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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter for Retired Conservation Service Employees

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Julie MacSwain, ARCSE President

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ARCSE Board, Advisors, and members for their support of our recent ARCSE meeting which took place on July 22nd, 2024 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Over this past year, **Cheryl Simmons, Craig Derickson, Jack Carlson, Becky Fletcher, Chris Tippe, and Melvin Womack** worked hard to plan a meeting to celebrate our 50 years as an organization. As the saying goes, "Many hands make good work." Thank you.

At our ARCSE meeting, three ARCSE members were recognized. **Arnold King, Distinguished Service Award; Barbara Osgood, Community Service Award; and Nancy Paolini, Meritorious Award.** Please check out the article written by Becky Fletcher regarding this award recognition. Congratulations Arnold, Barbara, and Nancy. We are proud of your accomplishments.

And, ARCSE and the National Experienced Workforce (NEW Solutions) signed a Memorandum of Understanding at our ARCSE meeting. This agreement will provide an opportunity for ARCSE and NEW Solutions. "WHEREAS the First Party (ARCSE) and the Second Party (NEW Solutions) work together to achieve the goal of furthering and promoting voluntary conservation assistance delivery in the United States by fostering an increase participation of qualified ARCSE members in the ACES Program as determined by and through the USDA NRCS." Becky Fletcher, President-Elect signed this agreement with **Lisa Lee**, Managing Director, Programs NEW Solutions [A special thanks goes out to NEW Solutions for providing refreshments at the ARCSE Annual Meeting]. Please refer to the article written by Becky Fletcher for more information. A copy of the MOU will be available on the ARCSE website.

A special thank you to **Nithin Guddera**, SWCS intern, for your assistance in handling the streaming via Facebook of our ARCSE meeting. This was a first for ARCSE, and based on feedback, the effort was well received. ARCSE will be keeping with its tradition of holding our annual meeting/board meeting in conjunction with the SWCS meeting.

ARCSE is grateful for the dedication of its members, and I would like to thank you for all that you do for our organization. In 2024, we developed our first ever Strategic Plan and Annual Plan of Work, with 70 percent of our tasks completed or in progress. We also held virtual training for our state representatives. This training provided the state representatives with some foundational information about ARCSE, and about their roles and responsibilities. You are right, taking on these various workload items is something that is new for ARCSE.

Please check our ARCSE.org website to see a copy of our Annual Report for 2023-2024.

Last but not least, please keep membership of ARCSE on your mind. Like many organizations, our membership numbers change monthly. If you know of anyone who is retiring, please share with them information about ARCSE. The first year is free to retirees. And, keep in mind we do have Affiliate memberships available for active NRCS employees, or for others interested in ARCSE.

Keep shining! Thank you! I am scheduled to have eye surgery on Sept. 24th. Don't know how long it will take to recover to use the computer—Julie.



ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES



Myrtle Beach, South Carolina



ARCSE Recognizes National Leaders

Congratulations to our 2023–24 ARCSE award winners who were recently recognized at the 50th annual meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Barbara Osgood is the recipient of our **Community Service Award**. Barbara was recognized for her long-term impact on women's careers in natural resource conservation and her involvement with a not for profit close to her heart.

In the early 1990s Barbara was recruited to serve as the agency's first sociologist. In her position, she had the opportunity to mentor many young women, and she continued this important effort in retirement. Because of women like Barbara, an unprecedented number of women are now serving in leadership positions in the agency.

In the community, Barbara works with Lab Rescue LRCP. Not only has she rescued and fostered at least 24 labradors – she continues to share her experiences, conduct interviews and help train other volunteers. Barbara authored the book 84 Paws: A Life with Old Labs to tell the story of the important role these dogs have played in her life. Proceeds from her book sales go to Lab Rescue.

Nancy Paolini, New Jersey ARCSE State Representative is the recipient of our **Meritorious Service Award**. Under Nancy's leadership the state has become a national leader in increasing membership, member engagement, and activity over the past few years.

Recently, Nancy's leadership has resulted in 10 new members, increased contributions to the ARCSE newsletter, re-established contacts with the NRCS state office, and a significant increase in communication and exchange among fellow retirees. Nancy serves as a positive role model for the Northeast region and beyond.

Arnold King is the recipient of our **Distinguished Service Award**. Arnold received this award for more than 20 years of dedicated service and leadership at all levels of the association.

Arnold has served as state representative, regional vice president, president elect, president and now he is serving as past president. He continues to be active in his home state of Texas. It is rare to have someone so dedicated to the progress of the association for such a sustained period.

As president, Arnold initiated the first ever strategic plan. He also led the effort to develop the MOU between NRCS and ARCSE to facilitate mentoring new employees hired to meet the agency's expanded workload and priorities under the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill. We thank Arnold for his leadership and dedication.

ARCSE is pleased to recognize these award winners and their contributions to the organization and their community. Congratulations Barbara, Nancy and Arnold.



Pictured are retirees and guests that attended the ARCSE meeting on July 22 in association with the SWCS National Convention at Myrtle Beach. Earl Norton, age 86, was recognized as the oldest member present. He responded with a "Thank You" for the support over the years of mentors, colleagues and friends in the SCS workforce.

Terry Cosby SWCS address:

Nearly 600 conservation-minded attendees from government and non-government agencies, organizations, and affiliates attended the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Annual Meeting held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina recently. Among those present was Terry Cosby, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief, who emphasized the importance of working together in conservation efforts to not only continue with the ethic initiated by Hugh Hammond Bennett, but also for the benefit of producers and farmer in meeting conservation goals. "Collaborative conservation for all means [NRCS has] programs and services that work for producers of all backgrounds, in all parts of the country, no matter how big or small the operation," said Terry Cosby, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief.



ARCSE Mentoring session at SWCS meeting:

The session presenters were **Becky Fletcher**, President Elect; **Craig Derickson**, Mentoring Team member; and **Samantha Ziph**, SWCS Emerging Leaders graduate and NRCS Nebraska employee with recent mentoring experience. **Chris Tippie**, another mentoring team member, also assisted with putting the program together.

The session began with opening comments by Becky Fletcher to introduce presenters and provide a brief overview of the plans for the mentoring session.

Craig Derickson provided a brief overview of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ARCSE and NRCS in 2023 that included a statement about ARCSE working to establish a cadre of members interested in providing mentoring services to NRCS employees. Craig explained how NRCS Chief Terry Cosby suggested a new MOU between NRCS and ARCSE and how that could be helpful to assist new NRCS employees with their employee development.

Becky Fletcher kicked off the main presentation and introduced the topic of "How to be an Amazing Mentor." Becky explained that the PowerPoint used in the presentation was created from a document of the same name, and the document is available on the ARCSE web page under the Mentoring tab.

Craig and Becky took turns delivering the brief 14 slide PowerPoint, and Samantha provided insightful comments about her own experience as a mentee working with a skilled mentor during her service in South Dakota. Samantha's comments as a recent mentee were much appreciated by the other presenters and by those in attendance.

A Question-and-Answer session followed the presentation, and Craig, Becky and Samantha each provided responses in the discussion. Many people in the audience were familiar with the challenges of staffing and attrition at NRCS and provided their perspective and ideas relative to mentoring and employee development.

The session adjourned after about an hour of discussion, presentation and participation by those in attendance. We hope to make the PowerPoint available on the website in the future.



Cheryl Simmons, SWCS Liaison; and Julie MacSwain, ARCSE President



Julie MacSwain and Melvin Womack presenting Meritorious Service Award to Nancy Paolini



Julie MacSwain presenting the Distinguished Service Award to Arnold King.

MOU Signed with New Solutions

Over a year ago the ARCSE board began to think about formalizing our relationship with New Solutions because we recognized the importance of promoting opportunities for the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services (ACES) program to our members. Several of our members are currently ACES employees, and some work for New Solutions.

The ACES program has been around for many years, but it requires nonprofit organizations such as New Solutions to advertise, recruit, hire, and pay each position.

Julie mentioned the mutual goal we have in her president's article; but basically, we plan to work together to increase the participation of ARCSE members to fulfill the needs of NRCS across the country.

To do this, we will need to work with NRCS at the state and national levels to better understand the needs of the agency. We will also need state representatives (or their point of contact) to promote New Solutions and ACES opportunities in their states and to share ideas and input on how to most effectively engage and sustain retiree interest in ACES opportunities. We will be calling on you to share success stories as we carry out our part of the MOU.

The MOU will be emailed out to state representatives and state conservationists in the near future, and we will also have it posted on the website. Please read through it and contact your regional vice president if you have any questions.

New Solutions will be available to provide information at state meetings – either by Zoom call or in person.

We could not be happier to begin this journey with New Solutions. Watch for more information. In the meantime, check out <https://newsolutions.org> for information.

Note: Becky Fletcher signed the MOU with New Solutions to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest since Julie MacSwain is currently an ACES employee.

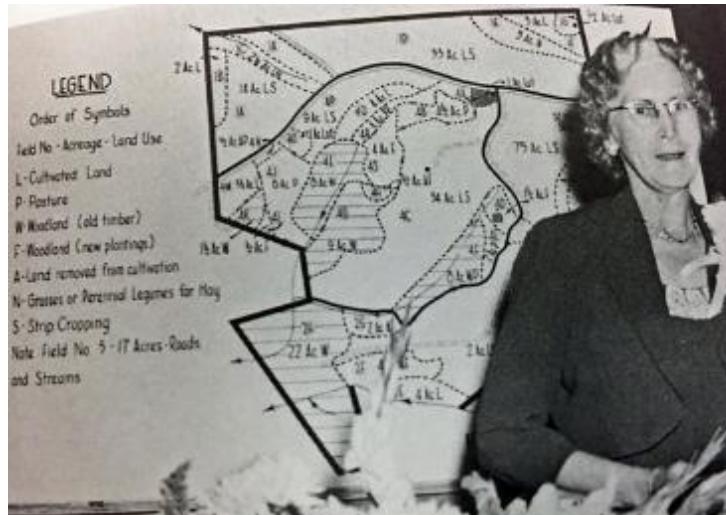
ARCSE at SWCS: S. Carolina Conservation Legacy

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Secretary

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The ARCSE Annual Meeting at SWCS in Myrtle Beach on July 22nd featured exceptional presentations by **Debbie Mann** and **Sudie Thomas** capturing and exemplifying progress with conservation in South Carolina through the years.

Debbie, a recently retired District Conservationist from Georgetown, South Carolina, started with the South Tyger River Watershed demonstration project and the nation's first ever conservation plan developed for the **Ploma Adams** farm near Seneca in 1938. From there a tour through the years to 20,000 plans throughout the state in 1947 and beyond. She described the changing landscape from cotton, tobacco, and rice commodity crops to a much more diverse agriculture today, including top 10 status for 15 specialty crops, the nation's only tea plantations, and poultry and livestock production. From an erosion control focus to assessment and treatment of many resource concerns, from the farm, the food system supply chain to expanding populations in urban areas and their interaction with the rural and natural environment.



Ploma Adams and her farm plan developed in 1938 with the Upper Savannah Soil Conservation District to prevent excessive erosion and gully formation



The first conservation plan continues to be commemorated with this marker, now within Seneca town limits, but still having a positive impact on runoff and sediment control.



On-going management of Carolina Bay easements involves collaboration and support from many individuals and organizations.

Sudie, currently State Coordinator of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and former NRCS Wildlife Biologist, followed with a detailed look at long-time conservation easements established starting in the 1990s focused on the unique Carolina Bay communities along the South Carolina coast, home to many endemic and rare plant species, including the Venus Flytrap. She stressed the vital importance of on-going restoration and management to sustain the health of the natural communities within these easements and the value from long-term cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders, agencies, and organizations invested in this goal. The work is an example of the many kinds of conservation progress being made today in the state. You can view her PowerPoint presentation at https://arcse.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/20240722-sudie_thomas-carolina_bay_restoration_project.pdf. Debbie's slides can be accessed here:

https://arcse.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/20240722-debbie_mann-south_carolina_mountains_to_sea.pdf

Many thanks to **Kristine Ryan**, NRCS State Soil Scientist, and the NRCS team supporting the SWCS conference for helping make this part of our ARCSE program a success. Debbie and Sudie's presentations can be accessed from the ARCSE web site (www.arcse.org).

Retired and Ready to Make a Difference? Join the Earth Team!

For over three decades, the Earth Team has been a cornerstone of the USDA-NRCS's work to support farmers, ranchers and forestland owners and improve the quality of our air, water, soil, and wildlife habitat. By partnering with dedicated volunteers, NRCS has been able to expand its reach and impact.

Retirees are invaluable members of the Earth Team. Your years of experience and knowledge are a tremendous asset to our agency. Whether you're a seasoned Soil Conservation Technician, a skilled Soil Scientist, or simply passionate about conservation, there's a place for you.

How can you help?

- **Share your expertise:** Put your skills to work by assisting with conservation planning, field work, or office support.
- **Mentor the next generation:** Share your knowledge with students and young professionals through soil judging, conservation education, or 4-H programs.
- **Provide administrative support:** Help with paperwork, data entry, or answering phones during busy times.

Volunteer opportunities range from one-time projects to ongoing commitments. The flexibility allows you to choose the level of involvement that best suits your schedule.

The impact of your contributions is immeasurable.

In FY2024 alone, Earth Team volunteers dedicated over 20,950 hours to supporting our mission. Their efforts have helped us provide more conservation services to producers across the country.

If you're a retired NRCS employee looking to stay involved, or if you're simply passionate about protecting our natural resources, we encourage you to join the Earth Team. Your time and talent will make a significant difference.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please contact your local [NRCS Offices](#).

Together, we can build a brighter future.

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

–Craig Derickson, retired USDA-NRCS

In the last edition we noted that significant action was needed by Congress to pass critical legislation before the end of the fiscal year on September 30th, 2024. The House has passed five appropriation bills (see list below), and the Senate has not passed any bills out of Committee. Overall, there is still much legislative work to do, and Congress is currently on recess for the remainder of August and through the first week of September.

Agriculture Appropriations Progress at a Stand-Still

On Monday, June 11th, the House Appropriations Committee released their proposed funding bill for the 2025 fiscal year (FY). Appropriations bills must be passed each year by Congress to determine how much funding different parts of the federal government will receive. The Agriculture Appropriations bill determines the level of funding for USDA and important agriculture provisions they administer. An article from the **Farm Aid Organization** suggested that the House's proposed funding bill was met with considerable resistance because it included spending cuts of 3.6% from 2024 funding levels, and decreased food and nutrition program funding in the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**. The House bill also included several other riders that were viewed as being partisan and not closely related to agricultural policies, including a rider to ban mail-order of the abortion pill mifepristone. See <https://www.farmaid.org/blog/the-latest-updates-on-the-2023-farm-bill/>.

According to a statement from the **Organic Farmer Organization**, the House Appropriations Agriculture Subcommittee bill would "provide \$25.9 billion in funding across USDA and Food and Drug Administration (FDA), with approximately \$22 billion going to USDA, representing a more than 1% cut from current funding levels." The Senate Appropriations Committee also passed a bill; however, the bill did not get brought to the House floor for a vote before lawmakers left town for the August recess.

This leaves only three weeks in September for legislators to push through final appropriation bills before the start of the 2025 FY on October 1st, 2024. Given the current distractions with the November election and conflict across the globe, it appears unlikely that new legislation will be passed. Therefore, current government funding will need to be extended, probably through a Continuing Resolution (CR) and dealt with by the next Congress.

See: <https://organicfarmersassociation.org/news/august-2024-policy-update/> .

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) maintains an **Appropriations Tracker** website where they monitor the status of the 12 separate appropriations packages that need to be passed each year. See the CRS Appropriations Tracker at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/AppropriationsStatusTable>. As of 08/05/24 the following information is available on the status of appropriations legislation in both the House and Senate Committees:

BILLS PASSED:

HOUSE (5 OF 12)

Defense
Homeland Security
Interior-Environment
Military Construction-Veterans Affairs
State-Foreign Operations

SENATE (0 OF 12)

BOTH CHAMBERS (0 OF 12)
VETOED (0 OF 12)
SIGNED BY PRESIDENT (0 OF 12)

Progress On a New Farm Bill

Similar to a lack of progress on FY 2025 appropriations, it is becoming increasingly unlikely that a new farm bill will be completed before the end of September. While it is still possible that a bill could be passed this fall, the looming pressure of the 2024 election and other political distractions would seem to suggest that the Farm Bill will need to be extended again until 2025.

In an article by **Jonathan Coppess** with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois, he noted: "already-slim chances of Farm Bill reauthorization in 2024 are wilting in the summer heat, and the legislative calendar is running out of days." Jonathan wrote: "Congress has made no substantive progress since the House Agriculture Committee reported its bill just before Memorial Day. The House bill was introduced by **Glenn "GT" Thompson** (R-PA), Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee on May 1st, 2024, and is referred to as: **"The Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024, H.R. 8467."** In June, **Senator John Boozman** (R-AR), the Ranking Member on the Senate Agriculture Committee, released a series of one-page summaries of the committee's Republicans' "framework" for the Farm Bill that generally traced the bill proposed in the House."

To present opposing views by the other party, in late June **Senate Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow** (D-MI) called for a "Time to Get Real" on Farm Bill reauthorization and released a limited amount of content on her party's proposed farm bill policies. See <https://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/2024/07/farm-bill-2024-a-mid-summers-review.html>.

Congressional Budget Office Farm Bill Baseline Cost Projections

On August 2nd, 2024, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released a new official cost estimate for the Farm Bill reported by the House Agriculture Committee in May (H.R. 8467). An official cost estimate by CBO is a critical procedural requirement in the legislative process according to Congressional budget rules. Congressional cost estimates also provide valuable transparency on provisions in complex omnibus legislation like the Farm Bill.

Several agricultural interests are describing the latest CBO score on the House farm bill proposal to be another setback for Congress to overcome. An article by **Jerry Hagstrom**, DTN Political Correspondent, reported that House Committee Chairman Thompson immediately expressed dissatisfaction with the score because it did not provide the savings that he believes should come from suspending Section 5 of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act. See <https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/blogs/ag-policy-blog/blog-post/2024/08/03/cbo-report-house-farm-bill-fuels>.

In another article by Jonathan Coppess of the University of Illinois titled; "Reviewing the Congressional Budget Office Score of the House Farm Bill," he provided an analysis of the CBO scoring of the House Farm Bill. All of the information in the following section on this topic is taken directly from the article by Mr. Coppess on the University of Illinois website at <https://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/2024/08/reviewing-the-congressional-budget-office-score-of-the-house-farm-bill.html>.

-Background

Congress required CBO to project 10-year spending estimates to create an annual baseline, as well as requiring CBO to score legislative changes against the baseline over one-, five-, and ten-year budget windows, regardless of the length of the authorization. The 118th Congress, moreover, added a provision known as “**CUTGO**” (or cut-as-you-go) which prohibits consideration of any legislation that increases mandatory spending within either a six-year or 11-year window. The score of the House Farm Bill provides a sharp example of the challenges presented by the need for Congress “to adhere to its own rules.”

-Discussion

Overall, CBO projects that the House Farm Bill will increase mandatory spending by \$33 billion over 10 years. Figure 1 in the online article shows that almost all additional spending in the House Farm Bill is for the farm programs in **Title I and Crop Insurance**; almost all reductions in spending are from the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, with minor scored reductions for conservation programs.

If enacted, CBO estimates that the House would spend an additional \$47 billion over 10 years, as compared to the May 2023 baseline: \$43 billion for Title I; and \$3.5 billion for crop insurance. Figure 2 in the article illustrates the ten-year total spending projections for these programs. Notably, most of the additional spending is for increasing reference prices in the **Price Loss Coverage (PLC)** program: \$35 billion. CBO scored the limitations on **Commodity Credit Corporation** authorities as saving only \$3.6 billion over 10 years, or about one-tenth of the total cost for increasing reference prices.

For conservation, the House Farm Bill proposes to rescind the additional investments from the **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)**, which provided \$18 billion for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (**EQIP**), the Conservation Stewardship Program (**CSP**), the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (**ACEP**), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (**RCPP**). CBO projects that this would reduce spending by \$11.7 billion over ten years. The House Farm Bill reinvests most of those funds by increasing the baseline line for conservation programs. In total, CBO projects increased spending of just under \$10 billion through the Farm Bill conservation authorizations, which is nearly \$2 billion less than the savings from rescinding the IRA investments. Figure 4 in the article illustrates the CBO score for these changes.

The CBO score highlights other notable changes that have received less attention. The House Farm Bill would increase spending on farm program payments through changes in the methods for limiting payments and for eligibility, including these:

First, the House would permit farmers to receive additional payments through “qualified pass-through entities,” which includes partnerships, limited liability companies (LLCs), S corporations, and joint ventures or general partnerships.

Second, the House Farm Bill increases the payment limit from \$125,000 to \$155,000 with future increases to adjust for inflation. This applies only for those operations with 75% of adjusted gross income (AGI) from farming, ranching, or silviculture activities.

Third, the House exempts conservation program payments, supplemental disaster payments, and payments from the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) from the \$900,000 AGI requirement if the operation demonstrates that 75% or more of income is from farming, ranching, or silviculture activities. In total, CBO projects that these changes will cost \$1.1 billion over the next 10 years.

Figure 3 in the article illustrates the additional spending from these changes for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2033. See: <https://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/2024/08/reviewing-the-congressional-budget-office-score-of-the-house-farm-bill.html>.

On August 2nd, 2024, following the release of the CBO score on H.R. 8467, Chairman Thompson issued a statement saying: “Bringing about a five-year farm bill is a long process, one filled with multiple steps and a lot of hard work. Today’s score from CBO is part of that process, but shows me there is still more to be done to make certain the bill – one that has been consistently praised by those across the agriculture value chain – can be brought across the finish line.”

Chairman Thompson went on to say “Unfortunately, the score relies on the same methodology that has led CBO to underestimate Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) outlays by more than \$60 billion over the past seven fiscal years. I will continue to work with the Budget Committee and CBO to bring about a clear-eyed, defensible interpretation of restricting Section 5 discretionary authority.” For more information on Chairman Thompson’s views of the CBO score see <https://agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=7806>.

-Conclusion

As noted earlier, with the month of August quickly passing by and a limited number of days remaining in September for Congress to pass legislation, it seems difficult for a new farm bill to be approved. The CBO score of proposed farm bill legislation is a critical part of the legislative process and provides transparency on the impact to the federal budget.

Member Benefits Of The National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE)

The National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) is the only organization dedicated entirely to the general welfare of all federal workers and retirees. NARFE’s objective is to deliver valuable guidance, timely resources and powerful advocacy for federal retirees and their families. For 100 years NARFE has been a trusted source of knowledge for the federal community, Capitol Hill, the executive branch, and the media.

According to their website: “Since NARFE’s founding in 1921, the association’s mission has been to defend and advance the earned pay and benefits of America’s civil servants. Today, NARFE’s team of professional lobbyists continues to work tirelessly on behalf of the federal community. Supported by grassroots activists, NARFE is a leading voice in Washington and across the country.”

Information provided by NARFE is not only valuable for retirees, but also employees still working who are thinking about retirement. Information from NARFE states: “Federal benefits and retirement plans are unique, complex and subject to change. NARFE

provides both federal workers and retirees with the clear, reliable and accessible counsel they need to make critical decisions and gain confidence in a secure future. NARFE webinars, training conferences, magazines, online benefit resource library, and individual counseling services all offer in-depth expertise on key issues.“

Being a member of NARFE allows retirees to connect with other Feds, participate in NARFE webinars and advocacy efforts, and enjoy all the benefits of the association for just \$48 a year. For more information visit the NARFE website at: <https://www.narfe.org/about-narfe/>.

NARFE Legislative Priorities for Congress

NARFE has identified a number of legislative issues that are vitally important to federal retirees. The following information is taken directly from the NARFE website on legislative priorities for the current 118th Congress:

Oppose Any Cuts to Earned Federal Retirement and Health Benefits – In exchange for years of hard work, federal employees and retirees were promised retirement annuities and retiree health care. These benefits were earned fairly and paid for. They should not be altered in retirement.

Support Reform or Repeal of the WEP and GPO – The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) unfairly reduces earned Social Security benefits based on government employment. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) unfairly reduces or eliminates the Social Security benefits government retirees could collect based on their spouse's work record by two-thirds of their own government pension. NARFE supports fully repealing the WEP and the GPO via passage of the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597.

Support for Full COLAs for Federal Retirees – NARFE supports providing Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) annuitants with an annual COLA equal to the relevant CPI increase via passage of the Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866/S. 3194. Current law holds the FERS COLA at 2 percent if the full COLA falls between 2 and 3 percent, and it reduces FERS COLAs by one percentage point if the full COLA exceeds 3 percent. This inequitable policy, enacted in the 1980s with the creation of FERS, fails to fully protect the earned value of FERS annuities.

Strengthen the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Retirement Services – NARFE is concerned with significant retirement processing delays and the inability of annuitants and their families to connect with OPM to receive needed assistance. NARFE has supported including language in Financial Services and General Government appropriations committee reports to require publication of retirement claims and benefit change processing times, call center response rates, along with quarterly congressional briefings on the issues.

Protection for Enrollees in the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program – After enduring premium increases as high as 25 percent and 126 percent in connection with the last two contract renewals of the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP), enrollees will face yet another premium increase in 2023, likely well beyond the limit of what they could reasonably expect when they signed up. This creates an unfair, and financially burdensome situation for enrollees, forcing them to either cancel their coverage and forfeit the premiums already paid or take on significantly higher premiums to retain their coverage.

Support Improved Integration of Medicare with the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program – Federal annuitants enrolled in both FEHB and Medicare Part B pay two sets of premiums for overlapping, and often duplicative, coverage. While they benefit from lower cost sharing payments (deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance), they pay more up front. For this reason, many federal annuitants decline Medicare Part B, and NARFE continues to oppose mandatory Medicare enrollment. Furthermore, FEHB plans often provide prescription drug coverage in lieu of Medicare Part D. This leaves FEHB on the hook for a greater amount of retiree health insurance coverage than most employer-sponsored plans typically assume, raising costs for the entire program.

Support Market Rate Increases to Federal Pay Rates / Oppose Federal Employee Compensation Cuts – Federal pay rates must be competitive to recruit and retain a well-qualified and high-performing workforce. To maintain competitive pay rates, NARFE supports an average increase of at least 4.5 percent, on average for calendar year 2025. Furthermore, the competitiveness of federal compensation should not be undermined by benefits cuts. NARFE opposes proposals that would effectively decrease the pay of federal employees by reducing benefits, such as past proposals to increase contributions towards retirement — nothing more than an immediate across-the-board pay cut.

Improving Government Operations and Protecting the Merit System – NARFE supports efforts to modernize federal human capital management, from hiring process reforms to performance management improvements, to ensure effective and efficient government operations. But NARFE stands firmly against any attempts to undermine the merit based civil service, a system that ensures federal employees are hired and fired based on their competence, rather than political connections or lack thereof. To these ends, NARFE supports the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R. 1002/S.399; and the Chance to Compete Act, H.R. 159/S.59. See more at: <https://www.narfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/118th-Congress-Legislative-Priorities-3.6.24.pdf>.

DEADLINE FOR THE Nov/DEC 2024 NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IS OCTOBER 25TH, 2024.

NRCS/ACES Enrollee Spotlight

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](http://www.newsolutions.org/jobs)

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
Animal Husbandry Specialist	Casper, WY	yes	\$50.00	40

Opportunities to make donations to ARCSE

Your donation to ARCSE provides funding for special projects that help us provide additional services to our members so that we are more visible and relevant. Your contributions have enabled us to keep the first year's dues free for new members and partner with the Soil and Water Conservation Society to hire summer interns.

Contribute to ARCSE today, via mail or online: MAIL. Write a check to ARCSE with the memo "Donation" and mail to ARCSE, P.O. Box 8965, Moscow, ID 83843 or contribute online via PayPal. <https://arcse.org/give/>.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Paul Benedict, Membership Chair

New Members

Gaylynn Kinter – Flushing, Michigan
 Harold Crose – Soap Lake, Washington
 Robert Steiner – North Vernon, Indiana
 Albert B. Coffey – Wake Forest, North Carolina
 John P. Corrigan – Hudson, Wisconsin
 Denise Troxell – Vancouver, Washington

New Honorary ARCSE Members:

The following 18 ARCSE members celebrate their 91st birthday in 2024. With this milestone, each of these members automatically becomes an Honorary Member beginning in 2025 if they have been a paying member for 5 years. As an Honorary Member, they are no longer required to pay annual dues for calendar year 2025 and thereafter. Honorary members who wish to receive a printed copy of the newsletter still need to pay a \$15 annual fee for that service. If you have turned (or will turn) age 91 by the end of 2024, have been a paying member for at least 5 years, and are not on this list, please let me know as I do not have everyone's birthday information.

First Name	Last Name	State
Mary	Andreuccetti	CA
Frederick E	Bubb	PA
James P	Clevenger	WV
Randall W	Giessler	NC
Hector	Gonzalez	TX
Charlie	Gossett	IN
James C	Hunt	SD
Donald E	McCandless, Jr.	PA

Paul R	Newcombe	VA
Victorin "Vic"	Ruhland	MN
Duane K	Setness	OR
Roman A	Statz	WI
Rollin N	Swank	PA
Carrie	Wetsch	WV
Ruth	Wilimek	AZ
Gerald W	Yeoumanns	OR
William P	Yolton	NY

ALABAMA

Earl Norton, ARCSE Representative

Email: earl_norton@yahoo.com

Earl and Julia Norton attended the SWCS National Convention at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on July 21–24. Earl said that he is no longer seeing many familiar faces in the technical sessions but that it is encouraging to see so many new and young faces in attendance. Earl said It was especially good to see several colleagues and friends from SCS/NRCS days at the ARSCE meeting on the afternoon of July 22nd and that he and Julia considered the ARSCE meeting the highlight of the Convention. Numerous reports reflected that ARCSE has outstanding leaders and exciting ideas and plans to support conservation efforts in the future and that the partnership between ARCSE and SWCS is becoming stronger.



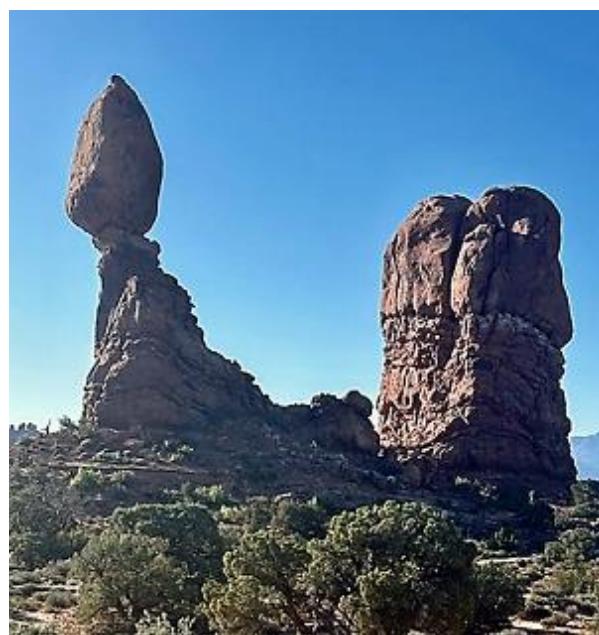
Auburn area retirees continue to meet monthly for breakfast. Meeting at Chappy's Restaurant on August 5 (L-R): George Martin, Charles Bush, Steve Musser, Earl Norton, Vic War Eagle Payne, and Mac Nelson. Breakfast topics included vacation trips, grandchildren, vegetable garden success, field crops around the area, the upcoming football season expectations for the Auburn University Tigers and local high schools, construction projects in the area, and the hot humid weather of early summer.

ARIZONA

Wade Biddix, ARCSE Representative

Email: rwbiddix@aol.com

In July, **Wade Biddix** and his wife **Joanne** vacationed in Vail, CO. They did some hiking and played golf. The low temperatures were in the 40s and 50s and highs in the 70s and 80s which was a welcome relief to the 110–118 degree temps in Goodyear, AZ. During their trip, they also visited the Arches, Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Parks in Utah. There were several signs that paid tribute to the men employed by the Civilian Conservation Corps that built many of the roads, trails, lodges, etc. in the parks. The CCC also contributed to many similar activities and conservation projects for SCS during the 1930s. It was enjoyable visiting these beautiful parks and seeing the legacy left by the CCC. Below are a few pictures from our trip.



Balanced Rock in Arches National Park



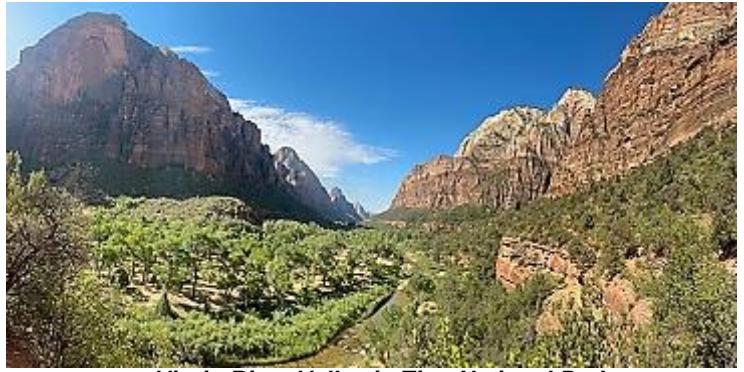
Wade and Joanne Biddix hiking near Vail, CO.



Wade and Joanne Biddix above Hoodoos in Bryce Canyon National Park



Amazing Hoodoos in Bryce Canyon National Park



Virgin River Valley in Zion National Park

CALIFORNIA

Bill Ward, ARCSE Representative

Email: bluegrassbillward@gmail.com

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 August 7th Meeting.



**Top: Bob Snieckus, Bill Ward, Bill Gradle
Middle: Doug Toews, Jon Hayard, Ron Harben
Bottom: Ed Schmit, Walt Sykes, Mark Cocke**

Highlights for this meeting included Retired NRCS Engineer **Doug Toews** sharing about his Last 6 years working for Santa Barbara County Flood Control District. During this time his major work was overseeing the repair work for our NRCS Santa Monica Debris Basin Watershed project originally constructed in 1978. The repair work was just recently completed, and Doug now is fully retired now. Congratulations Doug! Following is a YouTube video sharing about the Santa Monica Debris Basin and how it saved the downstream area from major damages from two major storms in a 5-year period.

<https://youtu.be/fUhG6fzhpvE>

"The Success Story of the Santa Monica Debris Basin, Twice

If the photo of **Ron Harben** looks unusual, it is because he was sailing on a ship somewhere near the equator when he dialed into our Zoom session!

Passing of NRCS Civil Engineering Technician Danny Maxim

In my last California report I shared the news of the passing of Danny Maxim, beloved by all NRCS folks who knew him. This is a follow-up story, how Danny was remembered by a number of his closest friends. As part of an obituary we put together our personal story and memories of knowing Danny. It was an emotional experience for the six of us. I am happy to share photos of our group, fortunate enough to share our stories and memories of Danny.



Just Danny



Danny with Ralph and wife Nancy Mashburn



Bob Snieckus, Danny, and Tom Smith



John Hanes, NRCS Engineer. "I loved Danny. We had a lot of fun together, especially playing golf after work."

I would love to be able to share those stories here but the obituary with memories and photos ended up being 9 pages long. If anyone would like to see the entire obituary and memories that were shared, please let me know and I will be happy to share it with you.



NRCS Engineer Tom Benson and "Rosie" - "I Loved Danny, he was a true friend" – Tom



Danny and NRCS Design Staff leader Bill Ward

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

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

COLORADO

Jack Carlson, ARCSE Representative

Email: pspicata@gmail.com

The Fort Collins breakfast club met twice as scheduled the first Tuesday, in July (just before the 4th): **Frank Geter, Stu Keil, and Jack Carlson** (plus grandson **Zane**), in August; **Bernie Shafer, Dennis Lytle, Chuck Hart, Terry Buettgenbach, Phil Smith, and Jack Carlson**. Grandkids, travel, downsizing, summer heat, and air quality were among the topics attended to.

Paul Ohland (90) of Fort Collins, Colorado passed away November 20, 2023. See the In Memoriam section for more details.

CONNECTICUT, RHODE ISLAND, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Carl DuPolt, ARCSE Representative

Email: cdupoldt@gmail.com

CT 2024 Environmental Summit, Connecticut Science Center - Hartford, CT: <https://www.conervationeducation.org/summit-269894.html>

CT wineries and vineyards: <https://ctwine.com/wineries/>

Connecticut Land Conservation Council - 860-852-5512

Connecticut Cocktail Hour at Rally - <https://ctconservation.org/event/connecticut-cocktail-hour-at-rally/>

Excellence in Conservation Awards Ceremony – Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy - <https://ctconservation.org/event/excellence-in-conservation-awards-ceremony-traprock-ridge-land-conservancy/>

Cultivating Leadership: A Three-Part Series for Land Trusts in the Farmington River Valley Area - <https://ctconservation.org/event/cultivating-leadership-a-three-part-series-for-land-trusts-in-the-farmington-river-valley-area/2024-10-15/>

Cultivating Leadership: A Three-Part Series for Land Trusts in the Farmington River Valley Area - <https://ctconservation.org/event/cultivating-leadership-a-three-part-series-for-land-trusts-in-the-farmington-river-valley-area/2024-10-29/>

NH 2024 means renewed energy, environment debates for NH lawmakers

<https://newhampshirebulletin.com/2024/01/08/2024-means-renewed-energy-environment-debates-for-nh-lawmakers/>

New Hampshire State Technical Committee Meeting, October 2024 - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/events/new-hampshire-state-technical-committee-meeting-october-2024>

Natural Resources Stewards - <https://extension.unh.edu/natural-resources/outdoor-recreation-stewardship/natural-resources-stewards>

Wineries & Vineyards in New Hampshire

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g28950-Activities-c36-t132-New_Hampshire.html

The White Mountains of New Hampshire are a promising area for wind power generation due to their high surface wind speeds and ridge crests. In 1980, the world's first commercial wind farm was built at Crotched Mountain in the White Mountains, but it has since closed. As of 2020, other wind power projects in New Hampshire include:

Lempster Mountain: Opened in 2008

Granite Reliable Wind Farm: Opened in late 2011

Groton Wind: Opened in 2012

Jericho Mountain: Opened in 2015

Antrim Wind: Opened in 2020

New Hampshire has one-quarter of New England's hydroelectric generating capacity. Some hydroelectric plants in New Hampshire include Lochmere Hydroelectric Plant, Lower Great Falls, and Lower Lisbon.

Generative AI is experimental. - <https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=NH>

RI 2024 Rhode Island Land & Water Conservation Summit

<https://rilandtrusts.org/2024-summit/>

Wineries & Vineyards in Rhode Island

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g28960-Activities-c36-t132-Rhode_Island.htmlRhode Island Land Trust Council - <https://rilandtrusts.org/>State of Rhode Island, Department of Environmental Management - <https://dem.ri.gov/programs/marine-fisheries/surveys-pubs/habitat.php>

Stream Enhancement:

The last time migratory fish swam freely between Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay and Lake Nippenicket in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, Woodrow Wilson was president and women couldn't yet vote. It was high time for a change. Until 2023, the High Street Dam stood as the first barrier to migratory fish on the Town River, but thanks to efforts by many partners, the dam is gone. Fish coming from Narragansett Bay, up the Taunton River, and into the Town River can now more easily reach historical spawning and rearing grounds upstream, and the nearby Bridgewater community is now more resilient to climate change.

Read about the rewards of restoring a river: <https://ow.ly/YHP750SU9AJ>

VT Vermont 2024 - Environmental Common Agenda - <https://vermontconservationvoters.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-Environmental-Common-Agenda.pdf>

Best Vermont Wineries, Vineyards & Wine Tours 2024

<https://www.winetraveler.com/vermont/best-vermont-wineries-vineyards-wine-tours/>Vermont Conservation Conference to convene October 7 - <https://vermontbiz.com/news/2024/april/25/vermont-conservation-conference-convene-october-7>Vermont DEC and GMP Help Ben & Jerry's Reduce Diesel Usage and Eliminate Over 90 Tons of Carbon Each Year - October 11, 2023 - <https://dec.vermont.gov/news/vermont-dec-and-gmp-help-ben-jerrys-reduce-diesel-usage-and-eliminate-over-90-tons-carbon-each>Game-Changing Solar Power Technology to Get First U.S. Installation in Vermont - <https://vtta.org/game-changing-solar-power-technology-to-get-first-u-s-installation-in-vermont/>**ILLINOIS****Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative****Email:** daleabscs@gmail.comFrom Northern Illinois, **Rich Stewart**, Retired DC; Email: illini76@hotmail.com

Fifteen retired SCS/ NRCS employees in the northern Illinois area met on March 21st at Pizza Ranch in Sterling, IL. L-R: Sharon Hartzold, Mike Richolson, Jim Jensen, Tim Kistler, Jerry Misek, Jim Dykema, Dave Dornbush, Steve Hollister, Steve Hobson, Rich Stewart, Julie Jacobs, Greg Jackson, Julie Vasquez, John Lewis, and Terry Kerchner.

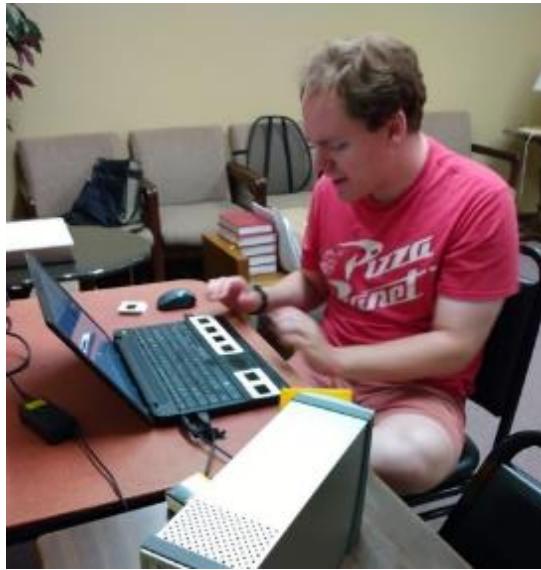
IOWA**Mark Jensen, ARCSE Representative****Email:** amjens1@gmail.com

Dick Hall recently celebrated his 90th birthday. The northwest Iowa retirees group helped Dick celebrate it at their August get-together. Dick retired as a Civil Engineer in the Sioux City Area Office. He spent his entire career working in western Iowa. One of Dick's favorite nonwork activities, which he continued on well into his retirement years, was officiating at track meets. Happy Birthday Dick – and here's wishing you many more!

Marty Adkins provided the following update on his family's activities. "I'm writing this while helping Drew with his ongoing Earth Team project. We (mostly Drew) are working with **Gregg Hadish** and some Iowa field offices to scan old 35 mm slides for electronic archiving and (hopefully) use. There are thousands of these old slides sitting in boxes. Among those slides are some cool images of conservation people and projects from 25–75 years ago. Today, Drew is working on slides from Woodbury County. It's a great



project for him; he is always ready to get to work on slide scanning days. We appreciate Gregg's partnership to make this project possible.



Drew Adkins working on his Earth Team project

Otherwise, we are enjoying another summer that is passing far too quickly. Lots of family, church, and community theatre stuff to fill the days. We will be helping with a production of "Fiddler on the Roof" this fall and planning some travel too. We are grateful for the opportunities and for good health so we can enjoy them."

Lyle and Charlotte Asell used direct seeding (planting tree seeds), in 2003, to plant 6.5 acres of their farm in southwest Iowa. The farm has been in his family for 114 years. The planting is a huge success. By 2023 it needed thinning. **Wes Adkins**, nephew of retired NRCSer **Marty Adkins**, did the work. When he is not doing forestry work, he makes highly sought-after knives. Lyle and Charlotte have also worked to create a prairie by their house, and it is beginning to look like one. The gray head cone flowers are going crazy this year (yellow ones in the picture).



Andy Asell, one of Charlotte and Lyle's sons, looks at a black walnut tree that will benefit from the thinning. It looks like a forest, much better than rows of trees. (Note: This picture was taken last February)



Yellow cone flowers in Lyle Asell's prairie

Lonny Fox was a design engineer on the Iowa design staff from 1972 – 1976. From there, he went to Boise, Idaho, where he worked in the state office. He retired in December 1994 as the Hydraulic Engineer for Idaho. I met and became good friends with Lonny when he was in Des Moines. Then when we moved to Idaho in 1978, Lonny and **Sherron** were some of the first to welcome us. We have been good friends ever since. Lonny followed a passion and took up the hobby of restoring old vehicles. The 1948 Plymouth Club Coupe that is pictured is one that he is currently working on. This car was Sherron's when they met while still in high school. The pickup is a 1954 GMC half ton. The picture shows Lonny with his "Best of Show" trophy which the vehicle won at

the Pinehurst, Idaho, car show in August 2023. Lonny and Sherron celebrated their 62nd anniversary in August. Congratulations Lonny and Sherron!



Lonny with his pickup and trophy



Lonny's 1948 Plymouth – a work in progress

In August we were saddened by the passing of **Larry Hammitt** and **Ramon "Ray" Wycoff**. Larry was a long time Civil Engineering Technician in southwest Iowa. Ray was a Soil Conservation Technician in northeast Iowa.

MAINE

John Simon, ARCSE Representative

Email: jjhorseshoe39@icloud.com

Our July breakfast was a small but pleasant crowd: In attendance were **Art Taylor, Susan Arrants, Bruce and Karen Champeon, John Simon, Dan Baumert, and Bob Lagassey**.

Heard from **Mary Thompson** who indicated she was busy with the Union fair and trapping for blueberry fruit flies and will see us in the fall after harvest activities.

Paul Hersey sent a note to say hello to all retirees. Paul indicated he met his wife **Therese** in college and married in June, 1974. So last month they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations to you both! Paul indicated he started work with SCS in November of 1974. Therese started a day care for small children and in 1988 started work as a teacher, retiring in 2014. Paul and Therese keep busy with gardening and their grandkids who live nearby and are just starting to harvest goodies.

Paul indicated he would like to attend a breakfast. Wow. Long drive. Paul, I think you should team up with **Tom Smith** who attends the breakfast once or twice a year. I know both of you and it would be fun for you both. Tom and Connie were up to our picnic in June, and it was great seeing them.

Pray that all of you are weathering the heat and humidity. I am using only the upstairs mini-split for air conditioning in our home - The new 15,000 BTU unit handles the home quite well.

Our August breakfast was graced by the presence of our Senior-senior retiree **Ed Snow** along with **Bob Lagassey, Patty Wright, Karen and Bruce Champeon, Art Taylor, and John Simon**. The next older retiree in our group is **Joe Bertolaccini** who is just a few months younger than Ed. Ed indicated he is still at his camp at Half Moon Pond in the summer and enjoying it. Ed and I go back to 1964 when I was Ed's supervisor, until it became obvious that Ed was destined for more than a technician. We had a great time, and Ed's common sense helped me in my early days of my career. Thank you, Ed.

Bruce Champeon sent me an email indicating that **Don Haley** of Durham N.H. has passed away. Bruce worked with Don out of the N.H. planning staff for years and was a fishing buddy of Bruce. See the In Memorium section for more details. Don had been suffering from memory problems as of late. Don was the Hydraulic Engineer on the planning staff at Durham, N.H. for years.



Bob Lagassey, John Simon, Patty Wright, Bruce Champeon, Karen Champeon, Ed Snow, and Art Taylor Breakfast at Dysarts. It was great seeing Ed again, as he spends his winters in Florida. We all had a good time remembering OLD times

I have been thinking that our retiree group needs a mascot. I have several recommendations and am open to other suggestions. The following two are my suggestions:



“attitude” Mascot



“batman” mascot

“Attitude” represents some of us retirees some of the time, while “batman” represents us some of the time also. Let me hear from any of you that are interested in either or recommend something else. Enjoy. I just felt we needed something to lighten up my follow up reports. Till next time, take care and God bless.

MIDATLANTIC STATES

Terry D'Addio, ARCSE Representative

Email: tmdaddio@aol.com

Bill Irwin, Dave Thackeray, and Jerry Bernard met for breakfast on Tuesday, August 6th at the Woodbridge Bob Evans and discussed issues of the world.

From John Peterson: Time for another health update. Many of you knew of my problems with my broken right leg and hip which required emergency surgery on Easter Sunday. After 2 months in hospitals and a rehab center, I went home to await an Anterior Hip Replacement on my left hip. This hip had been bothering me since OCT 23 and surgery was delayed by my other emergency. My left hip was replaced on 29 JUL. what I thought would be an easy recovery has been anything but. Surgery went well and I was home in a day. About my 4th day home I started having pain again. Back to the hospital for a week. The doctors said for every 1,000 hip surgeries they do, 10 people react as I did. So now I am back in the rehab center. And yesterday they discovered a blood clot in my left leg. That requires specialized treatment. I am not sure when I will leave here. I know it will be at least two more weeks. The saga continues. I really appreciate all your thoughts and prayers. 2024 has been a lost year for me. I appreciate how your prayers have helped me improve. Thank you all. John.”

If you want to send a card, he and Blanche are at 9304 Lundy Ct., Burke, VA 22015.

Warren Lee responded: “John, it sounds like you've had more than your share of health issues. We hope you're on the road to recovery.

We are having similar problems. Last fall we moved to Pennsylvania to be near our daughter and grand children into a senior living facility. Barb was starting to have short term memory issues.

She has had a history of knee problems, having both knees replaced 3 times. Unfortunately, she fell on her butt in April and damaged one of the knees, requiring a second surgery on the same knee in a 5-week period of time. The fall also fractured her L3 in her spine. Thus, she has back pain and knee pain. She's having physical therapy, but we don't heal as fast as we used to. During this same time period, I went through radiation treatment for prostate cancer.

Getting old isn't for sissies! Give Blanche a hug from us and get better soon.

—Warren

Melvin Womack announces that an East Region Luncheon / Patio cookout is tentatively scheduled for early October at the Army Navy Country Club, Fairfax, VA.

We need at least 20 people to book it. Please send confirmations to mwpocket2@comcast.net by September 12, 2024.

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, ARCSE Representative

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

Mike Blaine: It's been a pretty easy summer on Blaine hill. I have loved the mostly cooler temperatures and have tried to get some farm maintenance done. There are always fence rows to clear of sprouts and rights-of-ways to mow. (The county doesn't mow along those gravel roads!). Our hay crop did decent this year. Not quite as well as I had hoped, but acceptable! I am very thankful we are not having the flooding and temperatures being experienced in other parts of the country. **Pam** and I stay busy with yard work, garden work, (we canned a lot of green beans this year and froze a lot of corn, our tomatoes just refused to grow this year for some unknown reason), and church work. We are blessed and thankful. God is good.

Craig King: Good day to all, I think. Been a hectic summer to say the least. We graduated **Candra** from Palmyra High School. Her **Weston** brother and 3 other friends took a trip to Destin Florida immediately after school. **Candra** planned it all. Nice to see the maturity. She played in an Illinois/Missouri basketball game June 15th. That's all she wrote for that era.

Weston once again was a Pathway Student for NRCS working in the Warrensburg Field Office. He enjoys it. We may have a second-generation employee. His summer football workouts went well. The Mules season will open on September 7th. If they can stay healthy, it should be a fun season.

Andrea finished chemo the first week of June. It had shrunk the lesion on her liver in which she had an appointment in Dallas Texas at Southwest UT to remove it. The procedure went well and she is now CANCER FREE! All 4 of us went to Dallas and stayed 5 days. We were blessed to get to stay with one of my college teammates. We took in some sites.

The weekend of July 19–21 we all took the train from Quincy, Illinois to Chicago. We went to a concert at Soldier Field: Little Big Town, Chris Stapleton, and George Strait – 60K people. We also took in some other sites. Came home and prepared for the Marion County Fair. **Candra** showed a couple of lambs, (last time), **Andrea** supervises the non-animal 4H projects and recruits judges, which I was a judge for photography. Amazing what the kids can do.

I'm in the Kiwanis, so I had a shift to work each day. We sold 1,550 cheeseburgers, 825 double cheeseburgers, 350 hamburgers, tenderloins, chicken strips, cheese balls, fries. Not bad for 5 days. Oh yes, calf fries on Saturday night. I also pulled our antique tractor on Tuesday evening, getting 1st.

The fair ended on August 3rd. On Sunday August 4th, **Andrea** and I took the State Fair 4H Projects to Sedalia with our camper. Along with **Andrea's** sisters, nephews, we washed and sheared sheep for the state fair, which we left on Friday August 9th, returning home on August 14th.

Home for a day, then **Andrea**, **Candra**, and I spent Friday, Saturday, coming home Sunday in St. Louis for my 1979 Northeast Missouri State University Bulldog Basketball Team Reunion. We had gracious donors on the team that paid for our suite/food/drinks at The Cardinal Ballgame.

Got home Sunday, and **Candra** started packing for college, which is where we are as of this writing, August 20th. We are at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Throw in a couple of family funerals and the schedule was full. **Weston's** first game is September 7th at home, then Edmund, Oklahoma followed by a trip to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Ready for a nap.

I'm still hanging in there. It's a slow decline, but I manage. Not going to win any races.

Our condolences to the **Gary Noel Family**.

Hope all is well. God Bless!!

Alton Taylor: Last two weeks of September will be touring the Western States again. We will be looking at what man has done. Our three weeks in British Columbia was hot and only one night with AC, and it was a one room portable. If you stayed in sight of the ocean, it was cool. We saw trees that their bottom limb was a couple hundred feet above ground; they are looking for sunshine. Blue Berries are harvested by a machine that paddle the bush and made the ripe ones fall.

In Memorium (see the In Memorium section for details):

Doug Switzner, Smithville, Missouri, passed away on August 19, 2024 at 91 years of age. We've also learned of the deaths of two other retirees. **Buck Burch and Gary Noel**. A loss of some first-class citizens. We were lucky to have known them.

MONTANA

Lori Valadez, ARCSE Representative

Email: valadez226@gmail.com

Gooby Ranch Report: (Note that this is Dick's last report because he has advanced Parkinsons). My two brothers came to visit us for a few days. My older brother is not able to climb stairs, and our guest bedrooms are down stairs. It was not easy to figure out how we could get him from upstairs to the rest of the house.

We gave it a lot of thought and decided the best way would be to take the tractor with the bucket and have him get in the bucket on the ground and lift the bucket and drive forward so he could crawl out of the bucket onto the deck.

Mary Ann suggested we give it a try. I got in the tractor while Mary Ann got in the bucket, then I raised the bucket. The bucket was about half way to the height of the deck, and I accidentally hit the button that turn over the bucket. Mary Ann went flying out of the bucket and dropped to the ground. When she got up, we decided using the tractor was not a good idea.

Then we came up with the idea that we would take a 12-inch by 16-foot-long plank and set one end on the ground and the other end on the deck. We got a pulley and tied it to the eave above the deck. Mary Ann got a rope long enough to reach the pulley hooked to the eave. She got the tractor and had my brother tie the rope to his belt and sit on the plank while Mary Ann backed the tractor up and pulled my brother up the plank to the deck. It worked great except that he was full of shivers.

NEBRASKA

Norm Kempf, Jim Culver, ARCSE Representatives

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LINCOLN SCS/NRCS RETIREES CLUB NRCS/SCS MINUTES

The July 17, 2024 meeting was opened by Vice-Chairperson **Doug Christensen**. Present were **JoAnne Thiele, Paul Bartlett, Gerald Montgomery, Doug Christensen, Steve Scheinost, Gary Muckel, Steve Stover, Gus Dornbusch, Russ Shultz, Thomas Reinsch, Norm Helzer, and Donna Dornbusch**.

The August 21, 2024 meeting was opened by Vice-Chairperson **Doug Christensen**. Present were **Harold Klaege, Norman Kempf, Scott Willet, Jim Culver, Dave Camper, Larry Brown, Gus Dornbusch, Gerald Montgomery, Steve Scheinost, Gary Muckel, Bob Engel, Doug Christensen, Paul Bartlett, Norm Helzer, Steve Stover, JoAnne Thiele, and Donna Dornbusch**. Chairperson **Craig Derickson** has had COVID and now his wife has it; therefore, he thought it best not to attend this morning.

Doug announced that NRCS is now hiring Deputy State Conservationists again. It has been nearly two decades since states have had Deputy State Conservationists. Eight states will now be hiring Deputy State Conservationists, but other states will follow.

Tom Reinsch rode his bicycle to the meeting today. He recently biked to Valparaiso and Garland, NE, and plans to bike to Ashland next week.

Doug Christensen and wife will be traveling by ship to Hawaii, Tahiti, and New Zealand but will fly back home.

Steve Scheinost and wife took a two-week road trip to Idaho to see their daughter. They came back through Yellowstone, which had a lot of visitors. They also went to Cheyenne, Wyoming, to attend a wedding anniversary.

Larry Brown has been traveling, mostly to see his daughters.

Steve Stover and his wife **Jan** were able to meet with all three of their sons together.

Gary Muckel went to Reno to visit his daughter and attend a cartridge show; he will be traveling to other cartridge shows in the future.

JoAnne Thiele attended three funerals last week; two were for NRCS retirees, **Linda Schrock** and **Robert "Gus" Fredrickson**. Linda Schrock passed away on July 30, 2024 at the age of 77. She spent most of her life working for NRCS at the National Technical Center. Robert (Gus) Fredrickson passed away on August 2, 2024 at the age of 93. He spent his career working for NRCS as a watershed engineer.

Harold Klaege said he had had COVID. **Louie Buller** has had COVID, and his wife is currently in the hospital.

Sylvia Kempf has been in the hospital twice in the past two weeks and is currently in the Eastmont rehabilitation center but will be released Friday. **Jim Culver** reported that **Dana Snyder** had hip surgery but is doing okay.

Harold Klaege reported that he had planned to attend the NARFE national meeting but was not able to. He reported that Congress is still working on HR 82. It does not appear that the bill will pass the House.

*HR 82 is a bill that repeals provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefit such as a pension from a state or local government, eliminate the government pension offset which in various instances reduces Social Security benefits for spouses, widows and widowers who also receive government pensions of their own, or eliminates the windfall elimination provision, which in some instances reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes.

Craig Derickson attended the NARFE national meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and accepted an award for the Nebraska chapter. **Corey Brubaker** was unable to attend but did receive an award.

The annual **David Langemeier** memorial golf tournament will be held this coming weekend at the Highlands Golf Course in Lincoln. It is a fundraiser for university scholarships.

Tom Reinsch recommended the book, Anatomy of Peace by Emery Reves.

Meeting adjourned. Minutes recorded by **Donna Dornbusch**, Secretary. Submitted by **Jim Culver and Norman Kempf**.



We had an excellent program and great participation at the recent Nebraska State SWCS annual meeting held this year at Scottsbluff. From left to right – Craig Derickson, Jim Culver, Laura Rubeck, Jonathan Sliva, and Dave Bedlan sitting.



Cheerful members at our July breakfast meeting. From left to right – Steve Scheinost, Gary Muckel, Steve Stover, Gus Dornbusch, Russ Schultz, Thomas Reinsch, Norm Helzer, Donna Dornbusch, JoAnne Thiele, Paul Bartlett, Gerald Montgomery and Doug Christensen, our chairman for the meeting.



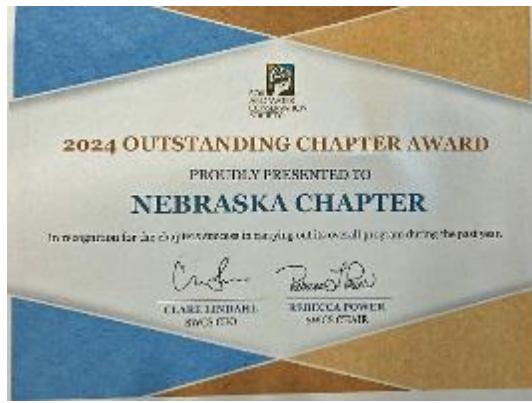
Left to right – Dave Camper, Larry Brown and Gus Dornbusch. Larry Brown a long time Lincoln resident joined us today. Larry was the Soil Scientist Soil Survey Project Leader who completed the Soil Survey of Lancaster County – where Lincoln is located. Larry later worked in Kansas before and prior to his retirement was at lead person at the Kellogg National Soil Survey Laboratory located in Lincoln.



Some lively discussion going on about Nebraska Volleyball and Nebraska football. Norm Helzer – with the hand up and a “V” sign for traditional winning Nebraska volleyball and Steve Stover, a Kansas State graduate talking about a hopefully winning Nebraska football team in the Big Ten going to a bowl game as his Kansas State team in the Big Twelve traditional win and go to bowl games.



Nebraska attendees receiving the SWCS Chapter award at Myrtle Beach. Left to right -- Steve Neon, Claire SWCS CEO, Craig Derickson, Anita Neon, and Samantha Ziph. Samantha was also an SWCS Emerging Leaders graduate at the conference.



Nebraska SWCS Chapter 2024 Exceptional Chapter Event Award presented at the SWCS International meeting at Myrtle Beach.

NEW JERSEY

Nancy Paolini, ARCSE Representative
Email: npaolini@comcast.net

Greetings from New Jersey, the Garden State and home of the best tomatoes, sweet corn, and blueberries (among other things).

Back in May a few of us gathered at Town Diner in Hightstown, NJ. The group included both current and retired NRCS-ers, and a few spouses.



Left to right: Doug Brown, (spouse), Barbara Phillips, (retired PAS), Janice Reid (Brown), (retired Asst. State Con), Steve Phillips, (Spouse), Nancy Paolini, (retired Res. Con), Gail Bartok, (Asst State Con- Programs) and Fran Deficchio, (Analyst - Programs and Protracts).



In July, ShayMaria Silvestri, (retired Natural Res. Specialist) and I visited Belmar, NJ for a little day trip to get some Ocean Breeze. Ahhhh.

Attention: SAVE THE DATE! Plans are underway for a get together for NJ NRCS retirees in Ringoes, NJ on Sunday, September 29. Details will be sent out to NJ retirees early in September.

Congratulations to Nancy Paolini and Barbara Osgood for recently receiving Service Awards on behalf of the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE).



Nancy Paolini, New Jersey State Representative received the 2023-24 ARCSE Meritorious Service Award. Under Nancy's leadership the state has become a national leader in increasing membership, member engagement, and activity over the past few years. She has made efforts to re-engage with NRCS in her state. Nancy serves as a positive role model for the Northeast region and beyond.



Barbara Osgood is the recipient of our ARCSE Community Service Award. Barbara is recognized for her long-term impact on women's careers in natural resource conservation and her involvement with Lab Rescue LRCP. She has rescued and fostered at least 24 labradors and whenever possible, she shares her story of the role these dogs have played in her life. Barbara authored the book 84 Paws: A Life With Old Labs, and she donates the proceeds to Lab Rescue.

OHIO

Mike Monnin, ARCSE Representative

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With great sadness I'm passing along the obituary notice for Jim Piper, a beloved co-work and friend to many of us:

<https://www.fischerfuneralhome.com/obituary/James-Pip>

OREGON

Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative

Email: don.stettler@comcast.net

The Oregon retirees met for the summer quarter lunch on July 24th at Elmer's Restaurant on NE 181st Avenue. A number sent their regrets. **Jon and Jolyne Lea** reported that they were vacationing in Maine. **Bruce Newton** said he was vacationing in Sun River and went on to say that he is most often volunteering for Habitat for Humanity on Wednesdays. **Russ Langridge and Leland Saele** both told me that they would be helping their wives with medical appointments. **Eldena Vanderzanden** is still recovering from a broken leg, and **Louise Davis** managed to get COVID.

Attending the lunch were **Terry Mitchell, Dick and Kathy Sylvester, Ralph Wadleigh, Jim Marron, Stefanie Aschmann, Danny Moore, Bobbie Hart, Kay Denfeld, Gale Voge, Lowell Kenedy**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**.



Ralph Wadleigh, Kathy Sylvester, and Terry Mitchell

Terry Mitchell told the group that she keeps busy with yard work and going to baseball games at Mt. Hood Community College. **Kathy Sylvester** said that her cataract surgery went well and that everything now looks brighter. **Ralph Wadleigh** is looking forward to visiting New England this fall and seeing the autumn colors there. **Jim Marron** is enjoying Grandpa duties babysitting his two- and five-year-old grandchildren twice a week. The group welcomed **Danny Moore** who has not attended a lunch for a time. He said he is dealing with many changes within his family and is behind on his yardwork. **Bobbie Hart** just got back from spending some time at the family beach house. While she was gone, her home was broken into and robbed. **Kay Denfeld** is now taking lessons to learn to play the dulcimer. **Gale Voge** vacationed at the beach a few times and is still volunteering for Meals on Wheels. Lately **Dick Sylvester** has been doing quite a bit of power washing. **Lowell Kenedy** reminisced about being in Toastmasters with Danny Moore.



Lowell Kenedy, Dick Sylvester, and Gale Voge



Kay Denfeld, Bobbie Hart and Stefanie Aschmann



Danny Moore, Jim Marron, and Ralph Wadleigh

Don Stettler told of a day trip to the South Beach Marina at Newport. The marina was an RC&D project with design and construction management provided by a private engineer in the late 1970s. Don was involved in the overview of its planning, design, and construction of the 600-boat basin marina. The plans for the marina also included a 150-boat dry moorage building which became the project's bane. After it was constructed, it was learned that a sprinkler fire suppression system was required by the city fire department. With this feature, the cost of insurance for the building would be too expensive because if the sprinkler system was set off, water would fill the stacked boats which would cause the storage racks to collapse. Further, the filter cloth used in construction of the seawall failed to retain sand from migrating from under the building into the boat basin, resulting in its concrete floor collapsing. In the end, the Port of Newport had to find another use for the building, other than for storing boats. Rogue Brewing and Spirits is now utilizing the building. Don hoped to be able to look inside to see what had been done to stabilize the concrete floor, but the inside of the building has been developed in a way that made that impossible. However, he did learn from Rogue Brewing staff that just recently, some work had been done to prevent sand from migrating from under the floor.



South Beach Marina. The intended dry moorage building is shown on the left center of picture.



Don Stettler at Rogue Brewery



Brewing equipment

PENNSYLVANIA

VACANT, ARCSE Representative needed.

From **Frank Resides**: **Don Haley**, former Engineer in the MA State Office died on 8/14/24. Don had a number of health issues and had fallen a few days before and broke some vertebrae in his neck.

Our prayers are with his wife, **Debbie** and their family

TEXAS NORTH

Mike Bogard, ARCSE Representative

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John Mueller wrote: **Kate** and I recently celebrated our 35th anniversary with a trip to Colorado Springs, and we had a great time. Our adventures included hiking the Garden of the Gods, touring Glen Eyrie Castle, taking the cog railway to Pike's Peak (wonderful

scenery and a delightful 44 degrees), visiting the Air Force Academy and taking in a couple of IMAX films, and also exploring the towns of Manitou Springs and Cripple Creek.

Then, on the return trip, we detoured slightly to the Capulin Volcano National Monument in New Mexico. We weren't quite sure what we would find, but we had fun touring an extinct volcano and hiking its rim. There were fabulous views in all directions, and we were able to see areas of four states (Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) before clouds started to roll in.



A photo from the Central Garden Trail at Garden of the Gods.



At Pike's Peak (elevation 14,115 feet).

Mike Bogard reported the following: **Mary Beth** and I got married in March. Mary Beth lost her husband of 55 years in November 2021, and I lost my wife of 61 years in December 2022.

We were already attending the same church, and I joined the Sunday School class she was a member of, where we soon became well acquainted.

With combining two households and Mary Beth having knee replacement surgery, we delayed our honeymoon until August. We left Gatesville, Texas August 1st, 2024, and returned home August 24th. We drove through parts of eleven states covering 6,761 miles, averaging over 280 miles a day. Below is a list of our travels.

New Mexico, we visited Capulin Volcano Nat. Monument. Then traveled northwest to Colorado Springs, Colorado where we toured the Air Force Academy and Garden of The Gods. We drove to Canon City and rode the train through Royal Gorge.

We drove east from Colorado Springs then north through Nebraska into South Dakota. In South Dakota we toured Custer State Park, drove up Iron Mountain Road to Mount Rushmore and left Mount Rushmore on the Nettles Highway. We also visited the Badlands National Park.

An added element to our South Dakota experience was the annual Sturgis Bike ten-day rally. There were thousands of bikes (mainly Harleys) touring the same areas.

We visited Theodore Roosevelt Nat. Park in North Dakota then headed west across northern Montana to Glacier Nat. Park.

From Glacier we headed south into Idaho near the West Yellowstone entrance and toured Yellowstone Nat. Park for part two days. Out of Yellowstone we headed east to Cody, Wyoming. In Cody we visited the Wild Billy Cody Museum. As we left Cody, we drove

south and visited the Flaming George Nat. Rec. Area and into Utah. In Utah we drove to Moab and toured Dead Horse State Park, Canyonlands Nat. Park, Newspaper Rock, and Arches Nat. Park.

Our next stop was Panguitch, Utah where we stayed the first night in the Panguitch House B&B (very nice) and next two nights in some nice cabins nearby. From Panguitch we went to Bryce Canyon Nat. Park and Cedar Breaks Nat. Monument.

We went to the west entrance of Zion Nat. Park and drove through the park to Springdale at the east entrance. We spent the night in Springdale and caught the city bus to Zion Visitors Center. At the visitors center we got on a shuttle that took us into the park. We took several stops to walk the trails and see the sites. We walked the trail to the Narrows; this was quite a long hike.

We drove back through Zion Nat. Park and went to North Rim of the Grand Canyon Nat. Park in Arizona. After staying in a cabin at the north rim and taking several side roads for different views of Grand Canyon, we drove to Flagstaff, Arizona. The next day we drove up to Grand Canyon Village (west entrance to South Rim of Grand Canyon) and drove east along highway US 64 stopping for several views of Grand Canyon. Rain and lighting traveled with us while there. This limited our efforts for hiking.

We spent the night in Holbrook Arizona and toured the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest Nat. Park. Leaving the Petrified Forest, we headed home going across southern New Mexico along some roads neither one of us had traveled.

Of interest to us was the village of Cloudcroft, New Mexico. At around 9,000 feet elevation we were not the only ones enjoying the cool weather. It was a very lively little town.

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative

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Most West Virginians have heard about **Jon McBride**. This Charleston native was an American Naval officer, test pilot, astronaut, and administrator for NASA. He died a week before his 81st birthday on August 7th. What most people don't know is his connection to SCS.

On a sunny day in 1986, McBride was at a farm near Cheat Lake in Monongalia County to create a public service announcement about the Earth Team volunteer program. **JR Wolfe**, Retired Farm Bill Program Specialist and current ACES employee, was also in the video as he was a volunteer at the time. JR says that it was an interesting and enjoyable experience. **Peg Reese**, West Virginia's first Volunteer Coordinator and current ARCSE State Representative, produced the video which was filmed by a videographer from USDA.

Corine Powell, District Conservationist for the Huntington Service Center, was one of six women selected as a 2024 Women in Agriculture. The WVDA release provided the following overview of her achievements:

CORINE POWELL – MASON COUNTY An internship with USDA in 1999 led Corine down an agricultural path. She worked in several districts until she found her home in Mason County and married a farmer's son. She is a strong community leader, key partner, visionary, and innovative conservationist. Corine served as the first female District Conservationist for the Guyan Conservation District. That work led to improvements in partner relationships, conservation education, and innovative approaches to accomplishing conservation on the land. She is a promoter, leader, and problem solver, and her work continually results in positive outcomes. She has certifications such as Nutrient Management Planner, Conservation Planner, and Pasture Management Planner, but is most proud of receiving the Capital Conservation Partnership Award.

The other honorees were **Esther Allen**, Marshal County; **Heather Duncan**, Jefferson County; **Cindy Jenks**, Hardy County; **Carol D. Miller**, Cabell County; **Teri McCoy**, Pendleton County; and **Carol D. Miller**, Cabell County.

WISCONSIN

Deb Legear, ARCSE Representative

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Retirees Met in Antigo, WI for a tour of a bird rescue facility and luncheon on August 15th, 2024. I was not able to attend personally but was sent a couple of pictures to share.



(L-R) Howard Gundlach, Dave Omernik, Jean Omernik



(L-R) Kim Georg, Susan Georg, Joanne Lubich, Ken Lubich, Kathryn Gorichan, Jim Barnes, John Campbell, Darryl Ellis



(L-R) Howard Gundlach, Dave Omernik, Jean Omernik, Kim Georg, Sue Georg, Joanne Lubich, Ken Lubich, Kathryn Gorichan, Jim Barnes, John Campbell, Darryl Ellis, Lori Van Hulle, Kate Kelly, Sue Gundlach, Vic Price taking photos and not pictured



(L-R) Kathryn Gorichan, Jim Barnes, John Campbell, Darryl Ellis, Lori Van Hulle, Kate Kelly, Susan Gundlach, Howard Gundlach, Dave Omernik, Jean Omernik, Kim Georg, Susan Georg, Joanne Lubich, Ken Lubich

Submitted by Julie, MacSwain, ARCSE President – Hudson, WI

In May, 2024 I completed my role as House Mother for Alpha Gamma Rho Alpha Psi Chapter in River Falls, Wisconsin. Though I enjoyed the opportunity to serve in this position, I felt it was time to spend time in some other areas in retirement. Currently I am working in an ACES position as a public affairs specialist, for Management and Strategy at NRCS, and New Hampshire NRCS. I have found this to be a great way to give back in retirement.

Submitted by Tim Meyer – ARCSE Member - Eau Claire, WI

Hwy 16 to Hinton. Alberta Hwy 40 to Grand Prairie. Hwy 43 to Dawson Creek, BC.

Animal Crossing signs on these highways included Elk, Mountain Sheep, Deer, Caribou, and Moose. Big rolling forested country. Aspen, pine, spruce, and for covered slopes over everything except highest elevations. Some steep downgrades and upgrades but not bad. Not as scenic as the National Parks but still demands many photographs.



Had our first experience with forest fire smoke today starting about 50 miles out of Dawson Creek. Assuming a S/SW wind the fire must be off to the south of us. I asked a guy at Pink Mountain, when we stopped for gas (1.92/L C\$), who seemed like he was working there, "Where is the fire?" His answer as he shrugged, "In the bush." I asked people at Fort Nelson where the fire is burning and was told "Apparently out in the Territories." Nobody seems concerned or to care about the location of the fire. Must just be a common thing they live with. A guy did tell me it wasn't affecting the road to AK.

Averaging 17.4 MPG to Fort Nelson. After passing through Beaver Lodge, BC, had a steep 10% grade down into Taylor, BC (Taylor Hill) and we followed a logging truck with full load of logs down the hill. All rivers drain into the Arctic Ocean now. Numerous critter warnings but wildlife is scarce today in the smoke. Staying cool! Low 70s. First vehicle incident seen. Car or motorcycle down off road with steep bank. Couldn't see over shoulder on that southbound side of road. Ambulance, rescue vehicle, and law enforcement arriving at scene. We did not stop. Smoke still thick at Fort Nelson.



Glad they re-routed the road around Suicide Hill!

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: ARCSE needs someone to take over the great work that Marc Safley 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 Paul Benedict.

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist

Thomas Daniel McCain

Thomas Daniel McCain was born 11/11/1940 in Delphi, Indiana. He is a graduate of Purdue University with a BS degree in agronomy (June, 1962). He was a soil conservationist with SCS in Monticello, Portland, and Lafayette. He then served as district conservationist in Williamsport (1964–1968) and Fort Wayne (1968–1987). He worked in the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) from 1987 to 1994. He retired on 4/22/94 as an agronomist. He worked with Dave Schertz on the Crop Residue Management Team. He worked as a consultant in Crop Residue Management with the agricultural industry from 1992 to 1998.

His interests after retiring include history and non-profit organizations. He was president of the Wabash & Erie Canal Association for 22 years after retiring in 1994. He is a member of the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission.

He became an Earth Team Volunteer in Indiana on the day that he retired in 1994. Shortly thereafter the SCS was renamed the NRCS. He says that "My seven years at the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) were the most exciting and productive time of my career. I traveled to 38 states and three countries, speaking or coordinating meetings or gathering information. I was responsible for the collection of county level crop residue acreage data from 3,092 counties in the US, and disseminating these data to the agricultural industry, government entities, and the farm media from 1987 through 1994."

Dan's contact information is 3198 North 700 West, Delphi, IN 46923; 765-412-4308; dan.mccain@gmail.com.

OBITUARY INFORMATION**Paul Benedict, Membership Chair**

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

Surname	Year	<i>In-Memoriam</i> (Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see www.arcse.org)
Atwill	2024	Joseph Lewis Atwill (101) of Fulton, Kentucky passed away August 9, 2024, at Magnolia Place of Union City, Tennessee. Lewis was born July 24, 1923, in Fulton County, Kentucky to the late Joseph Lewis Atwill Sr. and Edna (Davis) Atwill. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Force. Mr. Atwill was retired from the USDA-Soil Conservation Service where he worked as a Soil Conservation Technician. He was also a school bus driver and farmer. He was an active member Cayce Baptist Church in Cayce, Kentucky; the Gideons International, the Order of the Eastern Star and the Roberts Lodge #172 in Fulton. He loved being outside and working in his garden. Lewis was preceded in death by his wife Helen Louise Atwill in 2013. He is survived by his son, J.L. "Melanie" Atwill, of Fulton, Kentucky; two grandchildren, Camiel "Mike" Atwill Taylor, of Martin, Tennessee and Jay Atwill, of Brentwood, Tennessee; and two great grandchildren, Emma Taylor and Nick Taylor.
Blake	2024	Ronald Charles Blake (74) of Boise, Idaho, passed away from a short illness on Father's Day, June 16, 2024, in Boise. He was born in Twin Falls, Idaho on December 1, 1949, to parents, Rosemary K. and Charles Stewart Blake. Ron graduated from the College of Southern Idaho and went on to earn his degree in Range Management from Utah State University. He worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service throughout his career both in Twin Falls and Mountain Home, Idaho, where he was the District Conservationist. He retired and moved to Boise in 2008. Ron met his wife, Zena, at a conference in Florida in 1992. In retirement Ron and Zena traveled together in Europe, traversing long distance paths in France and Spain with friends, and in the United Kingdom with the Newport (Wales) Outdoor group. Ron especially enjoyed the trips to Israel and made presentations of them to his church on his return to Idaho. He was a faithful member of Bridgepoint Church in Boise. Ron's survivors include his wife, Zena Cook, his daughter Alyssa (Ryan) Smith, his granddaughters Aria Rose and Kora Iris Smith.
Bright	2024	Dorothy Cecelia Bright (84) of Portland, Oregon, passed away peacefully with family at her side on August 10, 2024, due to the effects of dementia. She was the wife of ARCSE Member Roy E. Bright, retired State Conservation Engineer for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Portland State Office. Dorothy was born to Jeremiah and Agnes McCarthy in Manchester, New Hampshire on August 29, 1939. She graduated from Keene State College and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. It was in graduate school where she met her husband of 61 years, Roy Bright. Dorothy and Roy moved to Ohio, New Jersey, and Minnesota, before settling in Portland in 1978, residing in the Rock Creek area for over 45 years. Dorothy Was a high school teacher for most of her adult life. She taught home economics and vocational education at Hillsboro and Glencoe High Schools in Hillsboro, Oregon for twenty years. Dorothy was a devoted church volunteer at her parishes in Arizona and Oregon. Dorothy is survived by her husband, Roy, her son David (Linda) of Happy Valley, Oregon and their sons, Devin and Derek of Portland. Dorothy was preceded in death by her son, Brian.
Brooks	2024	James Euell Brooks (82) of Chatham, Virginia, passed away on July 25, 2024, at Centra Lynchburg General Hospital. James was born February 7, 1942, in Union Hall, Franklin County, Virginia, the son of James Edgar Brooks and Nena Brown Brooks. James grew up and lived on his parents' farm in Union Hall, helping to grow tobacco, grain, and livestock, until his marriage to Barbara Watson. They attended New Bethel Church of the Brethren, at Pullens, Virginia. He was a cancer survivor from 2010. James proudly served in the US Army for two years. James was employed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for 55 years in Franklin, Pittsylvania and Halifax Counties as a Soil Conservation Technician. James was an amateur astronomer and enjoyed building bluebird houses to help bring back bluebirds to Pittsylvania County. He researched his family's history/genealogy and contributed data to Find a Grave and Ancestry.com sites online. He loved his work with NRCS and helping farmers with conservation practices. Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Barbara Watson Brooks.
Burch	2024	Martin Wallace "Buck" Burch of Columbia, Missouri, passed away on August 21, 2024, due to complications from Parkinson's. He was born February 22, 1945, the only child of Martin and Lucille Burch. He graduated with honors from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri in 1967 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture with a minor in Biology. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for 39 years. He started as a trainee in Fulton, Missouri. He was then selected as District Conservationist in Ozark, Missouri. While in that position he developed a program to seed grass by helicopter. He transferred to Clinton County as District Conservationist in Plattsburg, Missouri which was designated a training location. Later Buck was chosen to be the Resource Conservationist based in St. Joseph, Missouri which included a 12-county area in Northwest Missouri. After several years in that position, he was promoted to Area Conservationist, in 1993 he was selected to National Liaison to Region 7 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Kansas City, Kansas. That position included programs between EPA and NRCS in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas. He also served on a team advisory committee that dealt with watersheds near Moscow, Russia and Warsaw, Poland further developing international relationships within Agriculture and Natural Resources. Buck's final assignment was as a National Liaison to the National Pork Producers Council in Des Moines, Iowa. In his spare time, he enjoyed landscaping, designing stained glass and a part time photography business. After he retired, he and his wife Carolyn enjoyed golfing, snow skiing in Colorado, traveling around the world and country with friends as well as entertaining friends and family to dinner parties at their home on Lake Concord, Plattsburg, Missouri. In 2011 Buck and Carolyn settled in Columbia to be closer to their children and grandkids that would attend the University of Missouri and to provide Buck the medical support for Parkinson's. He and Carolyn recently celebrated their 55th Wedding Anniversary. He is survived by wife Carolyn; two sons, Shawn (Maggie), of Jefferson City, Missouri, and Travis Burch, and grandchildren Whitney and Austin Burch.
Corson	2024	Larry Corson (88) of Meridian, Idaho, passed away June 12, 2024. Larry was born March 7, 1936. He started work with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in 1968 in Idaho. He was an Information and Education Specialist before

		being assigned as Area Conservationist in Boise, Idaho. He then transferred in 1980 to northeast Pennsylvania where he worked many years there as an Area Conservationist as well while living in Trout Run, Pennsylvania. After retiring he moved back to Idaho, first to Eagle, Idaho and then Meridian. An obituary was not available.
Coufal	2024	Joe William Coufal (81) of Thalia, Texas, passed away on June 28, 2024, in Vernon, Texas. Joe was born Friday, July 24, 1942, in Thalia, the son of the late Joe Coufal and the late Elizabeth Zacek Coufal. He married Robbie Sandra Scott on January 1, 1964, in Vernon, Texas. Joe was a farmer and a retired technician for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Crowell, Texas. He was a member of the Quanah Masonic Lodge #689, Quanah Council Chapter #450, Quanah Council #367 of the Grand Lodge of Texas, Vernon Commandry #33, and the West Texas York Rite. He was also a member of the Red Cross of Constantine of Wichita Falls, Holy Royal Arch Knights Temple Tabernacle #9, and the Royal Order of Scotland. Joe was a deacon and member of First Baptist Church in Crowell, Texas. Joe is survived by his wife, Robbie Sandra Coufal of the home; one daughter, Angel Wheeler of Forney, Texas; one son, Charles "Bill" Coufal of Vernon, Texas, and seven grandchildren, Alexis Synatschk, Abbey Dunn, Taryn Adams, Jayden Wheeler, Charlie Coufal, Kaymi Zimmerman, and Halley Wheeler. Joe also leaves behind seven great grandchildren.
Dierking	2020	Richard Allen Dierking (92) of Portland, Oregon, passed away peacefully in his daughter's Milwaukie, Oregon, home on November 26, 2020. He was born March 18, 1928, in Vallejo, California. Richard was a WWII era veteran having served in the United States Army and as a Captain in the California Air National Guard. He graduated from Oregon State University. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a soil scientist in Fresno, California, Washington DC and Portland, Oregon where he retired after more than 40 years of service in 1993. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janice Diane Erickson Dierking and granddaughter, Brianna Leon. Richard is survived by his daughters, Rochelle Caffee of Tigard, Oregon, and Rebecca Bergio of Milwaukie, Oregon, and his sons, Earl Dierking of Vancouver, Washington, Eric Dierking of Denver, Colorado and Mark Dierking of Seattle, Washington. Richard left behind thirteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.
Dominick	2024	Former USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee Becca Celeste Dominick Lamoreaux (36) of Paragonah, Utah passed away on July 26, 2024 at home. Becca was born on March 23, 1988, in Woodward, Oklahoma to Gwyn and Darrel Dominick. Becca lived in several places as she was growing up due to her father's career with the NRCS. While in high school she received her Business Certificate from Meridian Technology in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Becca then went on to achieve an Associate Degree in Business from Northern Oklahoma College. She attended Oklahoma State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Langston University. Becca went to work for the NRCS as a Soil Conservationist in New Mexico. She was proud to be a fourth-generation employee with the NRCS. Becca met her future husband and great love Dustin Lamoreaux there. They both loved working in natural resource careers and moved to Tiffin, Ohio for another NRCS position. Heartbreakingly, Becca became very ill while in her twenties. She was a patient of the Cleveland Clinic where they diagnosed severe Gastrointestinal Hypomotility Syndrome and Gastroparesis. This chronic illness disabled her, and she left the work she loved. She strove to increase awareness of chronic illnesses, and often reached out to help others in their own struggles. Becca bravely fought this illness for the rest of her life. On October 31, 2015, she married Dustin Lamoreaux. They moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2016 to be near her parents for their help and support as she fought the chronic illness. In 2021, Dustin had the opportunity to go to work with NRCS in Cedar City, Utah. They moved to Paragonah, Utah, Dustin's hometown, to be near the Lamoreaux family. They purchased a camper trailer and spent many wonderful days in the mountains and exploring around the area. Becca was a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and was baptized in the Catholic Church. Becca's big bright blue eyes and sunny smile were beautiful and will be cherished by all who knew her. She was a woman with a fiery spirit, inner strength, love of helping others, and a big kind heart. Becca's survivors include her husband Dustin, parents Gwyn and Darrel Dominick, of Stillwater, and sister Erin Anderson. Becca did not want any services, and her wishes will be met. If a kind gesture is desired in Becca's name, the family recommends giving to Ronald McDonald House at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio. Please specify "Cleveland House Program".
Firebaugh	2024	John David Firebaugh (90) of Columbus, Ohio passed away on June 5, 2024. John was born March 27, 1934, to George Marshall and Mary Lillian (Coffman) Firebaugh and grew up on a dairy farm outside Wooster, Ohio. He graduated The Ohio State University with a degree in Civil Engineering. He remained in Columbus to work for the USDA in the Soil Conservation Service and Farmers Home Administration. In Columbus he met Francille at the Ohio Hiking Club, and they married in 1970. In 1978 John was appointed by the United States Agency for International Development to work on a two-year drainage project in a remote region of Afghanistan. Francille was able to join him by taking a leave of absence from her administrative position at Ohio State. After one year there, they had to be evacuated to India when the Russian army moved in. They eventually arrived in Nepal where they stayed for six months before returning to the United States. In 1988 John and Francille moved to Ithaca, New York, where Francille accepted a position as Dean of Human Ecology at Cornell University, and John continued his work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They moved back to Columbus in 2008, after they had both fully retired. John is survived by his wife of 54 years, Dr. Francille (Maloch) Firebaugh, and over 20 nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held June 24, 2024 at the First Congregational Church in Columbus (where John was an active long-time member).
Frederickson	2024	Robert "Gus" J Fredrickson (93) of Roca, Nebraska (previously of Lincoln, Nebraska passed away on August 2, 2024. Gus was born December 22, 1930, to Robert O. and Edna Heller Fredrickson in Lincoln. He joined the United States Army to serve during the Korean War. He was stationed in Yokohama, Japan, where he repaired radar sets. While flying home in 1953, a fellow soldier encouraged him to earn a college degree, and he took to that idea. With the help of the GI Bill and work-study jobs, he first attended Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, and then the University of Nebraska in Lincoln to complete his civil engineering degree. He then spent his entire career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, mostly as a watershed engineer involved in the designing and constructing of earthen flood control dams on many watersheds in Nebraska. At Doane College, he met fellow student Jane Herzog, who was studying to become a teacher, and they were married in Omaha, Nebraska, at Florence Presbyterian Church on June 20, 1959. In addition to being a professional engineer, Gus was also a woodworker who made everything from turned bowls, plates, and lamps to headboards, bedroom sets, side tables, cradles, and benches as well as beautiful black walnut gunstocks. He loved to hunt (especially deer), fish (especially big northern pike), garden (vegetables), watch

		the weather, and just be outdoors. Gus is survived by his wife of 65 years, Jane Fredrickson, children Linnea Fredrickson and Karl (Lou) Fredrickson, grandchildren Melanie (Jeff) Mueller and Stephanie (Mike) Bradley, and great-grandchildren Logan, Gabby, Kaiden, and Alexis. His church and conservation were important to him, so memorials are suggested to Westminster Presbyterian Church or Wachiska Audubon Society, both in Lincoln.
Haley	2024	ARCSE Life Member Donald Weldon Haley (81) of Durham, New Hampshire, passed away peacefully on August 15, 2024, after a courageous battle with dementia. Don was born on June 13, 1943, in Guilford, Maine to Beth (Davis) and Weldon M. Haley. Don enlisted in the United States Army, where he served as a surveyor in Libya and Iran. Following his military service, he pursued higher education at the University of Maine, Orono, where he earned a degree in agricultural engineering in 1969. It was during his time at the university that he met the love of his life, Debra (Johnson) Haley, with whom he shared over 56 years of marriage. Don built a distinguished career as an engineer with the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), serving in Orono, Maine, Batavia, New York, and Amherst, Massachusetts, before concluding his career at the New England Water Resources Planning Staff (NEWRPS) in Durham, New Hampshire, in 2004. His expertise was sought after even in retirement, as he continued to consult on various projects for NRCS in Amherst, Massachusetts. An avid outdoorsman, Don found joy in fishing and woodworking, hobbies he cherished throughout his life. He spent many happy days at the family camp on Whetstone Pond in Blanchard, Maine, and enjoyed traveling to Virginia Beach and Siesta Key, Florida. His greatest joy was found in his role as a devoted grandfather to his three grandchildren. Don is survived by his loving wife, Debra Haley; his daughter Kristen (Alan) Halpern of Goffstown, New Hampshire; his son Kevin (Tina) Haley of Dover, New Hampshire; and three grandchildren Gabby and Toby Halpern of Goffstown, New Hampshire, and Brianna Haley of Dover, New Hampshire.
Hammitt	2024	Larry Claude Hammitt (76) of Minden, Iowa, passed away on August 5, 2024, at Bergan Mercy Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. Larry was born May 4, 1948, in Council Bluffs, Iowa to Claude and Berniece Hammitt of rural Logan, Iowa. Larry married Jill (Frahm) in 1967 and they have spent 57 ½ years together. Larry earned an associate's degree in the Engineering field at Iowa Western Community College. In 1968, Larry was drafted into the U.S. Army to serve in the Vietnam war. He was a proud member of the BIG RED ONE, Charlie Company Swamp Rats. His main duties were to patrol the jungles and villages near the Cambodia border. And he spent lots of time in the swamps as well. Larry's year of serving in Vietnam finally ended, leaving him with about six months left of his two-year commitment. Back state side, he spent those six months with his wife Jill and son Michael at Fort Riley, Kansas pulling guard duty. He spent most of his career working for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Civil Engineering Technician inspector. He earned many awards for the hard work and creativity he put into his job. He retired in 2015. Larry was selected to join the Vietnam Honor Flight to Washington DC. His favorite thing of the entire trip was the Vietnam Wall. He felt very fortunate to get to make the trip. Larry was preceded in death by his son Michael and his wife Terry. He is survived by his wife, Jill; daughter, Jennifer (Arlyn) Jensen; grandson, Joe Jensen; granddaughter, Jessica (Grant) Sorrell; and great-grandchildren, Silas and Myla Rose.
Hornsby	2024	John Roger Hornsby (77) of Franklin, Alabama, passed away on June 3rd, 2024. Roger was born on April 27, 1947, in Tallassee, Alabama to James Huston Hornsby and Marjorie McEune Hornsby. Roger graduated from Macon Academy in 1965 and began working for the USDA as a cotton scout and then full time as a soil conservation technician for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Tuskegee Field Office until retiring in 2012. He was well known and respected throughout Macon County and all Southeast Alabama through his job with USDA. Roger also farmed row crops. After retirement, he especially loved working with his wife 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 has left behind his loving wife Linda Galt-Hornsby; son John Hornsby (Kathryn); daughter Rebecca Beckman (Paul); son Joshua Hornsby (Elizabeth); and 9 grandchildren.
Huffman	2024	Terry Jon (T.J.) Huffman (76) of Shawano, Wisconsin, passed away peacefully at home on June 10, 2024, after a long battle with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. Terry was born December 5, 1947, in Richland Center, Wisconsin to the late John and Lucille (Brown) Huffman. He was united in marriage to Dorothy Hall on June 22, 1968. Terry was a 1974 graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville School of Agriculture with a Bachelor of Science degree in Soils and Crops Science. He worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for 35 years, mapping soils throughout Wisconsin and later became District Conservationist. After retiring from NRCS he went into private contracting. Terry loved all aspects of nature including island camping, gun and bow hunting, fishing, fossil hunting, and cross-country skiing. He became a skilled taxidermist. He was always there to help family and friends. Terry had a strong faith. Terry's survivors include his wife Dorothy, son Michael and grandson Mikhail.
Kellogg	2024	Melissa Ann Kellogg (72) of Bozeman, Montana passed away July 24, 2024. Melissa was born on April 4, 1952, in Denver, Colorado to Lyle C. and Margaret Elizabeth Leonard, along with her twin brother, David Dutton Leonard. On December 4, 1970, she married Glen Dalone Kellogg. Glen and Melissa moved to Dubois, Wyoming, and she worked for the Forest Service from 1975 to 1985. In 1985, they moved to Bozeman, where she worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as the Digital Map Supervisor with the Geological Survey Mapping Team until 2015. She was active in the community, as a softball coach, with her quilting club, and even charity mudwrestling. She had a strong faith and was a member of Grace Bible Church. Melissa enjoyed a multitude of hobbies, including sewing, writing short stories, playing board games, and quilting. She played softball and golf and loved the outdoors, particularly taking long walks and camping. She was preceded in death by her son, Michael Kellogg. Survivors include her husband, Glen; son, Bill (AmyLyn) Kellogg, and their daughter, Katherine; and grandsons (Michael's sons), Kyle and Brett Kellogg.
Kessel	2024	Harold Jesse "Donnie" Kessel (89) of Burlington, West Virginia passed away on June 6, 2024 at Grant Rehabilitation and Care Center in Petersburg, West Virginia. Donnie was born on Christmas Day, December 25, 1934, at Scherr, West Virginia, the son of the late Arthur Emmanuel Kessel and Alice (Wolfe) Kessel. Donnie served in the United States Army from 1954 to 1956 and was a member of Petersburg American Legion Post 78. After serving his country, Donnie attended Potomac State College, later graduating from West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia with a Bachelor of Science in animal husbandry. Donnie worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, where he worked throughout West Virginia. He started as a Soil Conservationist and retired in 1992 as Area Conservationist.

		<p>After retirement, he started HJK Angus Farm, always having a dog at his side while tending to cattle, hay, and horses at his family farm in Williamsport, West Virginia. In addition to farming, he enjoyed hunting, ski trips, and beach vacations to the Outer Banks with his family and grandkids. He also volunteered with Lahmansville Ruritan Club and was a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Petersburg, West Virginia. Donnie was preceded in death by two sons, David Edward Kessel and Bernard Emmanuel Kessel. Donnie is survived by his wife of over 67 years, Bernadine (Bergeson) Kessel; six grandchildren. Derek Kessel, Miranda Kessel Vincent (Stephen), Zebulon Kessel (Jackie), Lauren Kessel (Michael), Benjamin Kessel and Jesse Kessel; and one great granddaughter, Delilah Mullens. The funeral service was held June 10, 2024 in the chapel of Schaeffer Funeral Home with Pastor Pat Pittsnogle officiating. Interment was at Green Hill Cemetery, near the Kessel farm in Williamsport, West Virginia with Military Honors by Grant County Veterans Honor Guard and West Virginia Army Honor Guard.</p>
Lowrey	2024	<p>Honorary ARCSE Member John Clarence Lowrey (92) of Sun City West, Arizona, passed away on April 13, 2024. John was born December 25, 1931, the youngest of 6 siblings and was raised in Illinois. John joined the United States Army after World War II in the 5th armored division as a field artillery cannoneer and received an occupation medal during his service in Germany. John later became a proud member of American Legion Post 94 of Sun City West, Arizona. John went on to marry Rose and loved and cherished her through many years. They both worked and retired from the federal government working for the United States Department of Agriculture. John was a graduate of the University of Illinois. His passions included golf and enjoyed playing wherever he and Rose traveled and lived. John was an economist for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service and worked in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Washington, DC, and Chicago. He retired in 1986. John is survived by his loving wife Rose of almost 32 years, a son Mark Lowrey of Texas, a daughter Jean Zertuche of California, and granddaughters Kristine, Renee' and Katie. He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers and three sisters.</p>
Maxim	2024	<p>Daniel "Danny" B. Maxim (86) of Sacramento, California, passed away May 30, 2024. Danny was born July 29, 1937, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Danny worked as a Surveyor for the United States Army Corps of Engineers before joining the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1963. His first position with the (SCS) was as an Engineering Technician in Morrilton, Arkansas. Danny then took a position with SCS in New York, in 1967 as an Engineering Technician. Danny was noted for the excellent work he did in both states. Danny came to California from New York as an Engineering technician in 1978 on a temporary basis to assist California SCS on Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program work after major storms resulted in significant major damage to flood control facilities in Southern California. He quickly developed a reputation for getting things done and also one of an "engaging personality". He was ultimately offered and accepted a position with California's State Administrative staff to assist in Contract administration work. Later Danny took a position on the California Engineering Staff as a Contract Specialist who did a little bit of everything related to management of contracts and agreements. Danny was a team player and worked exceptionally well with all California staff in whatever he was asked to do. Danny retired from his position on the California Engineering staff in about 1992. An obituary was not published, but because Danny's fellow California retirees had plenty of good memories of their times with him, both on and off the job, California ARCSE State Representative Bill Ward was able to compile a lot of information about his life and career. Danny is survived by his daughter, Danielle D. Maxim-Hughes (Goes by Dani) and older Brother Larry Maxim.</p>
Melven	2023	<p>Senior Conservationist and ARCSE Member William Joseph (Bill) Melven (89) of Columbia, South Carolina, passed away April 4, 2023. Bill was born in Kennett, Missouri, on October 29, 1933 to the late Lowell H. Melven and Ina Jenkins Melven of Carrier Mills, Illinois. Bill had a deep love for wildlife and the outdoors and pursued that love in studies at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois, graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Biology in 1955. In 1956, he was drafted into the United States Army and served honorably until 1958. Also in 1956, Bill married Shirley Barnett Melven who remained the love of his life for sixty-seven years. Following discharge from military service, Bill continued his pursuit of a career in wildlife biology, eventually joining the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) where he served in various capacities in Illinois, West Virginia, Tennessee, and South Carolina, eventually retiring in 1986. In 1990 he went to work for the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District and served as district manager until retiring again in 2014 at the age of eighty. During his long career, Bill earned many awards including SC Conservation District Employee Association President's Award, NACD Southeast Region Conservation Hall of Fame Award, SC Soil & Water Conservation Society Conservation Technical Award, and the National Conservation District Employee of the Year. In December of 2022, Bill received his highest honor when the Lexington Soil and Water Conservation District permanently renamed the District Conservationist of the Year Award to The Bill Melven Conservationist of the Year Award. However, Bill has always maintained the greatest reward in his career in conservation, and in his life, was the true friendships developed with the many fine people he came to know and love. Bill was a member of Union United Methodist Church in Irmo, South Carolina for forty-seven years. He was a lifelong avid fisherman, hunter, and outdoorsman. Bill is survived by his wife Shirley Barnett Melven, his son William Chad Melven (Jane), and three grandchildren, Meredith Melven, William Melven (Abigail), and Reese Melven.</p>
Miller	2024	<p>Former USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee Dorothy "Dottie" Lynn Miller (71) of Meridian, Idaho, passed away June 8, 2024. Dottie was born May 3, 1953. She worked for USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service on the Information Technology staff in the Idaho State Office as a Computer Specialist - An obituary was not available.</p>
Noel	2024	<p>Gary Michael Noel (72) of New London, Missouri, passed away August 17, 2024, at Mercy Hospital in Springfield, Missouri. Gary was born on May 26, 1952, in Alexandria, Virginia, the son of Frank and Gladys (Howell) Noel. Gary served his country in the United States Air Force. Afterwards, Gary attended Southwest Missouri State University where he found friendships that lasted his lifetime and discovered a passion for the earth beneath his feet. He met the love of his life, Natalie, in college. They were married on November 27, 1982, in Martinsburg, Missouri, and have been married happily for 42 years. After college, Gary worked for 33 years for the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service as a Soil Conservationist. He ended his career as the District Conservationist for the Pike County/Ralls County Field Office Service Area. Just this summer he attained the certification as a Master Naturalist. Gary was active in the Episcopal church, giving sermons, reading scripture, and gathering others for bible study and prayer. He was non-judgmental, giving folks the benefit of the doubt. He was forgiving, never speaking badly about anyone (unless they truly deserved it). Survivors include wife Natalie; and daughters, Carrie Noel of Alameda, California and Mandy Noel (Will Bolinger) of Ashland, Oregon. He was anxiously awaiting the birth of his first grandchild. A memorial service was</p>

		held August 21, 2024, at Trinity Episcopal Church with full military honors provided by the Emmette J. Shields American Legion Post 55 at the church following the service.
Ohland	2023	Paul Ohland (90) of Fort Collins, Colorado passed away November 20, 2023. From his hometown of Malcom, Iowa, he went to Ames where he attended and graduated from Iowa State University in 1955. An ARCSE Life Member, Paul began his SCS/NRCS career in June 1955 as a Soil Scientist in Marion and then Hampton, Iowa. He continued his conservation work throughout the state, based in Sigourney, Winterset, Osage, Northwood, and finally as District Conservationist at Algona. In 1985 the agency chose Paul to bring his conservation program and technical expertise to one of the four positions of the original Field Office Support Staff (FOSS) at Ft. Collins to design and develop the first integrated software and database system (CAMPSS/FOCS) for field offices. As FOCS was being deployed nationally Paul retired in April 1994, passing the torch to the next generation to build on what had been created. He and his wife Marguerite remained in Ft. Collins and could be seen regularly at Colorado State University sporting events. Paul and Marguerite are survived by two daughters. Paul's interests were many, including photography, Haviland china, theatre, and Bev Doolittle art works.
Payne	2024	Rosolyn Jane Payne (83) of Auburn, Alabama, passed away on May 8, 2024. Rosolyn was the wife of Victor W. E. Payne, retired engineer with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. She was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, on September 6, 1940 to Robert V. Williams and Rachel Crowder Williams. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education from the University of Texas, Austin in 1961. She and Victor married in 1962. 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. Rosolyn is survived by her husband, Victor; her two wonderful daughters: Robin Broome (Maxwell) and Heather Judkins (James); six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.
Podoll	2024	Erling 'Punch' Bernhardt Podoll (99) of Fargo, North Dakota (formerly of Aberdeen, South Dakota), passed away June 16, 2024, at the Fargo Elim Healthcare Center. Erling was born in rural Westport, South Dakota on February 24, 1925, to Ferdinand and Anna (Bunrock) Podoll. He attended Northern State College in Aberdeen for one year – then went on to receive the United States Navy V-12 Officer Training Program in Minot, North Dakota. In July of 1944, Punch reported to Northwestern University Midshipman's School, Chicago, Illinois. He was commissioned as an Ensign on November 22, 1944. Punch became the Officer in Charge (OIC) of LCT (Landing Craft Tank) 354 in April of 1945. He served in the Northern Mariana Islands, stationed on Tinian. He was honorably discharged on May 15, 1946. Punch was always in awe that a farm boy from the prairie was put in charge of a landing craft in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. In the fall of 1946, Punch enrolled at South Dakota State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in "Wildlife Techniques and Conservation" in 1948. On June 18, 1948, Punch married Constance Mae Keeler at St. John's Lutheran Church, in Columbia, South Dakota. Punch worked for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks from 1948 to 1957. From 1957 to 1959 he worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Steven's Point, Wisconsin. He then worked for the Soil Conservation Service in Bismarck, North Dakota State Office from 1959 to 1984 as the State Biologist. He received the American Motors Conservation Award, the North Dakota Award – Outstanding Contribution to the Profession of Wildlife Management, and the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year Award. In 1984 Punch and Connie moved back to rural South Dakota, living near the Willow Reservoir north of Aberdeen, allowing him to spend time with his brothers and other relatives and friends in the area. They moved to Aberdeen in 2000. Punch was an avid outdoorsman. He was a charter member of the North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society. He was a charter member of Bethel Lutheran Church in Bismarck and its first church president. Punch ran twice for State Representative in South Dakota. Punch is survived by his children Clint (Pat) Podoll and Rachel (Michael) Croatt; grandchildren Julie Podoll, Jason (Carrie) Odenbach; Matthew (Danielle) Odenbach; Jessica (Jason) Niemi, Jeremy (Morgan) Croatt and Jordan (Alicia) Croatt; and 13 great-grandchildren. Punch was preceded in death by his wife, Connie in 2019 and his daughter, Marcia Odenbach in 1993.
Pyle	2024	Senior Conservationist Kenneth S. Pyle (99) of Danville, Indiana, passed away on May 21, 2024. Ken was born in Marshall, Indiana on May 2, 1925, to Clarence and Gladys Pyle. He married Julie Smith Pyle on July 20th, 1952, and loved her faithfully until her death on April 2, 2022. Ken graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Agricultural Engineering and worked as a Soil Conservationist for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Carroll County, Indiana in 1950. Later he was a district Conservationist and He was an inspiration and mentor to many SCS employees. Besides his "day" job, Ken also ran a working family farm. He retired from the SCS in 1980. He then started his own business, Land Inc., as a land use consultant. He fully retired at the age of 80. He served on the Hoosier Heartland RC&D's urban committee. He helped with contractor and realtor workshops, turf grass field days and retention/detention pond design and maintenance workshops. He helped author the Indiana Urban Erosion and Sediment Control Manual that was used across the state and the Midwest region. He also helped to train and mentor many conservation partnership employees during his career and in retirement. Note from Dan McCain: "Ken Pyle was an inspiration to me as a kid. I passed the newspaper to his office in my hometown of Delphi, IN at age 10. I was fascinated with the array of aerial photographs and drawings. Soon I became a "cooperator" on our small farm. My father was not a farmer but a shopkeeper downtown. I took over farming at the age of 15, and Ken wrote my farm plan, which I am still following at the age of 84. Later, when I joined SCS and worked as the district conservationist in Fort Wayne, IN, Ken was my Area Conservationist Supervisor." A favorite memory is Ken coming into the office and saying "Hey Becky, I've got an idea!" And he would always say "see you later alligator" when he left. Ken enjoyed being active and loved spending time with his family. He sang in the church choir, loved to read, especially the Sunday comics, and could be heard laughing out loud. Survivors include his children Michael (Nancy) Pyle, Larry (Pam) Pyle, Linda (Mike) Hulse, Julia Diane (Brett dec.) Cost; 9 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.
Robbins	2024	ARCSE Member Lt. Col. John Martin Robbins Jr. (86) of Scottsburg, Indiana, passed away on July 23, 2024, at Baptist Health Floyd in New Albany, Indiana. John was born on October 9, 1937, to the late John Martin Robbins, Sr., and the late Goldie (Comer) Robbins. He graduated from Purdue University in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy. John was a Soil Scientist with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, retiring in 2002 as Assistant State Soil Scientist. In 1955, John joined the Indiana Army National Guard and after 23 years of service, served for over 11 years in the Army Reserves, retiring as a Lt. Colonel. He will forever be remembered as a quiet man, easy going, strong willed and who was an amazing dad that loved his family dearly. John loved the outdoors and

		<p>enjoyed fishing, deer hunting, camping and especially his dogs. John started and ran the Leota Christmas Tree Farm, complete with live Alaskan Reindeer. John loved to watch sports and was a huge Purdue fan and also enjoyed western movies, with John Wayne being among his favorites. John was a cancer survivor and was extremely blessed and grateful for the years that God gave him. John's survivors include his two daughters, Jennifer Sue Donnell of Scottsburg, Indiana and Lea Ann Callico (Edward) of Nabb, Indiana; three grandchildren, Dejiah Callico, John Callico and Halie Callico; and three great grandchildren, Angelina Callico, Mateo Callico Lopez and Alessio Sabino Callico. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 62 years, Sharon (Koerner) Robbins.</p>
Sampson	2024	ARCSE Member Robert "Rob" Wayne Sampson (62) of Boise, Idaho, passed away August 16, 2024. Rob was born on December 7, 1961. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Idaho and a Master of Science degree in Watershed Science from Colorado State University. He worked as an engineer for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), retiring in 2017 as the National Water Management Engineer in Washington, DC. He previously worked in Idaho, Colorado and Alaska. After retiring from NRCS he formed his own consulting firm: Sampson H3 Engineering. An obituary was not available for this newsletter, but it is known that survivors include his wife, Dianna.
Sando	2024	Ronald Duane Sando (83) of Bismarck, North Dakota, passed away peacefully on April 8, 2024, with his family at his residence in Laguna Woods, California. Ron was born in Grafton, North Dakota, on July 5, 1940. He attended Denver University, University of Colorado, and University of North Dakota where he graduated in January 1965 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. On March 29, 1961, Ron married the love of his life Karen Sue Knutson. Ron was the Design Engineer for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in the Bismarck State Office for many years before he became the State Conservation Engineer. He retired as the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs in North Dakota. Ron designed and supervised hundreds of projects. He received multiple awards for his work and was most proud when his peers recognized him with the prestigious North Dakota Water Users Hall of Fame. Upon retiring from government service, Ron continued to participate in his water resource consulting and his work for the Bismarck Parks and Recreation Department. Ron is survived by his wife Karen of 63 years, two sons, Todd (Lunette) and Bradley (Terri), and grandsons Bradley, Nicholas, and Derek.
Schrock	2024	Linda Kay Schrock (77) of Lincoln, Nebraska, passed away on July 30, 2024. She was born on February 26, 1947, in Holdrege, Nebraska, to her parents, Wallace and Mildred Moline (Melroy). Linda graduated from Lincoln School of Commerce with a business degree and spent most of her career working for the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service at the Nebraska State Office and National Technology Center in Lincoln, at least part of that time as a Budget and Financial Analyst. Linda's survivors include her husband, Van Schrock of Lincoln; children, Jason Schrock of Lincoln and Marta Schrock of Bennington, Nebraska; and grandson, Liam Schrock.
Stidham	2024	Walter Dale Stidham (80) of Sharon, Oklahoma, passed away on July 15, 2024, surrounded by family. Dale was born on October 19, 1943 in Clinton, Oklahoma to Walter Carl and Ethel Mae (Hunnicutt) Stidham. He grew up in Clinton and graduated from Clinton High School. He earned his Bachelors in Agronomy from Oklahoma State University and was a member of Alpha Gamma Rho. Dale was inducted into the United States Army Reserves in 1961 and honorably served his country until being honorably discharged in 1969. He was united in marriage to Dianna Halley on May 11, 1968 at the Sharon Baptist Church in Sharon, Oklahoma. Dale was the District Conservationist of Jefferson County, Oklahoma for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. After retiring from government, he spent the rest of his life ranching. He loved helping his friends and neighbors by sharing his knowledge of grasses and hay. Dale also enjoyed snow skiing, snowmobiling and he loved watching his grandchildren. Survivors include his wife Dianna Stidham of the home; two sons: Dan Stidham (Danika) of Enid, Oklahoma, Don Stidham (Miranda) of Mooreland, Oklahoma; three grandchildren: Jake Adair, Danae Stidham and Ally Stidham.
Switzner	2024	Doug S. Switzner (91) of Smithville, Missouri, passed away on August 19, 2024. He was born June 7, 1933. Doug started his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1962 at New Madrid, Missouri, as a Soil Conservationist for 6 months. He then went to Charleston, Missouri as a Soil Conservationist for 18 months. He became the first District Conservationist at Hartville, Missouri, from 1964-1968, then the District Conservationist at West Plains, Missouri, from 1968-1971. In 1971 he became the Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator for the Top of the Ozarks RC&D for 14 years at Houston, Missouri. He retired from NRCS as the District Conservationist at St Charles, Missouri in 1986. He and his wife Dana moved to Cassville where they lived for 25 years before moving to Smithville. The suckers trembled when they heard Doug's voice during gigging season, and the trout at Roaring River State Park trembled at the mention of his name. He loved his career and especially the people and friends he had in the SCS. Doug finished life doing what he loved. Two weeks prior to his death, he had been fishing, won a domino game, and been at a family fish fry. He died from a head injury from a fall that led to a stroke. His wife, Dana preceded Doug in death in 2021.
Terpstra	2024	Senior Conservationist and ARCSE Life Member Earl A. Terpstra (90) of Fredericksburg, Virginia, passed away March 11, 2024. Earl was born May 13, 1933 on a farm near Moline Michigan. He graduated from Michigan State University in Agricultural Engineering. Later graduate work enabled him to become a Registered Civil Engineer. He served in Europe with Army Special Troops. He is a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Following military service he went to work for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). His first job with SCS was as an engineer on the Prairie Creek Watershed in Washington, Indiana. While there he met his future wife, Judy. They married in 1959. Earl held positions with SCS in Rensselaer, Indiana, where their son was born and Indianapolis, Indiana. Later assignments were in Michigan, Minnesota and lastly in Washington, D.C. Earl's 20 years in the National Office included being a Congressional Fellow on the staff of a member of Congress and working in the Executive Office of the President. His last few years were spent as Program Leader for the western states. Following retirement Earl and Judy bought a small farm in Southern Indiana and Earl started helping larger farmers driving trucks and tractors. He also collected farm tractors, farm toys and farm memorabilia. In 2013 he was inducted into the National Farm Toy Hall of Fame. Earl is survived by his wife Judy and son Earl Jr. (Terp) and daughter-in-law Alicia, sister Diane Koster, brother Duane (JoAnne) Terpstra, stepbrother Bob (Barbara) Deal and stepsister Vicki (Leo) Pagett. Fredrick and Son-Gill Funeral Home was entrusted with Mr. Terpstra's private services. Burial was in Arlington Cemetery.
Wycoff	2024	Ramon "Ray" Jules Wycoff (94) of Manchester, Iowa, passed away on August 18, 2024, at the Hallmark Care Center in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Ray was born on March 31, 1930, in Sioux City, Iowa, the son of Oscar and Fern (Menz) Wycoff. In 1950, Ray joined the United States Navy and served honorably until his discharge in 1954. On October 19, 1957,

		Ray was united in marriage to Marilyn Knapp in Sioux City. Ray worked for the USDA Soil Conservation Service his entire career as a soil conservation technician. In 1966 the family moved to Manchester. Ray retired in 1988. Ray and Marilyn were married for 64 years until her death in 2021. Ray was a longtime member of the Manchester United Methodist Church. Ray was a 54-year member of the Masons. He volunteered for 40 years with the Boy Scouts as a Scout Master, Troop Master, served on the district committee for 30 years, was the activity chairman for 8 years, and earned the Silver Beaver Award. Ray served as a member of the Oakland Cemetery Board and was a past member of the Delaware County Fair Board. Survivors include his three children, Barbara (Dennis) Schnieders of Lexington, Kentucky, Kevin (Jennifer) Wycoff of Lexington, Kentucky, and Michael (Carmen) Wycoff of Mt. Vernon; seven grandchildren, Rachael (Stanton) Fodness of Culpepper, Virginia, Stephanie (Art) Hubbard of Paris, Kentucky, Tyler (Courtney) Schnieders of Nicholasville, Kentucky, Samuel (Chinni) Wycoff of St. Louis, Missouri, Nicholas Wycoff of Lexington, Kentucky, Lyndsey Wycoff of Des Moines, and Kaitlyn Wycoff of Mt. Vernon; and six great-grandchildren.
Yolton	2024	Elva Mae Yolton (85) of Canastota, New York, passed away on August 5, 2024, in the Oneida Health Hospital. Elva was the wife of ARCSE Life Member William P. Yolton who worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Civil Engineering Technician and later as a Physical Science Technician until his retirement in 1996. Elva was born in Madrid, New York, on September 22, 1938, the daughter of Earl and Elva Moulton. She and William married on August 17, 1957. Prior to her retirement, Elva was employed with GNC Stores in Syracuse, New York as a manager and had previously been employed by General Electric. Surviving besides her husband William are her two daughters, Cheryl (Joel Regis) Sgarlata of Canastota and Felna (Joe) Sweet of Syracuse, New York; her two grandchildren, Ty Smith and Jason (Kaitlyn) Sgarlata; her three great-grandchildren, Brooklyn Smith, John Sgarlata and Will Sgarlata. She was predeceased by a granddaughter, Amberlee Sgarlata in 2023.