2/20/24; **John Pewthers**, 87, retired DC, Waurika, 34 years' service, passed 3/1/24; **Tony Boeckman**, 78, retired DC, Medford, 34 years' service, passed 1/27/24; **Brad Elder**, 74, former DC, Hinton, retired as Soil Conservationist in Anadarko, 40+ years' service, retired in 2011, passed 2/5/24; **Winston Hook**, 65, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Madill, medically retired in 2014 after 17 years with NRCS, passed 3/9/24.

David Hungerford led a prayer in memory of our departed former employees and comrades.



Dave Runnels and Steve Kelley

Several other retirees were mentioned who were dealing with health issues and not able to attend our meeting. Those were: **Helen Cole** (wife of **Everett Cole**), **Earl Weisner**, **Ed Kephart**, **Duane Crider**, **Jimmy and JoAnn Hill**, and **Robert Maples**.

Oklahoma retirees have a website with a lot of information about this meeting and those from the past. Just log in to www.joepad.com to see minutes, newsletters, attendees, and pictures from the meetings. **Joe Freeland**, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

We use dues (\$10 per year) to cover expenses of the meetings, including costs of printing meeting notices, postage, and name tags. The group decided to suspend dues in 2024, having a sufficient balance to cover expenses we have.

Retirees should email **Randy Freeland** at randy.freeland@suddenlink.net to request an email meeting notice in lieu of a mailed meeting notice and to report a change in mailing address or email address. He currently has 168 on his email group, which cuts our postage expenses by quite a bit. Let him know if you want to be on that list for email only.



Shelley Hungerford, Stan Rice, Brent Reavis, and David Hungerford

Stan Rice and **Larry Caldwell** provided handouts and shared quite a bit of information about the activities of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS) in its seventh year of operation. Fifty conservation oral histories have been completed and are available on the OSU Library's website. They noted that several who participated in an oral history interview have since passed, pressing the point of how important this activity is. Work is nearing completion with the Oklahoma Historical Society on a conservation photo collection available to the public on the OHS Gateway to Oklahoma History website. There will be 12 to 15 thousand photos in the collection when completed. Oral histories which were gathered can be accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/our-collections/digital/>. The photos may be accessed at: <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>. And the website can be accessed at: <https://www.oklahomaconservationhistory.org>.

A comment made by one member attending was, "Be sure you have plenty of time before you click on one of the links for the oral history interviews or to look at pictures, because you can spend hours on these websites."

President Schreiner challenged each retiree to contact one or more retirees before the next meeting and encourage them to attend our semi-annual meeting in October. There may be retirees who would like to attend but are not able to bring themselves. Offering to provide them transportation might further encourage their attendance.

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 does ACES and other volunteer work for the NRCS Office in Vinita. He said he "learned fishing" for the 1st time this month and has started working part time for Beacon Environmental Consulting on OERB Projects and really likes what he is doing. Also providing NRCS assistance through the ACES Program is **Larry Coppock**. He said that he has traveled to see the eclipse(s) – 2 in the past year – and he is learning the sport of soccer since his grandson is now playing. He and wife (**Kathy**) take short trips in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. **George Moreland** is mostly farming and ranching, but according to his friend, **Betty Gilbert**, he is also quite a dancer.



Greg Ritzman and Larry Coppock

Laurie Bogle has a goal of visiting as many National Parks as possible. She recently saw several in Texas and Savannah Georgia. She has also quickly become one of our most "regular meeting" attenders. Keep it up Laurie. **Dan Runnels** and wife (**Sharon**) are still living at Taste of Heaven Farm, raising chickens and mowing pastures. They very much enjoy their country home and traveling some around the country. **David** and **Shelley Hungerford** are enjoying their retirement and are staying busy with various activities. David plays pickleball, golf, and enjoys swimming. Shelley volunteers at Stillwater Medical Center and enjoys restoring furniture. They also spend time with kids and grandkids in the Oklahoma City Area and "somehow" find time to attend OSU sporting events.



George Moreland, Betty Gilbert, and Laurie Bogle

Phil Perryman makes several grandkid's ball games and stays in touch with friends, retirees, and family and helps with their needs. (Randy's Note: This guy has a real heart for following up with those suffering with health needs or the loss of a loved one). Other than being our current SCS/NRCS Retirees President, **J. Kirk Schreiner** ranches with his wife, **Carisa**, and works as a real estate agent working for Arrowhead Land Company.

Larry Caldwell stays busy with lots of NRCS watershed activities (Randy's Note: He doesn't know the meaning of the word "retired"). Larry did give a good report on a Watershed Dedication.

On April 23rd, the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society and Washita County Conservation District celebrated the 75th Anniversary of Cloud Creek Dam Number 1, **the first watershed dam in the nation**. **Congressman Frank Lucas** provided excellent comments on the value of the Watershed Program and how it changed Oklahoma and the Nation. The original dedication was held July 8th, 1948. **Hugh Hammond Bennett** gave the keynote address on that date. The 50th Anniversary Celebration was the beginning of the Watershed Rehabilitation movement with a Field Hearing by Congressman Lucas and the Ag Committee.

A few emails were received from those who couldn't attend our meeting but wanted you to know how they were doing. They were:

From Terri Tully: I wanted to let everyone know that I have moved. It was time to be closer to kids, and two of my four live in Conway, Arkansas, so that's where I went! It just so happens to be where the grands are too! I've put up my (OSU) "pistols firing," and am learning to "call in the (University of Arkansas) Hogs!" Ha! Not really, I'll ALWAYS bleed Orange!

I found a wonderful lakefront home on Beaverfork Lake! An open invitation to anyone who wants to come and enjoy lake stuff – you know, swim, boat, fish, ski, sun, and it's always 5:00 somewhere! Ha! My Steve would have loved this place! I've purchased my Lifetime Arkansas Fishing License and plan to put it to use this summer! I love the lake and watching the birds and wildlife. It brings me great peace. Best regards to all my fellow retirees! Below is my new address. Phone and email remain the same! I will be back and forth often, as I have family and many friends there!

Terri Tully, 8 Eagle Shore Drive, Conway, AR 72032; 405-880-6327; territully56@gmail.com

From Ron Hilliard: This year began with **Edith** and I traveling on New Years Day to cruise Southeast Asia. We began our trip in Singapore then cruised to Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and back to Singapore where we stayed three additional days, returning home on 22 January. A beautiful, friendly part of the world to visit and we missed all of the bitter cold at home during our trip.



Kevin Norton, Larry Caldwell, and Fred Fortney

Two weeks after our cruise, we loaded our RV and headed to Houston, Texas. We volunteered on the Ranching Wildlife Committee during February and March at the Houston Livestock show and Rodeo. This was our 11th year to work as volunteers. During the week of February 9–11, the Ranch and Wildlife committee hosted the 2024 Young Guns Shooting Sports Competition for Texas 4-H and FFA and was a huge success. We hosted over 500 competitors that shot at 115,000 clays. We served over 3,000 meals, and we sent our competitors home with over \$130,000 in cash and prizes, all while dodging the bad stormy weather in the area. During the week of February 27th–29th we hosted Ranching & Wildlife Expos and Educational Seminars at the NRG Center. They included Beef Cattle Production, Tools for Land Management and Current Topics in Wildlife.

At the conclusion, we hosted the Ranching and Wildlife auction, which included hunting and fishing trips, beach house trips, shotguns, rifles, and many other items for a grand total of \$550,670 raised for Houston Livestock and Rodeo scholarships. The Rodeo committed \$27,317,634 to the youth of Texas in 2024.

My summer of 2024 will be spent in a recovery mode as I did last year with my left hip replacement, and now this year I'm having the right hip replacement. Glad they still have spare parts for us older models. Best of health to all and be safe. Our doors are always open to visitors. You just have to catch us when we are home and not traveling.

From Dick Bogard: Enjoying retirement with **Avon**, wife of 60 years. Deacon at FBC Durant for Barnabas ministry to widows and widowers and Chaplain for Bryan County Gideon Camp. Avon is having immunotherapy infusions every three weeks to keep cancer from returning. Doing well and widely known for her gourmet baking. Prayers answered as all Pet-scans and CTs negative. Son **Vince**, OSU grad, after working for 1000 room Sky Tower in Durant, recently hired by Omni Louisville Hotel in KY as National Sales Manager. He will work from home in McKinney, TX. Son **Alan**, Executive Recruiter for Apple, works from his home in Portland, OR. He and family will visit Durant this summer. And I was recently added to ARCSE's list of Senior Conservationists.

From Charlie Colvin: I won't be able to make this meeting due to other plans, but I'll put these on my radar. I actually didn't know these meetings existed. My personal email is old79scouter@gmail.com.

From Jamey Wood: I won't be able to make it Friday. **Sabrina** scheduled a 35th anniversary/retirement trip and said I was going. We'll be traveling home from Maui on Friday. Jamey also recently joined the Association for Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE), which is kind of like our "National" SCS and NRCS retirees organization. **Chad Kacir** was helping his son move into another home, and **Mark Maples** was helping his mother with a doctor's appointment.

Please feel free to send something similar to those above that can be used in the October 2024 Newsletter. Do it now before you forget! Send it to: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net



Jamey and Sarina Wood in Hawaii

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Friday, **October 25, 2024**, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. Be sure to put that date on your calendar. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30am, so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30am.

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

Email: don.stettler@comcast.net

Lowell Kenedy recently discovered that time really does march on. He recently attended his 70th class reunion at Washington State University. Since his daughters both graduated from there, they went with him. Lowell didn't see anyone he knew but enjoyed visiting and learning. He remembered that at his 60th reunion ten years earlier, visiting with a delightful old guy who was an engineering graduate attending his 70th reunion. Now, Lowell realized, he was one of the old guys. This was reinforced by him finding that the campus has changed so much that he had trouble recognizing things. Further, he noted that the private student housing sprawled for a great distance to the north of campus. To get around, bus service is provided that is included with tuition.



In March, Eldena VanderZanden and her husband took the Flower Power cruise for the third time. She describes it as being all about the music from the sixties. But then the day they got home she broke her leg and had partial hip replacement. From these, she says, she is still recovering. Heel!

Tom George and Jeanne recently moved to Courtyard at Mt. Tabor, a retirement facility. The two celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary. Congratulations!

Jon and Jolyne Lea have been spending quite a bit of time going to dog shows. Recently, they took in a Great Pyrenees regional specialty show at Canby. In May they were in Turlock, California for six dog shows over four days. They are now looking forward to a trip to New Hampshire in July to celebrate Jolyne's mother's birthday at the lakeside cottage.

The summer quarter retiree lunch will be held on July 24th at Elmer's Restaurant on NE 181st Avenue. Details will be emailed in early July.

PENNSYLVANIA

VACANT, ARCSE Representative needed.

The following is an excerpt from the PA Bugle, courtesy of Tim Murphy, editor.

Mary Ann Bowers reported that the prayer garden at Mount Zion United Methodist Church has been completed, in honor of Bill Bowers. A moving dedication ceremony was held on June 9, attended by **Rich and Sue Shockey, Rosie Updegraff, and Tim and Gina Murphy**.

Don and Shirley Lindsey recently celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary. Shirley wrote: "It was a great party! And "No, we did not marry at 12 years old." We also had a lovely trip to Wellsboro, where we had spent 24 years.

Lee Bentz wrote that he and his wife **Jean** were honored to attend the Lindsseys' celebration. "I reminded Don of our first meeting in 1965 when he stopped into the Gettysburg field office where I was stationed in my first training location. Don was there to do some business with the ASCS regarding his Adams County farm. Since that first meeting we had occasion to work together in SCSA and various SCS activities around the Chesapeake Bay Program. I'm sure all of Don's "SCS" family join us in wishing them continued good health and many more happy tomorrows together!"

Alan and Judy Wood have returned from another round-the-world cruise. Ports-of-call ranged from Komodo Island to Singapore. Due to the attacks in the Red Sea, they ended their cruise early in India because they couldn't go through the Suez Canal. They hope to make up that missed part of their trip with a Mediterranean cruise in 2026.

Rose Marie Updegraff reported that she and her daughter **Tracy** visited New York City on April 25–27. They saw the Broadway show "Water for Elephants," and it was excellent. They enjoyed the Whitney Museum, one of their favorites. They went to The Summit, a 95th floor experience with incredible views of the city. "We had delicious meals at Grand Central Station's Oyster Bar and "Sardi's." My birthday present was tickets to see Billy Joel. The show was fabulous and sold out at Madison Square Garden. His daughter sang two songs, and Christie Brinkley was there too. On our last day, we went to the Cloisters via the Subway to 192nd Street. It's part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and is devoted to medieval art. It's huge and sits on top of a hill overlooking the Hudson River. It was a great trip!"

TENNESSEE

Dana Ensore, ARCSE Representative

Email: Dyork818@yahoo.com

The SCS/NRCS Retirees met in Waverly at Loretta Lynn's Kitchen for our summer lunch and meeting.



In attendance were: **Patty Lane, Anna and Jack Chidester, Richard Bryan, Joe Carmack and his sister Penny, Sharon Englett, Donald Dotson, Kevin Brown, Faye Floyd, Allen Crowe, Odell Poyner, and Traci Horne.**

Faye Floyd retired for the 2nd time in 2020. She is involved with her church and Sunday School. She stays busy and hopes to stay well and enjoy the summer. She heard from a couple of West TN retirees who would have liked to attend. **James Woodall** is doing mission work for another year in Utah, and **Mark Dorsett** has cancer and is taking some treatments and preparing for surgery.

Sharon Englett retired in December of 2019. She lives in Lewis County on a 300-acre ranch with 50 head of cattle, some horses, and other assorted animals. She is involved with her church.



Kevin Brown: Life is good. He has kids and grandkids in various places across the country, due to him moving so much during his career. His youngest daughter, from Kentucky, is getting married in his backyard this summer. His grandson, age 4 from Clover, SC is coming for a visit in July and wants to go fishing.

Richard Bryan enjoys retirement. He is involved with his church and works at the food pantry. He has cows, does a lot of mowing and some carpentry work. He lost part of his finger last year in an accident. He said that the surgery to fix it caused more pain than when he had the accident.

Allen Crowe has a 235-acre farm in Kentucky. Half of it is a family farm, and he bought the other half. He rents it out to a cow/calf operation. He is preparing to do a tree planting with 2,000 seedlings to put out. He also mentioned that the first watershed dam in the US is located about 5 miles from **Richard Bryan's** home in Arkansas. He also shared a funny story about a bathroom key and a survey stake in Oneida when he was the project engineer there, and **Joe Carmack** came for a visit.

Joe Carmack gives credit to his sister **Penny** to be his driver while in Tennessee. He lives in Spokane, WA and flies in to visit the family farm in Ripley. He worked in several federal agencies, but his favorite was SCS/NRCS. He has 3 children – one is a COO as a wealth management specialist, one is a retired nuclear scientist from Idaho National Lab (a sister to Oak Ridge National Lab) and a son who is an MD supervising about 300 doctors.

Odell Poyner has 3 kids. The oldest is in Waverly and is director of Safety and Health, a son is a CPA, and another is a Dr. in Memphis. He has 3 grandchildren. He is still working for the District. His wife had knee surgery, and he has been taking care of her.

Donald Dotson retired in 2005. He has been married for 57 years to his wife **Donna**. She has had shoulder surgery recently, and he took care of her and took her to her rehab appointments. She is doing well now. Both have had knee surgeries. He has 2 daughters, a grandson and a granddaughter. The granddaughter graduated from Belmont and is working as a NICU nurse. She is getting married in August.

Anna Chidester and her husband **Jack** attend lots of doctor appointments. They are leaving to go to Pigeon Forge to see Diamond Rio, and next month to see Randy Travis. They have a dachshund dog that they spoil and love very much. She is glad to be here.

Patty Lane worked in the State Office for 37 years. She has been retired now for 13 years. Her youngest daughter turned 50. She has 5 grandchildren and 3 great grands with another on the way. She travels with **Faye** and **Traci** and has a trip planned this fall to Laurel, Mississippi.

Traci Horne retired in 2019 but went back to work as an ACES employee last year. She is starting to make the doctor circuit now. Recently had an endoscopy, colonoscopy and now has sciatica. Was hoping to go on a trip in a couple of weeks to Washington, DC with her nieces but may not be able to go now because of the sciatica.

Our next meeting will be in the Cookeville area on September 19. Hope to see everyone there!

–Traci

TEXAS NORTH

Mike Bogard, ARCSE Representative

Email: mbogard41@gmail.com

Bailey Mayo wrote:

Got a tune up this spring. I had open heart surgery and a triple bypass. Got a new pacemaker, new software, and a defibrillator as a part of the new pacemaker. Spent some time in rehab before coming home. I am home now and having home rehab two days per week. I will not be driving for a few more weeks. Have to sit in back seat when traveling. Don't want an air bag going off. I had to cancel a tour starting next week. Lakes and Rivers of the Midwest.

I missed seeing everyone at the Reunion. Always enjoy visiting and swapping SCS stories prior to 1994. Something I look forward to each year.

GOALS: Short term:

- (1) Attend Foundation Fund Raiser in my old home town, benefiting local charities and scholarships.
- (2) Attend my 70th High School Reunion in Sept.

GOLF: See you next year. Bring your A Game. I think this year's Texas SCS/NRCS retirees reunion golf scramble is the only one I have missed since I retired.

VERMONT

Lynn Knight, ARCSE Representative

Email: edelweissfarm@yahoo.com

Raising Heritage Breed Animals – Lynn G. Knight

Many of us were drawn to our profession with a strong sense of the importance of conservation, whether it be our natural resources, or natural living things. **Dr. Temple Grandin**, Animal Science Professor at Colorado State University, is a strong proponent of conserving heritage animals and discusses this importance in a video on the Livestock Conservancy's website. She states that many people on small homesteads, upon retiring, desire to raise a few animals, and if so, they should consider raising heritage breeds in hopes of preserving their genetics for future generations. When I first saw that video, I chuckled, because although I wholly subscribe (and highly encourage) this viewpoint, what she doesn't mention is the high cost financially and personally that this journey can take.



Cleveland Bay Sport Horses

For me, that journey began over 30 years ago when I saw my first Cleveland Bay horse. My instant response – when seeing a proud bay horse trotting down the road during a driving clinic I was participating in – was "THAT's my next horse!" I sought out the gentleman who owned the horse and for the next three days of the clinic, pestered him with questions about his horse, the breed, and how could I get one! That forged a lifelong friendship, and passion for the breed.

What are Cleveland Bays? They are a critically rare breed of horse originally from the Cleveland Dales region of Yorkshire England, where they have been bred for over 200 years. They are bay in color with black legs, mane and tail, and no white markings except an occasional small star. They stand around 16–17 hands at the withers and weigh up to 1,500 lbs. They have well-muscled hindquarters, sloping shoulders, dense bone, are known for sound, durable feet, and kind temperaments. Many have been imported to the United States over time, where their genetics have improved countless American horse breeds. However, their real market value is in producing the Sport Horses, or a cross-bred Cleveland Bay like the one I first saw at the clinic all those years ago. Crossing a Cleveland Bay with other breeds make athletic (lighter and faster), easily trained and handsome horses for a variety of riding and driving disciplines. Although the Sport Horses give the breed notoriety for producing quality performance animals, there is less demand for the purebreds. Hence, the roughly 250 pure Cleveland Bay horses in the US tend to circulate between the same, relatively few pure breeders in this country. It is a tough club to join because these breeders are dedicated to keeping the breed alive, and every pure mare is considered extremely valuable to them. It is these mares that are critical to the continuance of the breed.

I quickly found out that pure Cleveland Bay horses were rarer than hen's teeth. Actual records vary, but it is estimated that there are only between six hundred and a thousand pure Cleveland Bays in the world, with around 25 pure foals born each year. So, after a couple of years of not being able to find a purebred within my price range, I was able to find a Cleveland Bay Sport Horse. That was the beginning of my journey, which several years later led to me slowly acquiring pure Cleveland Bay horses! My first pure was a weanling colt, who I raised and bred to Thoroughbred mares, resulting in several high quality Cleveland Bay Sport Horses that are now scattered across the country. Then, almost 10 years ago, through the generous assistance of the breeder who I originally bought my colt from, I obtained my first pure filly! Today, I now have two pure Cleveland Bay stallions, three mares,

and a filly foal! My lifetime dream has finally come to fruition, and I hope to continue to breed the pures after I retire in a couple of years.

My second pure foal was born early this June, and I hope to have three pure foals next year.

I agree with Dr. Grandin in that there is great value in maintaining and promoting heritage breed animals. Without them, genetics become greatly limited, and what is left is fewer breeds with less selections over time as these older heritage animals slowly disappear. However, breeding critically rare animals like the Cleveland Bay is not for the faint-hearted! Few breeders and bottleneck breeding lines make it a challenge to assure that the breed remains genetically viable. This takes dedication and a willingness to persevere, despite the many obstacles that invariably come our way. My reward is having beautiful horses and that I have done my little part in maintaining, promoting, and hopefully increasing the likelihood that they will still be around for future generations. After all, isn't that really what conservation is all about?

Note: Want more information on heritage breeds? Google "The Livestock Conservancy" and explore many great heritage breed farm animals! There's that great video by Dr. Temple Grandin that may pique your interest in helping save a breed worth saving.

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

Email: pegreesewv@gmail.com



"Babydog," Gov. Jim Justice's English bulldog, tries out the "Almost Heaven" swing in Charleston across from the state Capitol.

The West Virginia Department of Tourism is placing "Almost Heaven" swings around the state. To celebrate West Virginia Day on June 20, 2022, the Department of Tourism teamed up with students at Nicholas County Career and Technical Center to build nine super-sized wooden swing sets where you can take in stunning views at some of the most scenic spots in the state. The handmade, wooden swings have proven to be a popular draw with state natives and tourists alike. Two years later, swings are now at more than 20 locations with more being planned.

For more information about the swings go to <https://wvtourism.com/west-virginias-most-instagrammable-views/>.

The West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame (WVAFHF) will honor the 2024 inductees with a banquet on Saturday, July 20th, at Jackson's Mill. The evening will start with a reception at 5pm, followed by dinner at 6pm. The banquet is open to any interested parties. To purchase tickets, contact **Rebecca Williams** at (304) 825-6983. The 2024 inductees are: **Mark Bowers** (Petersburg, WV), **William "Bill" Coffindaffer** (Jane Lew, WV), **Mark Fitzsimmons** (Cameron, WV), **Carol Sue Miles**, PHD (Morgantown, WV), **Ric MacDowell** (Charleston, WV), **John Frederick Kelsey** (Southside, WV), **Lloyd "Rudy" Williams** (Fairmont, WV), and **Arthur "Art" Yagel** (Summersville, WV).

The West Virginia National Guard used water from Lost River No. 27 Watershed Dam to help combat extensive forest fires in Hardy County that consumed more than 6,000 acres of woodlands and threatened communities and residences. The deployment was in response to the State of Emergency declaration by **Governor Jim Justice** on March 21 for Grant, Hardy, Hampshire, and Pendleton counties. Helicopter crews collected payloads of water while ground crews directed where to dump the water. The National Guard said this delivery method helps when dealing in rough or dangerous terrain that's not easily accessible for ground crews. NRCS dams continue to be valuable resources decades after being built. All of the SCS/NRCS employees who worked on the dam between 1990 and 1998 should feel a lot of satisfaction for a job well done.

Jeff Skousen will retire in July after 40 distinguished years at WVU. To recognize Jeff's many contributions throughout his career, **Jim Thompson** and other colleagues are collecting photos and short stories from those who know him and worked with him over the years. The format of the collected stories is yet to be determined, but will probably be a printed booklet. Send any stories and photos to ForJeffAMD@gmail.com by the end of June.



Retired Assistant State Conservationist **Harold J. "Donnie" Kessel** passed away at age 89 on Thursday, June 6th, at the Grant Rehabilitation and Care Center in Petersburg, WV. He worked in many locations, including Lewisburg and Parkersburg, before retiring from the Romney Area Office.

WISCONSIN

Deb LeGear, ARCSE Representative

Email: deb.legear@gmail.com

Submitted by: Deb LeGear: Wisconsin Retirees group of 12 met in Green Lake, WI, at Langford's Pub on June 13th, 2024



Back Row (L-R): Howard Gundlach, Steve Prissel, Gene Nimmer, Jim Kaap, Ted Manning, Jim Johnson, Keith Widdel, Evelyn Widdel, Erv Lesczynski. Front Row (L-R) Susan Gundlach, Deb LeGear, Renae Anderson

Krecia Leddy, NRCS employee with NHQ Management and Strategy, **John Corrigan**, NRCS retiree, and **Julie MacSwain**, NRCS retiree, met in Hudson, Wisconsin to reconnect. All 3 of us used to work in Minnesota with NRCS. It's been around 7 years since we saw each other. Staying connected in retirement can be a challenge. While doing a search on LinkedIn I noticed that John lived in the same town as me, Hudson, Wisconsin.



L-R: Julie MacSwain, Krecia Leddy, and John Corrigan.

Submitted by: **Deb LeGear**

When it's summer in Wisconsin, I often have family and friends visit from Chicago. I try to get my visitors out to see some of the scenic places near my home in Eau Claire. Afterwards, I found out my granddaughter **Norah** had only been to one of the three waterfall sites, and she lives in the area. I recently shared them with her, and I thought I would share with the retirees in case they travel to or through the Eau Caire area. We went to Food Truck Friday (first Friday of the month in summer) in Phoenix Park, a waterfall in Big Falls County Park in Fall Creek, an iconic site from a bridge, Dells Mill in Augusta and a waterfall at Willow River State Park in Hudson, Wisconsin.



Deb LeGear's granddaughter Norah at Dell's Mill for the first time, Augusta, WI.



Deb LeGear at Big Falls County Park, Fall Creek, WI



Phoenix Park, Eau Claire, WI. This is where the Eau Claire and Chippewa Rivers meet



Deb LeGear at Willow River Falls, Hudson, WI. Willow River State Park

Submitted by: **John Campbell**

Retirees (19) met in Shawano, WI at the Launching Pad on May 9th, 2024. John Campbell sent me some pictures as I was not present at this luncheon.



(L-R) Dean Sylla, Mary Sylla, Joe Waukechon



(L-R) Steve Kellermann, John Hoephner



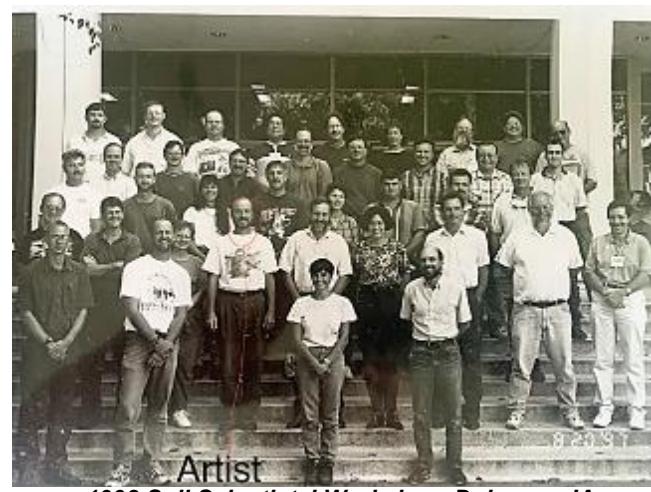
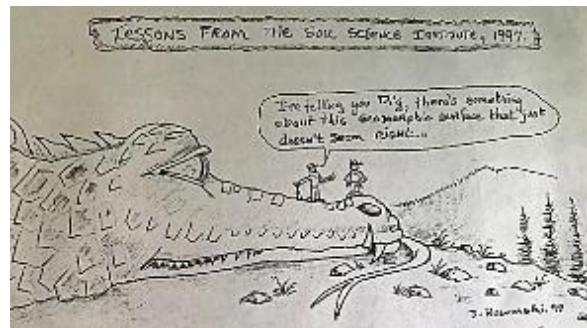
(L-R) Dave Gruber, Greg Rebman, Leon Janowski



(L-R) Leon Janowski, Joe Waukechon



(L-R) Gary Stanke, Susan Gundlach, Howard Gundlach

Artist
1992 Soil Scientists' Workshop, Dubuque, IA.

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.

Are You a Senior Conservationist?

If you have ever skimmed through the ARCSE Newsletter or browsed the ARCSE website, you have probably seen some people referred to as a "Senior Conservationist." Have you ever wondered what that means? Maybe you have wondered if you could be recognized as a senior conservationist, or how you go about being recognized as a senior conservationist.

The recognition of senior conservationists began many years ago to salute retirees of the Soil Conservation Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service for their efforts in building and maintaining a very strong agency. For most SCS/NRCS retirees, their work with the agency was much more than just a job. Their work centered around an ethic of desiring to protect our soil, water, and other natural resources for future generations by serving the public through promotion of wise voluntary stewardship of the land. Many retirees have continued those efforts into retirement through volunteering, consulting, or just providing perspective and advice to younger generations on how conservation has changed over the years. The Senior Conservationist recognition honors these individuals.

As of December 2023, over 820 retirees have been recognized as senior conservationists. Here are the requirements to be recognized:

- You must be a retiree who worked for the SCS or NRCS
- You must be 83 years of age or older
- You must complete and submit the Senior Conservationist Questionnaire

Please note you are not required to be an ARCSE member to be recognized as a senior conservationist. So, if you know of a deserving retiree who is not a member, please let them know about this recognition so they can apply. And you are certainly welcome to encourage them to join ARCSE too. You also don't need to have worked as a soil conservationist. Any retiree of SCS/NRCS of any discipline is eligible. We have senior conservationists that were engineers, soil scientists, biologists, technicians, area clerks, computer specialists, etc. It doesn't matter, your work helped put conservation on the ground.

After you meet the requirements and are named a senior conservationist, there will be a writeup in the ARCSE newsletter about your career and what you have been up to in retirement, and it will be posted on the ARCSE webpage as well.

Our ARCSE webpage dedicated to senior conservationists is here: <https://arcse.org/senior-conservationists/>. On this site you will find a link to the Senior Conservationist application. If you do not have access to a computer, I would be happy to send an application to you. Just call me, Paul Benedict, at 202-578-8226, and I will get one in the mail to you right away.

Senior Conservationist Chronicler Needed: As many of you know, our Senior Conservationist Chronicler, **Marc Safley**, passed away a year ago, leaving a huge gap in the association. ARCSE needs someone to take over the great work that Marc was doing in recognizing our senior conservationists. Perhaps you are not old enough to be recognized as a senior conservationist yourself and are looking for a rewarding way to put your energy to use. The Senior Conservationist Chronicler prepares the Senior Conservationist articles for the Newsletter and maintains the file on the Senior Conservationists. You don't do this all by yourself. The Regional Vice Presidents and State Representatives help. So does **Jerry Bernard**, our Editor. As Membership Chair, I work closely with the

Chronicler to make sure he/she has an accurate record of who is eligible or approaching eligibility. If you are interested or have questions on what might be involved, please contact ARCSE President **Julie MacSwain**, your regional Vice President, or me.

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist

Thornton J.F. Hole

Senior conservationist **Thornton Hole** was born Aug. 2, 1931, in Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio. He received a BS degree in Agronomy (Soil Science) from Ohio State University in June 1954. He married **Joanne Sitler**, Aug 21, 1955, in Columbiana, OH. They were married nearly 65 years when she passed away in 2020. They had two sons, John, and Kevin; and three daughters, Rebecca, Karen, and Pamela. They have eight grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

Thornton began his SCS career as a student trainee in 1952 (GS2) and 1954 (GS4) in Columbus, OH. Upon graduation, June 1954, he was assigned as a Soil Scientist in Tiffin OH (GS 5,7,9). He and **Charles Innis** found a collection of Peccary bones which were given to Bowling Green University, OH for identification. In 1963, Thornton was reassigned to the Erie County Soil Survey Party, Sandusky, OH(GS9). In 1966 Thornton was reassigned to the Washington County Soil Survey Party at Marietta, OH (GS9). He left Ohio and went to New Jersey in 1969, where he was assigned to the Atlantic County Soil Survey Party in Mays Landing, NJ (GS11). He worked in Mays Landing until 1974, when he was assigned to the Ocean County Soil Survey Party in Toms River, NJ (GS11). In 1978, he returned to the Mays Landing office as the District Conservationist for the Cape-Atlantic Soil Conservation District. In 1988, Thornton then became the Soil Scientist (GS11) for Southern Jersey based in Hammonton, NJ. He worked there until he retired in 1994.

Thornton served in the US Army Reserves for 28 years. While in the Reserves he completed all the required Military training and was on active duty from 1955 to 1957. He was stationed in Battery B, 176 AA Missile Battalion Edgemont, PA (Philadelphia Air defense). He reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

After retirement, Thornton and his wife had the opportunity to travel the world, visiting Australia, New Zealand, Antarctica, Alaska, Canada, and South America. Currently he is enjoying researching his Genealogy and maintaining his flower garden.

Thornton's contact information: 215 Boston Avenue, Egg Harbor City, NJ 08215; Tel. 609-965-2502; cell 609-705-5507joacky@aol.com

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist

Carey Franklin Evans

Senior conservationist **Carey Franklin Evans** was born February 25, 1941 in Edenton, North Carolina. He married **Loretta B. Evans**, 02/25/1962. They had one son, one daughter, five grandchildren, and 2 Great Grandchildren.

Carey began his SCS career as a surveying aid from 1961 to 1964 in Chowan County, NC. He worked as a civil engineering technician in Pender County from 1964 to 1968; in Pitt County from 1968 to 1973; and in Wake County from 1973 to 2003. He retired on 12/31/2003 in Raleigh, NC.

Carey received the NRCS Employee of the Year Award by the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation in 1997. The Wake County SWCD presented him their Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award for 2003. The NC Irrigation Society presented Carey their Irrigation Award for 2004. He also received the North Carolina Department of Transportation Roadside Environmental Award for 2005 to 2006. He was also an Eco Turf Environmental Inspector from 2006 to 2008. He has also been active with the NC Baptist Men Disaster Relief Organization, which has entailed travelling to provide his services.

Carey received several NRCS Work Performance Awards during his career.

Carey's contact information: 1124 Alcott Ct., Raleigh, NC 27609; Tel. 919-801-8738; fevans2@nc.rr.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)
Barner	2024	Stephen "Steve" Lynk Barner (64) of Eufaula, Oklahoma, passed away unexpectedly June 1, 2024, in Cassville, Missouri. Steve was born on September 4, 1959, in Wellington, Kansas, the son of Eldon Lynk Barner and Carroll L. (Walker) Shivers . He played one year of football for Southeastern Oklahoma State University before joining the United States Air Force in 1979. In 1983 Steve returned to Maud, Oklahoma where he met LaDonna Moore . In 1985 the two were married in Bowlegs, Oklahoma and moved to Jonestown, Texas. The family moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1987 where Steve attended Oklahoma State University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Animal Science. In 1990 Steve took a job with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service where the family moved from Medford, Oklahoma, then to Sedan, Kansas, and finally settled in Eufaula in 2000. Steve was a dedicated conservationist for 34 years. He improved, redeveloped, and developed thousands of acres of wetlands throughout the state of Oklahoma. Steve loved to travel with his wife Ladonna and fly fish all over the country. When he was home, he would spend his time hunting, trapping, and working outdoors on his mile worth of blackberries and muscadines and sawmill. Survivors include his wife LaDonna Diane Barner ; three children, Zachary Lynk Barner , Axel Barner and Tulsa Adams all of Eufaula; daughter-in-law Ashley Barner , and son-in-law Robert Adams ; five grandchildren, Dalli Barner , Dixie Barner , Dayci Barner , Stihl Barner , and Nash Adams ; and his mother, Carroll L Shivers .
Belcher	2024	Senior Conservationist and Honorary ARCSE Member Robert William (Bob) Belcher (97) of Brooksville, Florida, passed away peacefully on May 7, 2024. Bob was born October 1, 1926, to the late Vollie William and Sophia Gladys (Felker) Belcher in a log house on the family farm near Mifflin, Indiana. He was drafted into the Army Air Corps in 1945 and served for the remainder of World War II. As soon as he returned home, he purchased a 1948 John Deere B tractor. Bob worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Soil Conservation Technician in English, Indiana, for 28 years. He retired, sold his tractor, and moved to Florida in 1981. He could fix nearly anything and genuinely enjoyed helping people, so jobs continued to find him. He worked in facilities management for an apartment complex, a manufacturing company, and in multiple office buildings, first in Orlando, Florida, and then part-time in Cape Coral, Florida, before finally retiring and moving to Brooksville, FL in 2000. Once there, he kept busy helping neighbors and started trading golf carts - much to the delight of visiting family, especially his great-grandchildren. Bob is preceded in death by his beloved wives: Mabel Rose (Newton) Belcher of 45 years, Naomi (Jones) Belcher of 13 years and Anna (Lashbrook) Belcher of 8 years. Left to cherish his memory are his daughters Peggy Maddox (Guy) and Barbara Voglesong (David) , his grandchildren Sonia Winfield-Futch (Aaron) and Travis Voglesong (Susan) , his great-grandchildren Jack and Margaret Winfield, Brayden, Josslyn, Genevieve and Charlotte Voglesong . Funeral services were held May 11, 2024, at Denbo Funeral Home in English, Indiana, followed by burial at Mifflin Cemetery.
Campbell	2024	Plater T. Campbell (96) of Laurel, Maryland, passed away May 21, 2024. Plater was born and raised in Washington, DC. He built a 30-year career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, beginning as a Soil Scientist and progressed through the ranks to become the first Black State Conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service. Plater culminated his career as the Director of Conservation Planning and member of the Senior Executive Service. Plater is survived by his loving wife of 20 years and devoted partner, Faye Campbell ; his children - Stephen, Gregory (Darlene), Celeste, Maureen, Christine and Patrick ; and five grandchildren, Francis, Marvina, Shanay, Francoise , and Violette . Funeral services were held at Holy Comforter-St Cyprian Catholic Church, 1357 E. Capital Street, SE, Washington, DC. Note: in searching for information on Plater Campbell's life and career, I found an article on him and his family on the Black Enterprise website that you may find interesting: https://www.blackenterprise.com/campbell-family-real-estate-legacy/
Cline	2024	Bobby Joe Cline (71) of Davis, Oklahoma, passed away May 19, 2024, following a long illness. Bobby was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, before it became a state, while his father served in the US Navy. Bobby served with the US Army during the Vietnam War. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree with honors in agronomy from Oklahoma State University and began a long career with the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service. He retired as the District Conservationist in Sulphur, Oklahoma. Bobby was an avid hunter and fisherman. He loved wildlife, nature and searching for arrowheads. Bobby was described by many as a good and generous man with a heart of gold. He formed many strong and lasting friendships over the years. He is survived by his wife Judy Cline .
Cook	2024	Orville "Dean" Cook (84) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away June 17, 2024 at his home. Dean was born in Newport, Arkansas, on August 3, 1939, the son of Chester and Lucille Cook . In 1961, only after 2 weeks of being married, he started a career with the United States Army National Guard. He proudly served his country for 22 years and retired from the Army in 1991. Upon retirement, Dean's title was 1st Sergeant of the 1st Battalion 245th Aviation Special Operations Airborne in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In 1985, Dean graduated from Oklahoma State University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. Dean worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service as a civil engineer, retiring in 2010 as Project Engineer of the Perry/Stillwater watershed office, after serving 46 years with the agency. Dean helped design and construct flood control dams/watersheds all over the state of Oklahoma. Dean enjoyed spending time with his family, gardening, watching old western shows, farming, taking care of animals, camping, and fishing. He was an active member of the Baptist Church. Dean is survived by his wife of 63 years, Kay Cook ; his 4 children, Connie (Richard) Nicholson , JoAnna (Stephen) Mitchell , Carolyn Flynn , and Russell Cook (Nikki) ; and 10 grandchildren, Andrew Mitchell , Miranda Mitchell , McKayla Cook , Ashlynn Towne , Meagan Nicholson , Corbin Flynn , Aubree Nicholson , Jayda Cook , Alex Mitchell , Rustyn Cook , and Millie Flynn . He is proceeded in death
DeRossitt	2024	Linda Carol DeRossitt (77) of Lexington, Kentucky, passed away May 28, 2024, from an unexpected illness at Baptist Health-Hospice in Lexington. Linda was born on January 22, 1947, in Lexington, Kentucky. She had a fulfilling career, retiring from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service after 40 years of dedicated service on June 1, 2012. She was a Technical Information Specialist on the Soil Survey staff in the Lexington State Office when she retired. She also

		<p>served as the Director of Admissions at The Red Mile Gaming and Racing facility in Lexington for 25 years. In her free time, Linda enjoyed anything related to Elvis Presley, traveling, cruising, and playing Bunco with her friends. Linda will be deeply missed and remembered by her surviving family members: her daughters Monica Reynolds (Timothy), Melanie Yeiser-Demming (Patrick), son Gary DeRossitt (Nicole), as well as her grandchildren Brooke E. Eversole, Jacob E. Burris, Jadon D. Spencer, Justin D. Eversole, and Jaxon C.E. DeRossitt. She was preceded in death by daughter Melissa A. DeRossitt.</p>
Henderson	2024	Lorenzo Henderson (66) of Tallahassee, Florida, passed away April 3, 2024. Lorenzo was born April 3, 1957. A detailed obituary was not available. Lorenzo worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, part of which was worked in West Virginia. He finished his career in the National Office where he worked as a Watershed Rehabilitation Specialist.
Lorenz	2024	ARCSE Member Glenn E. Lorenz (89) of Viroqua, Wisconsin, passed away June 11, 2024 at his home. Glenn was born October 13, 1934 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, to Edward and Hilda (Meyer) Lorenz . He was baptized at Salzer Memorial and confirmed at St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church in La Crosse. He served in the US Navy as a pilot flying touch and goes, with T28's, on aircraft carriers. Glenn graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. On November 9, 1963, he married Carol Haugen at Middle Coon Valley Lutheran Church. Glenn worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, as a Civil Engineer, helping farmers and focusing on flood prevention type dams for 30 years (retired in 1989) and operated the family beef farm outside of Viroqua where they lived (his 2nd love) for 58 years. Glenn enjoyed flying, woodworking, hunting, land conservation and planting trees. He was awarded Tree Farmer of the year in 1982. Survivors include his wife Carol of 60 years; sons Aaron (Shannon) , Eric and daughter Sarah (Frank) Harless ; grandchildren, Molly (Brett) Ward , Ryan , Connor , Anna , Jenna , Abby ; and great granddaughter, Laney Ward .
Maples	2024	ARCSE Life Member Robert Charles Maples (92) of Ada, Oklahoma, passed away May 16, 2024, in Ada. Robert was born on March 27, 1932, in Chicago, Illinois, to John M. and Eveleen Maples . After high school, he went on to study at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas. Robert took leave during his studies at Midwestern to serve in the United States Navy. He served our country for 4 years and was a veteran of the Korean War. Robert married Charlene Hartley on May 7th, 1955, at Waurika Baptist Church. After his service in the Navy, Robert went back to Midwestern, graduating with honors in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science degree in agronomy and received a minor in animal husbandry. Robert worked in the USDA-Soil Conservation Service for 38 years, retiring as District Conservationist in Lincoln County in 1988. He was awarded the Outstanding Spirit Award in the Department of Agriculture. Robert and Charlene recently celebrated their 69th wedding anniversary. Robert and Charlene moved to Chandler, Oklahoma in 1974 and attended Chandler Southern Baptist Church for over 40 years, where they were both very active. Robert's volunteerism extended to the Konawa Fire Department, Konawa, Oklahoma, prior to moving to Chandler. He was also a member of Konawa Lion's Club where he served as president. When Robert wasn't working or volunteering, he enjoyed golfing, hunting, fishing, and spending time with his family, especially with his grandchildren. Robert was a devout Christian and a very good man. Robert's survivors include his wife, Charlene Maples , of the Ada home; sons, Bob Maples (Donna) of Wynnewood, Oklahoma, Mark Maples (Jan) of Bearden, Oklahoma and Jim Maples (Dawn) of Ada; grandchildren Amanda Maples of Santa Fe, New Mexico; J.P. Maples (Jamie) of Latta, Oklahoma; Robbie Maples (Sara) of Lawrence, Kansas; Tyler Roy , of Stonewall, Oklahoma; and Josh Maples (Maggie) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and great grandchildren Daxon and Maizey Maples . Funeral services were held May 23, 2024, at Chandler Southern Baptist Church, Chandler, Oklahoma. Interment was in Fort Sill National Cemetery, Lawton, Oklahoma.
Moreland	2024	Senior Conservationist and ARCSE Life Member Ronald G. Moreland (89) of Tucson, Arizona, passed away peacefully on May 9, 2024, at his home where his family was in constant attendance. Ron was born August 10, 1934, to Lyle and LaVena Moreland . While in high school, in addition to being a scholar and athlete, Ron obtained his pilot's license. He graduated from Colorado State University with a degree in vocational agriculture. Ron began his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as a soil scientist in Colorado and then moved to Reno, Nevada as Snow Survey Supervisor. Ron was promoted to Deputy State Conservationist for Colorado in 1987 and served some time as Acting State Conservationist. Ron concluded his successful career as State Conservationist for Nebraska from 1990 to 1996. Ron and Barbara loved hiking, golfing, fly fishing, birding and snow skiing. They traveled the world on their own - no cruises. The trips included scuba diving the Great Barrier Reef, helicopter hiking the glaciers of New Zealand, exploring all parts of Croatia and Slovenia, a thrilling bus ride with locals over the Andes, hiking twice to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and hiking every trail in Glacier National Park. Ron especially enjoyed the 18 years he and Barbara spent at their second home in Montana, sharing magical days with their grandchildren. Ron is survived by his wife, Barbara , his two children, Tracy and Tim , and two grandchildren, Madison and Reed .
Phillippi	2024	Dennis Richard Phillipi (80) of Bozeman, Montana, passed away at Spring Creek Inn Memory Care Community on May 17, 2024. Dennis was born in Casper, Wyoming, on August 24, 1943. Dennis pursued his education at Casper College and the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyoming, graduating in 1968 with a degree in Range Science & Conservation. This knowledge fueled his passion for the next 49 years, during which he made significant contributions to the field. Dennis dedicated his career to public service, working for the Bureau of Land Management, and the Wyoming State Land Board before joining the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS), where he served until 1994 when he retired as the State Range Conservationist in the Bozeman State Office. During his tenure with the SCS, Dennis' expertise extended across borders, as he provided technical assistance to agricultural producers in 12 countries. In 1979, Dennis relocated to Bozeman, where he continued his impactful work. Following his retirement from the SCS, Dennis founded Natural Resource Options (NRO), a consulting firm that became a family business; both his sons, Matt and Mark , and wife worked alongside him. NRO played a vital role in assisting landowners and ranchers in developing, conserving, and managing rangeland resources. Dennis retired from NRO in 2017 due to health reasons. In Casper, Dennis found his lifelong partner, Ruth Mackey Phillipi , and they shared a beautiful journey together. Their union, celebrated on June 12, 1964, was a testament to love and commitment. This June would have marked their 60th wedding anniversary. Dennis is survived by three adoring children, Tamira Phillipi of Bozeman, Matthew Phillipi (Jill Nofziger) of Tooele, UT, and Mark Phillipi (Klondy Heberling) of Bozeman; and grandchildren, Blake , Dylan , Addy , and Lily Phillipi .
Shriner	2024	William "Bill" Lewis Shriner (87) of Junction City, Ohio passed away April 27, 2024, at his home. Bill was born August 9, 1936 in New Salem, Ohio the son of Kenneth Roosevelt and Wilma V. (Beyer) Shriner . Bill attended Ohio State

		University for one year. He was a veteran of the US Air Force. Bill was a farmer through and through but worked his necessary income job for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service working mainly in Perry County. After retirement he worked for Fairfield and Hocking County Soil & Water Conservation District. He served on the Perry County Farm Service Agency County Committee. He was a 4-H advisor for 25 years and he and Nancy assisted in getting the Perry County Fair reestablished after the depression. He was a lifetime member of the FFA and a member of Salem Chapel United Brethren Church, Junction City. Bill is survived by his wife of 65 years, Nancy (Anderson) Shriner , whom he married December 7, 1958; sons, Bradley William (Julie) , Guy Fredrick (Windie) and Robert Andrew (Elizabeth) Shriner ; 7 grandchildren; Brandie (Dustin) Shriner , Dustin (Kendra) Shriner , Tyffanie (Drew) Fields , Jaycob Shriner , Christian (Matt) Munsey , Natasha (Blake) Cottrell and Johnna (Josh) Wheeler ; and 19 great-grandchildren.
Sommer	2024	Thomas Charles Sommer (79) of Sarasota, Florida, passed away in his home, April 22, 2024, from cardiac arrest, just five days shy of his 80th birthday. Tom was born in Celina, Ohio on April 27, 1944. Upon graduation from The Ohio State University in 1966 with a degree in Agronomy, he served three years in the United States Army. He spent part of his service in the Chemical Corps achieving the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Following the Army, he went to work for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) which later became the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Tom worked as a Soil Conservationist in Warren County, Ohio, a District Conservationist in Knox and Hancock Counties, Ohio, an Area Conservationist first in Dayton and then in Findlay, Ohio, an Assistant State Conservationist in the Columbus State Office, and lastly as a staffer in Headquarters in Washington D.C., retiring in 2010. He later moved to Sarasota, Florida, in 2013 with his wife, Pat, where he spent the remainder of his life. Survivors include his wife Patricia Sommer , son Aaron Sommer (Jennifer) , daughter Julie Guirguis , and his grandchildren Charlotte Sommer , Calvin Sommer , and Katie Guirguis .
Spitzer	2024	John Charles (J.C.) Spitzer (91) of Sayre, Oklahoma, passed away on January 18, 2024, surrounded by family and friends. J.C. was born to Dan and Goldie (York) Spitzer on August 24, 1932, at the homesteaded family farm near Berlin, Oklahoma. He served in the United States Air Force for 4 years. After his discharge, he returned to Sayre and attended Sayre Junior College. It was during this time that he met Shirley Welch , and sparks flew! They were married on May 24, 1960, and relocated soon after to Guymon, Oklahoma, where he attended Panhandle State University. They made their way to Stillwater, where he graduated from Oklahoma State University. J.C. began his long career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Several job moves to locations in Oklahoma occurred. The family relocated to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania where J.C. served as the State Agronomist. He retired in 1988. After retirement they returned to Sayre. J.C. raised cattle and was an avid gardener. He always seemed to be building or fixing something. He was an active member of the Sayre Church of Christ where he served as a deacon and food pantry coordinator for many years. Preceding him in death was granddaughter, Jordyne Salinas Doyal . Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Shirley; daughters, Suzie Salinas (Joe) of Cherokee, Oklahoma, Belinda Hall of Austin, Texas, and Joan Spitzer , of Sayre; son, John Spitzer of Enid, Oklahoma; grandchildren, Kyle Hall , Paige Hall , Trey Salinas , Chase Hall , and Kyle Doyal ; and great grandchildren, Kori , Kodi , and Gabriel .
Vanderwork	2024	Leslie Scott "Scotty" Vanderwork (61) of Taloga, Oklahoma, passed away on May 23, 2024, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Born on November 16, 1962, in Mooreland, Oklahoma, to Leslie Marvin Vanderwork and Maudine (Plew) Vanderwork , Scotty spent his entire life in Taloga, Oklahoma, where he made an indelible mark on his community and loved ones. His academic journey led him to Oklahoma State University until 1984, after which he transferred to Southwestern Oklahoma State University, earning a Bachelor of Mechanical Drafting Degree in 1987. On June 3, 1984, Scotty married his soulmate, Cindy Gay Squires , at the Taloga Christian Church. Professionally, Scotty dedicated ten years to the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service where he worked as a Soil Conservation Technician from 1992 to 2002. He also worked closely with his father-in-law and brothers-in-law in drilling water wells and cultivating crops, including alfalfa, peanuts, and cotton. Alongside Cindy, Marylu, and Richie, Scotty ventured into ranching registered Herefords, continuing a family tradition that brought him immense pride and joy. Scotty leaves behind his lovely wife, Cindy Vanderwork of Taloga; his son, Austin Vanderwork (Katelyn) of Woodward, Oklahoma; his daughter, Jordan Blevins (Derek) of Hobart, Oklahoma; his cherished grandchildren, Everett Scott "Rett" Vanderwork , Samuel David Vanderwork , and Drew Taylor Blevins .
Wallace	2024	Berneaze Jones Wallace (94) of Lexington, Kentucky, passed away peacefully February 28, 2024 at the Willows of Hamburg under the care of Bluegrass Care Navigators. Berneaze was the wife of retired USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) District Conservationist Harold R Wallace . Berneaze was born January 11, 1930, at Insko, Kentucky to the late Walter D Jones and Elizabeth Frances Prater Jones . Berneaze and Harold were married on December 30, 1952. Berneaze was a homemaker and caregiver to many relatives and friends. She also was employed by the offices of Dr. Alec Spencer and Dr. Ralph Gullett . Berneaze was a member of the Brushy Fork Baptist Church in Caney, Kentucky. Harold's employment with the United States Soil Conservation Service allowed them to reside in several locations across Kentucky and the opportunity to develop long and lasting friendships with many along the way including friends in Madisonville, Prestonsburg, Manchester, Louisville and Lexington. Berneaze is survived by her loving husband of 71 years, Harold.



SOIL MECHANICS SHORTCOURSE
Level II
January 5 - February 11, 1977

Front Row

W.G. Holtz
Edwin L. Minnick
Susanne M. Leckband
Deborah J. Lyons
Thomas W. Smith
John J. Swanda Jr.

Middle Row

Reynold K. Watkins
Irving S. Dunn
C. Jeffrey Craggs
Stephen Hovey
Ernest O. Copeland
Richard L. Peace
Elwin A. Ross
Fenton Nash
Rod Den-Herder
Jim R. Crouch
Robert D. Wiwi
Wayne L. Robison
O'Gene W. Barkemeyer

Top Row

Fred Kiefer
Dennis K. Carman
James C. Nettum
William A. McNeill
James L. Evans
John Steven Wilson
Daniel G. Edwards, Jr.
Terry R. Baker
James A. Hill
Kevin L. Prior
L. Dennis Medlin
Loren R. Anderson

Photo courtesy of Noller Herbert.