

**BIOGRAPHIES OF MUSICIANS
from the
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
and
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Compiled by the
Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees

Edited by Douglas Toews
With the assistance of Bill Ward and Dennis Clute

FORWARD

Growing up on a small farm in Blanchardville, Wisconsin, I was exposed to music as a valued part of our community and school life. Like many of my classmates, I took advantage of the opportunities to explore music and pursued that passion through my college years. However, as my professional career in conservation took priority, music gradually took a backseat. Not until retirement was I able to rekindle my love for music. Now, it is once again a meaningful and fulfilling part of my daily life.

This project is a tribute to those, like me, who have dedicated their careers to conservation while also carrying a deep passion for music. It recognizes and honors the many talented individuals within the Soil Conservation Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and partner agencies, who have balanced their professional commitments with their artistic expressions. Music and conservation may seem like different worlds, but both require creativity, discipline, and a deep appreciation for harmony—whether in sound or in nature.

May this collection of biographies serve as an inspiration, reminding us that our passions, no matter where life takes us, are always a part of who we are.

Hudson, WI
February 2025

JULIE MACSWAIN
President ARCSE

INTRODUCTION

“Real musicians have day jobs.”

ANONYMOUS

Since the dawn of the conservation movement in America, progress has been forged through personal relationships that transcend official channels. The nature of these efforts required not just the desire to maintain existing natural resources, but the foresight to sustain and improve them for future generations. Thus, this work depends on interactions at a human level, that address social behaviors in addition to scientific principles and learning. This is why so many career conservationists become well-known and respected members of their local communities. By adding an artistic element, these attributes reveal a certain subset of agency employees – the musicians. Through sharing their art form with family, friends, co-workers, clients, and the public, musicians of the Soil Conservation Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service have enriched the lives and culture of their communities beyond their professional achievements.

The purpose of this project is to document and recognize those agency employees, past and present, who pursued and shared their musical art, in addition to achieving a professional career. The scope is limited to employees of the Soil Conservation Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, as well as employees from partner agencies.

Information accumulated herein is presented in the form of concise biographies, which highlight the lives of employees who played or performed music. Also included are those who wrote about, produced, recorded, or promoted music. Each entry, comprised of three paragraphs, documents the following phases: Early Life, Musical Experience, and Professional Career. The format used for these biographies was inspired by and adapted from the written work of jazz critic Leonard Feather, who first developed this unique style for his book *Inside Be-Bop*, later retitled *Inside Jazz*, in 1949; then further refined in his *Encyclopedia of Jazz* published in 1954, now in its fifth edition.

How to use these biographies:

- Entries are listed in alphabetical sequence, based on last name.
- Cross references to other individual entries are shown with names in small capitals.
- Recordings, when listed, are indicated by artist or group, *title* in italics, format (in parentheses), and date.
- SCS and NRCS modifiers are used in approximate chronological order, as the Soil Conservation Service was renamed the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1994.

Santa Barbara, CA
January 2025

DOUGLAS TOEWS
Editor

ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL

b. – born
d. – died
ca. – circa
dj – disc jockey
w. – with

ORGANIZATIONS and LOCATIONS

ACES – Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services
ARCSE – Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees
DMV – District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia
NACD – National Association of Conservation Districts
NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWC – National Watershed Coalition
NYC – New York City
RCD – Resource Conservation District
SCS – Soil Conservation Service
SCD – Soil Conservation District
SWCD – Soil & Water Conservation District
SWCS – Soil & Water Conservation Society
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

RECORDING FORMAT

78 – 10-inch 78 rpm Single
45 – 7-inch 45 rpm Single
EP – 7-inch 45 rpm Extended Play
LP – 12-inch 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm Long Play
RR – $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch Reel to Reel Tape
Cass. – $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch Cassette Tape
CD – 5-inch Compact Disc
MP3 – Digital Music File