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*	*In-Memoriam* **(Note: These are recent notices. For a complete list, please see www.arcse.org)**
Bartlett	**2026**	**Paul Allen Bartlett** (95) of Lincoln, Nebraska, passed away on October 7, 2026. Paul was born on March 17, 1931, north of Max, Nebraska to George and Ocie (McClure) Bartlett. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in March 1952 and served in the Korean War as a Browning Automatic Rifleman, then as an Army squad leader. He graduated from the University of Nebraska Lincoln in agronomy and soil science in 1958. Paul went on to marry Betty Jean Sittner in 1956. He worked for 30 years as a soil scientist in several Nebraska counties and retired as an assistant state soil scientist in Honolulu, Hawaii. He eventually moved to Grand Junction, Colo., and later to Lincoln where he worked for Cambell's Nursery for several years. He was a member of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, loved the outdoors, gardening, fishing, hunting, and serving as a deacon in his church. Survivors include his wife, Betty (Sittner) Bartlett; daughter, Susan (Todd) Kuwitzky; son, Wade (Susan) Bartlett; granddaughters, Kelly Kuwitzky, Kristen (Kuwitzky) Critchfield, Evelyn (Lee) Todd, and Eleanor Bartlett; great-grandson, Theodore Critchfield; and many special nephews and nieces.
Black	**2026**	Life Member Jacob W. "Jake" Black, Jr. (86) of Laurens, South Carolina, passed away July 9, 2026, at Prisma Health Laurens. Jake was born on May 10, 1940, in Swansea, South Carolina, to the late Jacob W. Black, Sr. and Clara Dantzler Black. He graduated from Clemson University in 1963, where he earned a football scholarship and played under the legendary Coach Frank Howard. He remained an avid Clemson Tiger fan for his entire life. Jake retired in 2000 from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in Laurens as the District Conservationist. During his 40-year career, he worked in Pickens, Edgefield, and Laurens counties. He was instrumental in the work to build the Lake Rabon dam and also assisted in the work to build the park in downtown Laurens and to help control the flooding issues in town. He also served as the President of the LD55 High School Booster Club from 1984-1988. Jake was of the Methodist faith, was a Captain in the United States Army where he served in the Dominican Republic, and loved being outdoors, especially hunting and working in the garden before his health declined. Jake is survived by his wife of 32 years Diane Lollis Black. Other survivors include a daughter, Angela Black Drake (Lucas) of Charleston, South Carolina, and a son, Todd C. Black (Olga) of Woodstock, Georgia; two stepchildren, Scott Barker (Caroline) of Laurens and Mary Beth Campbell (Tim) of Laurens; and three step-grandchildren, Alexandra Barker, Hampton Barker, and Christian Campbell, all of Laurens.
Bone	**2026**	**Carl Wayland Bone** (88) of McKinney, Texas, passed away on October 12, 2026. Carl was born December 2, 1937, in Coryell County to the late Blaine and Irene Bales Bone. He graduated from Gatesville High School in 1956 and attended Tarleton State College. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Civil Engineering Technician, first in Waco, Texas and then in Temple, Texas on the State Office Design Team. After retirement, he lived in Tyler, Texas and Georgetown, Texas, before moving to McKinney to be closer to family. He was a member of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas. Carl is survived by his wife, Bonnie Berry Bone; daughters, Lezlie Smith (Randall) of Flower Mound, Texas and Lori Myers (Bob) of McKinney; grandchildren, Sarah Smith Walsh (Brandon) of Flower Mound, Rob Myers (Chasidy) of Prosper, Texas, Karen Smith Ambriati (Chris) of Flower Mound; and eight great-grandchildren, Riley Walsh, Camden Walsh, Hutton Walsh, Graham Myers, Declan Myers, Bree Myers, Caden Ambriati, and Adelyn Ambriati.
Bumgarner	**2025**	**Bobby Jack 'Bob' Bumgarner** (87) of Duncan, Oklahoma, passed on June 17, 2025. Bob was born September 29, 1937, in Graham Township, Oklahoma to John Stanford and Sue Elizabeth (Digby) Bumgarner - the youngest of seven children. He married Anita Ruth Gibson on September 15, 1961. He completed a 25-year career as a Registered Land Surveyor with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS) for the Davis, Lindsay and Marlow Oklahoma Field Offices) and then he worked 10 years as a Personnel Relations Specialist at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Bob also served in both the United States Army Reserves and Air Force Reserves. Bob was a charter member of the Oklahoma Society of Land Surveyors. Few know that he was recruited by the local SCS Field Office after their inquiry with Davis Schools for students who excelled in math. After observing his performance as a Land Surveyor, his superiors encouraged him to transfer to the state office in Stillwater so he could attend college and major in Engineering. Though he declined that opportunity, his superiors assigned their interns to work with him to gain practical experience as part of their Surveying and Engineering development program. After losing his father at the young age of five, he began helping support his mother during his early teens by working for local cattlemen in the Davis area. Through this work, he developed a deep and lasting passion for livestock, horses, and pasture management - knowledge that would somewhat shape the course of his life. Alongside his brother Tom, he built and maintained a successful livestock operation for nearly 20 years. Following Tom's passing in 1988, he continued the work they had started together, carrying on the operation for another two decades. Acknowledging his civic responsibilities, Bob served on the Arbuckle Memorial Hospital Board, City of Davis Planning Board, as Deacon at the Vinita Ave Church of Christ in Sulphur, Oklahoma, and the Food Closet at the Chisholm Trail Church of Christ in Duncan. Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Anita; son John Bumgarner (Monica) of Duncan; grandson Joshua of Edmond, Oklahoma; and granddaughter Marissa also of Edmond.
Chenoweth	**2026**	Senior Conservationist and Honorary Member **John Wilson Chenoweth** (95) of Pella, Iowa, passed away August 23, 2026. He was born on January 20, 1931, to Wilson and Helen Joyce (Furry) Chenoweth in the Daviess County Hospital in Washington, Indiana. John's 4-H Club activities included potatoes, beef calf, gardens and corn. Beef projects were financially profitable (somewhat due to his father's generosity) to the extent that John paid his way through Purdue University. He graduated from Purdue in 1953 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering. He continued his interest in raising beef cattle until 1987. After 10 weeks in hydraulic development at John Deere Tractor Works in Waterloo, Iowa, the military draft called John into the U.S. Army on August 26, 1953. He completed basic infantry training, field wire school and communications chief school at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Then, it was off to Europe where John was assigned to the 843rd Engineering Aviation Battalion at Toul Rosieres Air Force Base between Nancy and Metz, France. His primary duty was as chief construction surveyor on NATO airfields in France and Germany. While

		in the service, he visited 14 countries by using three-day passes and accumulated vacation time. After leaving the army, John farmed at Shoals for a while. His major career was with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, beginning in 1961. After serving in field positions in Washington, Indiana, and North Vernon, Indiana, he specialized in hydrology and hydraulic engineering for 29 years, working in project planning offices in Indianapolis, Indiana and Des Moines, Iowa. He retired in 1995 and enjoyed part-time consulting on matters related to his professional experiences. John was a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society for 53 years. He held lifetime memberships in the American Society of Agricultural Engineers and the Purdue Alumni Association and was a licensed Professional Civil Engineer for 44 years. John married his sweetheart, Carolyn Sue Pinkston, in her hometown of Farmersburg, Indiana, in 1960. John was involved in activities of the Methodist church early in life and remained active in congregations throughout his life. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Carolyn; three sons, Gregory John, Paul Wilson, and Andrew Joseph; 10 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.
Crane	**2026**	**Cara Diane Crane** (49) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away on September 12, 2026, in Stillwater. She was born on October 25, 1976, in Stillwater, Oklahoma to Gene and Sherry Crane. Cara earned her bachelor's degree in business management from Oklahoma State University (OSU) in 2000. She worked for several years as a management analyst for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Federal Aviation Administration. She also gave generously of her time and leadership in service as President/Treasurer of the Tri Delta Sorority Housing Corporation. She will be remembered as a fun, loving, kind, and generous person whose presence brought warmth to those around her. Cara enjoyed fishing, reading, restoring antiques, and anything related to OSU athletics. She especially loved fishing with her family and was always proud to say she had caught the biggest fish, a memory that will continue to bring smiles to those who knew and loved her. Cara is survived by her parents, Gene and Sherry (Russell) Crane; her brother Derek Crane and his wife, April, of Magnolia, Texas; and her nieces, Sydney Crane and Reena Crane, both of Magnolia, Texas. She is also survived by her uncles and aunts, Mike and Reta Crane, Billie and Doug LeForce, Carol Allen, John and Pam Russell, Denise Hunt, Becky and Virgil Beckner, LeAnn Jones, Bill and Sue Russell, and Phillip and Mary Russell; and numerous cousins. She was preceded in death by four uncles, Jim Allen, Bill Vassar, Lynn Hunt, and Wayne Jones.
Dorsey	**2026**	**Deborah "Debbie" Lynn Dorsey** (70) of Mount Nebo, West Virginia, passed away June 5, 2026, following a brief illness. Debbie was born October 9, 1955, at Naval Air Station North Island in Coronado, California, the daughter of Paul and Mazie Clemens of Canvas, West Virginia, who survive her. Debbie married her high school sweetheart, Leon Dorsey, on July 6, 1973. Together, they built a life centered on faith, love, and family and shared nearly 53 years of marriage. Debbie retired from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service after more than 20 years of dedicated service, rising to the position of GS-13. She was a Special Projects Officer with the Soil and Plant Division working remotely from Beckley, WV when she retired. She found great joy in arts and crafts, spending time with her family, and supporting her grandchildren in their many activities. Her kindness and generosity touched the lives of many. Debbie was a faithful member of Mountain View Church in Canvas. Even during her final illness, her confidence in Christ remained strong. In addition to her parents, Debbie is survived by her beloved husband, Leon Dorsey; three children, Lisa Randolph (Brian), Chris Dorsey (Trish), and Andrea Torres (Scott); and ten grandchildren, Andrew, Matthew, and Tyler Randolph; Caleb, Taylor, and Colton Dorsey; and Boston, Bryce, Bailey, and Brooks Torres.
Elkins	**2026**	**Robert "Bobby" Jones Elkins** (85) of Richmond, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on October 17, 2026. He was born on April 12, 1941, in Hodgenville, Kentucky, the son of the late Lorene and Joe Elkins. Bobby began working with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as an engineering technician in 1962 and retired in 1994. He then returned to the Madison County Conservation District, under its new name, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and continued working there until 2009. In total, he dedicated 49 years and 6 months of service to the organization. In addition, he served S as a pond consultant for the entire state of Kentucky. Bobby found joy in spending time with his best buddies on their annual hunting trips, fishing, enjoying the outdoors, reloading hundreds of shells, watching the University of Kentucky Wildcats, and watching every Western rerun over and over. Bobby was of the Baptist Faith. Survivors include children, Robin Elkins and Scott Elkins along with their mother: Maxine Bowen; his grandchildren, Jessica McVey, Reagan Read, Reanna Lobb (Jonathan Lobb), and Jared Elkins (Ashley Elkins); his great-grandchildren, Kindal Read, Haylee Hunt, Lane Elkins, Kyleigh Read, Conner McVey, Wyatt Elkins, Colt Elkins, Emery McVey, and Laira Lobb; one great-great-granddaughter Jazmyne Myers; and his sister, Jorene Garrison (Kenny Garrison). He was preceded in death by his wife, Frances Elkins in 2009.
Ely	**2026**	**Gary Robert Ely** (70) of Fairmont, West Virginia, peacefully passed away surrounded by his family on September 3, 2026. He was born on August 16, 1956, a son of the late Robert Henry and Katherine Elizabeth Welch Ely. Gary retired as a Soil Conservation Technician for the USDA-National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2011, a job he thoroughly enjoyed. Early in his career his duties included flood response, work that left him with many memories of the 1985-86 floods in West Virginia, and construction on watershed dams in the counties surrounding Marion. In retirement, Gary was happiest outdoors and at home with his hands busy. He enjoyed hobby farming on his property, and he spent many hours building hiking trails through the woods, often with his grandchildren beside him. Gary is survived by his loving wife of 47 years, Cindy Jane Henderson Ely; his children, Clint Ely (April) of Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania, Aaron Ely (Katherine) of Mt. Harmony, West Virginia, Jason Ely (Jessica) of Mt. Harmony, Megan Ely of Mt. Harmony, Sara Spicer (Logan) of Levels Community, West Virginia and Kimi Ely of Mt. Harmony. Gary is also survived by his grandchildren, Logan Garner, Levi Garner, Lucas Garner, Asher Ely, Graham Ely, Maddox Ely, Reid Ely, Caroline Ely, Kairi Jarrett, Brantley Spicer, Isla Ely, and Aliyah Spicer, one great-grandchild, Tobiah Garner.
Franssen	**2026**	**Bruce Allen Franssen** (75) of McMinnville, Oregon, passed away peacefully, at home on August 31, 2026. He was born in Sacramento, California, on January 23, 1951, to Roy Alex Franssen and Ethel Norma (Hanson) Franssen. He studied Rangeland Resources at Oregon State University. He married Nancy on Dec. 4, 1983. Bruce worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service for over 30 years, passionately working as a Range Conservationist alongside Oregon's farmers and ranchers to implement sustainable land practices. Bruce was a dedicated husband, father, brother, grandfather, uncle, cousin and a friend to many. He was loyal, honest, and a lover of the natural world. He could often be found among a mountain of library books, curiously exploring different countries and cultures, reeling in trout at the local lakes, or cheering on the mighty Oregon State Beavers proudly wearing orange and black. Bruce is survived by his wife, Nancy; son, Steven (Courtney); daughter, Melody (Dan); brother, Brian; sister, Karen; three grandchildren, Calla, Royce and Reed; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Fude	**2026**	Member and ARCSE Michigan State Representative **William John Fude, Jr.,** (80) of Grand Ledge, Michigan, passed away on October 15, 2026. Bill, as he was best known, was born on November 25, 1945, in Estherville, Iowa, the son of William Sr. and Marie (Haag) Fude. He was drafted into the United States Army and served during the Vietnam War. On November 23, 1974, Bill married Theresa "Terry" at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Winooski, Vermont. Following his military service, he graduated from Parsons College in Iowa. He later worked in Iowa, Vermont, and Michigan for 31 years with the USDA Soil Conservation Service/Natural Resources Conservation Service. He was the Michigan State Administrative Officer when he retired in 2008. In retirement, Bill continued his commitment to public service by serving as president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE). Bill enjoyed genealogy, traveling to Florida, and a good whiskey. He also enjoyed spending time with his dog, Aspen. Bill was preceded in death by his wife, Terry in 2009. Survivors include his daughter, Andrea (Kevin), and grandchildren, Chase William and Reese Marie, all of Grand Ledge.
Graves	**2026**	**John E. Graves** (97), formerly of Vega, Texas, passed away on January 14, 2026. John was born June 21, 1928, in Garrison, Texas. He graduated from Texas A&M University in 1952 with a bachelor's degree in Forest Management, was a Corps Cadet member, earning his military rank as Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Upon his honorable discharge from the service to return to the farm in Garrison to care for his widowed mother. He married Zella Mae Carpenter on February 27, 1953, in Nacogdoches, Texas. His employment with the USD-Soil Conversation Service transferred him to various West Texas cities before moving to Vega, Texas in August 1967. During this time he worked as a District Conservationist and Range Conservationist. John & Zella retired in 1996, moved briefly to Amarillo in 1997 before moving to Conroe, Texas in 1998. After Zella's untimely death from cancer in September 2002, John continued to live in Conroe. When his youngest daughter Sharon moved to Frankston, Texas in the spring of 2017, John followed shortly after that. John loved working outside in the yard, even helping Mike and Sharon at the farm. At the time of his death, John was residing at Garden Estates Retirement Center in Tyler, Texas. John was preceded in death by his wife of 49 ½ years, Zella M. Graves. Survivors include his children, Debbie Wilson (Brad) of Amarillo, Texas; Rick Graves (Chella) of Waco, Texas; and Sharon Spinhirne (Mike) of Frankston, Texas; grandchildren and great grandchildren: Shaye Pingel Segovia of Vega and her daughter Abreigh; John Wayne Pingel (Tara) of Humble, Texas and children, Wyatt, Tate and Walker; Dustin Spinhirne (Jin) of Frankston, and children, Logan and Evan; Joshua Spinhirne (Christina) of Flint, Texas, and children Jared and Jacob; Seth Spinhirne (Emily) of Frankston, and children Cole and Anna; Jason Graves Megan) of Arlington, Texas, and children Elijah, Ezra and Emerson; Jeffrey Graves (Jenny) of LaVernia, Texas, and children, Lyla, Layton and Linc; and Johnathon Graves of Lubbock, Texas.
Hart	**2026**	**Jimmy Joe Hart** (89) of Tulsa, Oklahoma, passed away on February 4, 2026. He was born on September 24, 1936, in Enid, Oklahoma, to John and Helen Hart. He attended Oklahoma State University from 1955 to 1956. On September 28, 1956, he married his high school sweetheart, Joyce Marie Hancock, at First Baptist Church in Enid. Jimmy enjoyed a successful 30-year career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). In 1962, he accepted a position as a Civil Engineering Technician with the Kansas State Office in Salina, Kansas. From 1974 to 1977, he continued his career in the Michigan State Office in East Lansing, serving first as a Contract Specialist and later as a Personnel Management Specialist. In 1978, Jimmy returned closer to family and continued his career with the Oklahoma State Office in Stillwater, where he served as Personnel Management Specialist, Personnel Officer and later as State Administrative Officer until his retirement from federal civil service in 1994. After retiring, Jimmy and Joyce moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1995 to be closer to family. Never one to be still, Jimmy became an active member of the Tulsa Elks Lodge. In 2019, the Elks Lodge honored Jimmy and his wife, Joyce, by renaming the Lodge's lounge the Hart Lounge, in recognition of their many years of dedicated service to the Lodge and the community. Jimmy enjoyed camping and hunting in his earlier years, later transitioning to golfing and traveling. However, his greatest joy was always found in spending time with his family. He had a gift for working with his hands, and no project was ever too great a challenge. Whether remodeling a bathroom, installing wood floors, or building furniture, Jimmy approached each task with skill and craftmanship. Jimmy is survived by his loving wife, Joyce Hart; his sons, Ron (Christy), and Doug (Susan); his grandchildren, Olivia Hughes (Nathan), Ann-Marie, and Megan.
Henney	**2026**	**Scott Shafter Henney** (62) of Elizabethtown, Indiana, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his dearly loved ones on September 25, 2026. Scott was born August 17, 1964, to Jean S. Henney and Geraldine (Sheets) Henney. Scott suffered a spinal injury that changed his life forever. If someone told Scott he couldn't do something, he was determined to prove them wrong. His strength, determination, spirit, and wit were hallmarks. Scott married the love of his life, Lorie Ann (Brinkley) Henney. He worked as a Computer Specialist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service until his retirement. He enjoyed working on cars, listening to jazz, drinking Mountain Dew, following motorsports, and driving his Corvette. He looked forward to trips to the Indy 500. Scott loved his family. Some of his happiest memories came from family trips to Mardi Gras and theme parks. He is survived by his wife, Lorie Henney; son, Zachary (Sherrianna) Henney; goddaughter, Laci Green; stepson, Adam Smith; stepdaughter, Amanda Smith; grandchildren, Theodore Henney, Charlotte Henney, Lexi Green, Jasmine Smith, Nicholas Smith, and Zoey Smith.
King	**2026**	**Lynn Turner King** (71) of Cerulean, Kentucky, passed away October 3, 2026. Lynn was the wife of retired Soil Conservation Technician Gaylon Wayne King. She was born on November 11, 1954, in Cadiz, Kentucky, to William Bill Turner and Louise Jacob Turner. She retired from the Kentucky Department of Unemployment as an Unemployment Insurance Specialist after 27 years of service. She was a member of the Cerulean Baptist Church. Lynn was a farmer alongside her husband, Gaylon. The joy of her life was spending time with her family and grandchildren. In addition to her husband Gaylon, Lynn is survived by her son Dusty King (Andrea), of Cerulean; daughter Laura Gayle Stith (Kevin), Brandenburg, Kentucky; eight grandchildren Laura Michelle King (fiancé Tyler Frost), Garrett King, Logan King, Emma Grace King, Mary Brooke Stith, Andrew Stith, Joellen Hanson (Carrington), and Jamison Reynolds; and two great-grandchildren.
Krebs	**2026**	Life Member **Donna Rae Krebs** (87) of Centre Hall, Pennsylvania passed away at Mount Nittany Medical Center on October 10, 2026, surrounded by her family. She was born in Centre Hall on March 10, 1939, to parents Emory F. Floray Sr. and Alice I. (Weber) Floray. Donna was in the first class to graduate from the new Penns Valley High School in 1957 where she played the trombone in the marching band and was the high school's first drum major. After high school, she worked at Pennsylvania State University in correspondence and later at HRB Systems-Singer in State College, Pennsylvania. Donna married Gerald L. Krebs in 1960 after meeting him at the Spring Mills Carnival, and four years later decided to stay at home and raise her growing family. Eventually, she worked in Bellefonte,

		Pennsylvania for the Centre County government and later for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in State College. Donna was best known as the Area Clerk in the Area 5 office on State College, and she served as a Program Assistant and held other roles in NRCS after that office closed until her retirement in 2003. She was a 55-year member and past matron of Centre Chapter 207, Order of the Eastern Star in Centre Hall; a charter member of the Centre Cedarettes in State College; and a longtime member of Trinity United Church of Christ in Centre Hall where she was the church secretary for 43 years. Her husband Gerald passed away in 2018. Survivors include three daughters, Jeanette Krebs of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Jessica Krebs (Mark West) of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Janda Hankinson (Ray) of Centre Hall; grandchildren Nick Jimenez (partner Sarah Kula) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Sophia Fox (fiancé Brendan Balco) of Philadelphia, Andy Hankinson (fiancé Natascha Santaella) of Mill Hall, Pennsylvania, Lydia Hankinson of Centre Hall, Anya Fox of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Olivia Jimenez (partner Larry Bourland) of Bozeman, Montana.
Lamirand	**2026**	**Thomas Jackson Lamirand** (79) of Perry, Oklahoma, passed away October 9th, 2026, at Stillwater Hospital in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Tom was born on February 5th, 1947, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, the son of T J and Deloris (Patterson) Lamirand. Tom studied at Oklahoma State University where he received a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering. He went to work for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service where he was a well-respected engineer. After retirement he worked for M & E Consultants for 11 years. His Christian faith was an important part of his life. Tom is survived by his sons Nathan Lamirand of Tecumseh, Oklahoma and Vince Lamirand of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, his brothers, Gerald Lamirand of Louisiana, and Charles (Mike) Lamirand of Edmond, Oklahoma; his grandson Trevin Lamirand of Englewood, Colorado and two great granddaughters. Tom was preceded in death by his his oldest son Troy Lamirand of Vermont. Tom was also preceded in death by his good friend Donna Brorsen.
Lavway	**2026**	**David R. Lavway** (79) of Glenburn, Maine, passed away peacefully September 22, 2026, at the Aroostook House of Comfort in Presque Isle, Maine, after a two-year battle with cancer. David was born on October 18, 1946, in Presque Isle, Maine, the son of Clair and Christina (Churchill) Lavway. Dave attended the University of Maine at Orono, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural business and economics. He married his sweetheart, Joanne, in July 1969. Dave began his career in 1969 with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Along the way, his commitment to service also led him into Christian education, where for 14 years he taught and coached at Bangor Christian Schools and later New Testament Christian School in Massachusetts. After returning to Maine, Dave resumed his career in agriculture and held a number of positions of increasing responsibility, including district director of the Central Aroostook Soil and Water Conservation District, executive director of the Maine Potato Board, government relations director for the National Potato Council, administrative officer for the USDA Agricultural Research Service, state executive director of the USDA Farm Service Agency, and deputy commissioner for the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services. Dave was a founding member of the Agriculture Council of Maine and was appointed to serve two terms on the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Fruits and Vegetables. He also served as a member and chairman of the USDA Potato Industry Advisory Committee for Research and Extension. Throughout his career, Dave was a respected advocate for Maine agriculture, supporting the state's agricultural community and the people whose livelihoods depend upon it. Dave is survived by his beloved wife of 57 years, Joanne (Brown) Lavway and their daughter, Marci (Stephen) Wilcox; son-in-law, Kris Milo; grandchildren, Christopher (Brooke) Wilcox, Andrew Wilcox, Morgan (Chris) Amero, and Felix Milo; great-grandchildren, Mason and Aubree Wilcox, and Grady and Brecken Amero. Dave was predeceased by his daughter, Amie Milo.
Love	**2026**	Life Member **Charles Lee Love** (72) of Auburn, Alabama, passed away on October 2, 2026, at his home. Charles was born February 24, 1954, in Madison County, Tennessee. On October 16, 1993, Charles Love and Alice Shackelford-Love united in holy matrimony in Chatman, Illinois. At Tennessee State University he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy and Soil of Science. He worked as a Soil Scientist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for forty years throughout the midwestern and southern states. In 2017, he closed his career as the “First African American” Regional Director for Region-7 headquarters in Auburn, Alabama. He received many awards as an employee with the NRCS. Upon relocating to Auburn, Alabama, Charles became an active member of Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church. Survivors include his devoted wife of thirty-two years, Alice Shackelford-Love; a loving daughter, Princess Mildred Love; four brothers, Terry Love, Jerry Love, Thomas Love, and DeRoy Ellison; one sister, Glenda Rogers; a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.
Menkin	**2025**	**Frank R. Menkin** (85) of Plymouth, Maine, passed away on December 6, 2025. Frank was born September 2, 1940, in Elmhurst, New York, the son of Arthur H. and Goldye (Wagner) Menkin. He majored in music, specializing in voice at Cornell University, graduating in 1962. In 1966, Frank married Frances M. Merrihew. They spent nearly 60 blessed years together. Most of Frank's working years were in computer technology, the last 12 years with the Maine State office of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in Bangor, Maine, until he retired in 2015. The memory of Frank's beautiful voice, lifted in song to the Lord will remain in the minds and hearts of all who heard him. Frank was a communicant of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Bangor, Maine, (St. John's Church) for 26 years, where he enjoyed the privilege of serving as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. Survivors include his devoted wife, Fran; their three children, Franklin R. Menkin Jr., Joshua C. Menkin (Joyce), and Sarah M. Menkin; 13 grandchildren: Elyshia Menkin, Ryan Menkin (Rebecca), Jennifer (Menkin) Glick (Matthew), Audrey (Menkin) Prowant (Joshua), Jordan Menkin (Laura), Zachary Menkin, Jared Menkin, Alyssa Menkin, Cherry Menkin, Melody Menkin, Spencer Menkin, Spring Menkin and Caroline Menkin, and 7 great-grandchildren: Emily, Bethel and Eleanor Glick; Woodland, Betsy and Madelyn Prowant and Ethan Menkin.
Mull	**2026**	Life and Honorary Member Norman Taylor Mull (93), formerly of New Paris, Ohio, passed away peacefully on September 30, 2026. He was born December 26, 1932, to Charles and Ruth Mull. Norman proudly served his country in the United States Army from 1953 to 1955 with the 298th Transportation Company (Light Truck). He earned the rank of Private First Class in 1954 and received the National Defense Service Medal. In 1956, Norman met the love of his life, Carolyn Joyce Bright, when he famously “fell over her desk at work.” Six months later, they married at her parents’ home. Norman “No-Till” Mull began farming at 14 and continued into his 70s. A dedicated conservationist, he embraced no-till farming and sought ways to care for the land while improving his farm. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Preble County, retiring in 1988. He later spent several years as a contractor for the Wayne County Soil Conservation Service Extension Office. Alongside Carolyn, he created Running Springs mini-bike farm and campground, where families, friends, and church groups gathered and made lasting memories. As founder of the

		Ambassador 4-H Motorcycle Club, he encouraged young people to develop riding skills, responsibility, character, and sportsmanship. He and Carolyn were longtime faithful members of St. Paul United Methodist Church in New Paris, where they worshiped and served together. Following Carolyn's passing, Norman found a new church home at New Hope Church. He was also a member of The Gideons for nearly 30 years. In 1994, Norman and Carolyn opened the Pathway Rec Center at St. Paul United Methodist Church. For the next 15 years, they provided a Christian environment where young people could enjoy games, friendship, and fellowship. Norman and Carolyn also spent more than 20 years supporting the National Trail cross-country team and were honored with induction into the National Trail Hall of Fame. Norman is survived by his sons, Daniel (Angela), Jim, and Rick (Shelly); his 12 grandchildren, Nigel (Jadwiga), Amanda (Marc), Alex (Tyler), Kristin (Matt), Ben, Roger (Katie), Leah (Vinny), Keaton, Victoria (Chris), Bethany, Krista (Stephen), and Keith; nine great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. He is also lovingly remembered by his bonus son, Steve (Sharon) Vanzant, and the Tabi family of Kumasi, Ghana, whose special friendship with Norman and Carolyn spanned many years. Norman was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 65 years, Carolyn, and his son, David.
Norton	**2026**	Senior Resource Conservationist, Life Member and ARCSE Alabama State Representative **Earl Norton** (88) of Auburn, Alabama, passed away on October 3, 2026. Earl was born in Gadsden, Alabama on November 13, 1937, to Earl Wood and Fannie Lee Norton. Earl went on to Auburn University (AU) where he played trumpet in the AU Marching Band, participated in Naval ROTC, and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Science in 1960 and a Master of Science degree in Agronomy and Soils in 1964. Upon graduation Earl served on active duty with the United States Navy before beginning his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service). Earl retired in 1994 with 37 years of federal service and immediately began his second career as a natural resources consultant for erosion and sediment control planning in the private and public sectors of the construction industry. He taught a conservation course at Auburn University, coordinated a state-wide erosion and sediment control program in construction stormwater for the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee, and worked as a specialist in the program. Earl believed strongly in professional development and obtained certifications as a Professional Agronomist, Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control, Crop Advisor, and Prescribed Burn Manager. He was a long-time member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), the International Erosion Control Association (IECA), the American Society of Agronomy, the Soil Science Society of America, and several state-level organizations. He received numerous recognitions and honors for his contributions to the field. He was inducted into the Hall of Honor by the Auburn University Agricultural Alumni Club and honored as a Fellow of the SWCS, a Sustained Contributor of the International Erosion Control Association, and the Soil Conservationist of the Year and Water Conservationist of the Year by the Alabama Wildlife Association. In addition to his career pursuits, Earl was an active member of Auburn United Methodist Church where he sang in the choir for 50 years. Earl is survived by his wife of 59 years, Julia Norton; son, Tony (Lisa) Norton of Auburn; son, Daniel (Susan) Norton of Auburn; grandchildren, Brad Norton (Sean Flowers) of Rochester, New York, Ashley (Levi) Sexton of Cartersville, Georgia, Payne Norton of Birmingham, Alabama, and Camille Norton of Auburn. Contributions for the Memorial Scholarship Fund may be made by check, payable to the Alabama Chapter of SWCS with "Earl L. Norton Memorial Scholarship Fund" included in the memo line, and mailed to: Alabama Chapter of SWCS, PO Box 116, Auburn, AL 36831-0116.
O'Bryan	**2026**	**Robert Claude O'Bryan** (78) of Eucha, Oklahoma, passed away September 12, 2026. He was born on March 11, 1948, in Tulsa, Oklahoma to his parents, Grayson O'Bryan and Alma Christine "Jackie" O'Bryan. Robert was a long time Soil Conservation Technician for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Jay, Oklahoma, field office. Robert's life was lived making sure his family was well taken care of. He was a blessing, his memory a treasure. He is loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. Robert was preceded in death by his grandson, Levi Aaron Sanders. Robert is survived by his wife of 52 years, Sandra O'Bryan of the home; Daughter, Lisa Sanders (Pat); Son's, Michael Prather (Kelly), and Patrick O'Bryan (Amy); Grandchildren, Jared and Derek Sanders, Hayden (Hannah), and Parker Prather; Great-Grandchildren, Jolene Sanders; numerous extended family and friends.
O'Connor	**2018**	Life Member **John Douglas O'Connor** (79) of Mt. Pleasant, Texas, passed away surrounded by family on September 17, 2018, after a brief illness at Christus Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler, Texas. He was born in Petty, Texas on August 7, 1939. John graduated from Texas A & M University in 1961 with a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy. He served in the 2nd Infantry Division, United States Army, for two years. John retired in 1994 after 32 years of service with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). While with the SCS, he worked in Texas, Kansas, and Louisiana, finishing his career as the Deputy State Conservationist of Louisiana. He then worked in Mt. Pleasant, Texas for 13 years as a Regional Manager for the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board. John was an active member of Tennison Memorial United Methodist Church in Mt. Pleasant. He was a Texas Master Gardener and enjoyed working with plants in his yard. John was a 33rd Degree Mason and a member of the Temple Lodge in Mt. Pleasant, TX. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Deloris; daughter Susan Moore (Stan) of Broken Bow, Oklahoma; daughter Pamela Kane (Chris) of Rockwall, Texas; and grandchildren Sarah Connor Moore, Jackson John Kane, and Cooper James Kaney.
Phillips	**2026**	**Gene Tunney Phillips** (96) of Elkhorn, Nebraska, passed away on August 10, 2026. He was born on a farm in Thurston County, Nebraska on April 24, 1930, to Lester and Blanche (Beaudette) Phillips. He was named after world heavyweight boxing champion Gene Tunney. He farmed for 3 years after high school with his brother Duane before entering military service, where he proudly served in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. After returning from Germany, where he was stationed, he married Elsa Piper on August 7, 1956. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1959. He devoted his professional life to caring for the land and helping others through his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, where he worked as a Liaison District Conservationist with the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District, an Area Resource Conservationist and then a State Office Resource Conservationist. He also served on the Stanton Community Schools school board, United Methodist church board, Stanton Health Center board of directors, and was instrumental in the design and development of the Stanton Golf Course and Maskenthine Lake. He was preceded in death by his wife, Elsa (Piper) Phillips in 2024. Survivors include his children: Reva (Dana) Altman, Joni Brower, Bret (Jean) Phillips, Lesa Verplank, and Steve (Jane) Phillips; grandchildren: Jordan, Chase (Rachel), Spencer, Audra (Danny), Grant, Jared (Rachel), Beau (Liz), Elise (Troy), Brittany (Stephan), Luke (Maggie), Colton, Tara, Dirk (Melissa), Kirsten (Tim), Ryan (Megan), and Brooke; great-grandchildren: Jade, Carter, Ray, baby girl Poppen, Nora, Maddox, Rhea, Eleanor, Oliver, Kael, Knox, Nash, Timmy, Nolan, Collins, Bella, Gabby, Emma, and Rosalie.

Prescott	**2026**	**Timothy McGuire Prescott** (67) of Champaign, Illinois, passed away at home on September 17, 2026. Tim was born in Chicago, Illinois, to James and Doris (McGuire) Prescott as the third of four children. Shortly after graduating high school, Tim moved with his family to Wisconsin and enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Baraboo, where he played on the basketball team and earned an associate of science in 1980. Tim went on to complete a Bachelor of Science in landscape architecture in 1987 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which led to a 33-year career in the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a cartographer/GIS specialist in Wisconsin, Nebraska, West Virginia, and Illinois. He worked in the Regional Soil Survey Office and was the National Resources Inventory Coordinator for West Virginia from 1997 through 2015. He retired from the NRCS in 2021. Tiim enjoyed basketball, softball, swimming, cycling, tennis, golf, and cross-country skiing. He met his future wife on a volleyball court. He passed his love of the outdoors on to his son via hiking, camping, and sledding adventures. Tim is survived by his beloved wife of 28 years, Linda Wessels, and son, Cole. Also survived by siblings Sandi Prescott (Dave Gray), Tom Prescott (JoAnne), and Ted Prescott, a niece and two nephews, five great-nieces and -nephews, and many cousins
Ramos	**2026**	**Rita Marie Conley Ramos** (65) passed away on September 6, 2026, in Farmington, Utah. She was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, to parents Thomas Conley and Tomiko Ebihara. After finishing school, Rita joined the United States Army, spending time in Germany as a drill sergeant. After an honorable discharge, Rita channeled her technical talents into a successful career with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation. She worked in information technology and became the state webmaster. While there, she met the love of her life, Fred Ramos. They shared many years together happily married, living in Oregon and Colorado. In retirement, Rita's tireless drive to serve others found a home at the Department of Corrections, where she volunteered with young people. Her nonjudgmental warmth and ability to make others laugh earned her the deep affection of staff and youth alike, several of whom called her simply "Mom". Rita's greatest joys in life were her family, her two labradoodles (Sally and Zoey), a passion for photography, her Japanese heritage, and taking long road trips to see friends. Rita is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Fred Ramos. She is survived by her son and family in Utah.
Reed	**2026**	**Sally J. Reed** (89) of Dixon, California (formerly of Woodland, California), passed away on October 7, 2026. She was born December 19, 1936, in an Indiana farmhouse to Arnold and Sadie Luebcke. After high school she started to work for Calumet Title Insurance Company and worked her way up to being assistant supervisor in the Preliminary Department. In 1967 she went to work for USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Berkeley, California. She enrolled in Laney College in Oakland and got an associate degree in business administration. Sally married Howard Reed on September 28, 1968. Her office was moved to Davis, California in 1973 and she and Howard moved to Woodland. There Sally was reassigned to the Contracting staff where she worked on putting out bids for building concrete, rock riprap channels, and dams. When there were floods, fires or earthquakes, she worked on EWP (Emergency Watershed Project). She retired in December 1995. She was preceded in death by her husband Howard in 2007. Survivors include stepson James Reed and daughter-in-law Michelle Reed; two granddaughters Amy Reed and Jenny Pulliam, grandson Jared Reed; three great-grandsons Jacob VerPlanck, Christopher Pulliam and Alexander Reed and two great-granddaughters Zoey Pulliam and Natalia Reed.
Salinas	**2026**	**Enedina R. Salinas** 78 of Troy, Texas, passed away October 3, 2026, in a Round Rock Hospice Home. She was born August 24, 1948, in Caldwell, Texas, the daughter of Esteban and Ysabel (Garcia) Ramirez. She married Daniel Salinas June 25, 1969, in Belton, Texas. She was a graduate of Temple College and worked for 37 years as a Secretary for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Temple State Office. She retired in 2012. She was a member of Christ the King Catholic Church in Belton. Survivors include her husband Daniel Salinas Sr., two sons, including Daniel Salinas Jr; and one daughter Veronica Yost; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.
Scaling	**2026**	Life Member **George Wilson Scaling II** (88) of Henrietta, Texas, passed away on September 19, 2026. He was born July 14, 1938, to Harry W. and Marjorie Bevering Scaling. He grew up in the ranch home he lived in for the rest of his life. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Husbandry from Texas Tech University. He was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and kept up many of those relationships all his life. When he graduated, he returned home, the place he treasured most. His love of Clay County branded everything he did. His heart for the land, people, and conservation of natural resources was rooted deeply, just as his family's history was. That history began in Clay County in 1891, when his great-grandfather Samuel Scaling purchased land here, and his Lazy B brand still marks Wilson's Hereford cattle. Wilson's humble, hard-working, and kind-hearted nature fueled everything he did, whether he was serving as Parade Marshall for Clay County Pioneer Reunion or as Chief of the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in Washington, DC, under Presidents Reagan and George H.W. Bush. He didn't just serve, he led in county, state, and national organizations. He was precinct 3 County Commissioner from 1993 to 2008. He served as a director of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raiser's Association, director and Vice-President of the Red River Authority, President of Clay County Pioneer Reunion and Rodeo, Chairman of the Nine-Man Board during each of his two terms, and he served on the Kirk Edwards Foundation. He was a Governor-appointed member of the Conservation Advisory Council in Austin, Texas, and was instrumental in many conservation societies from the Little Wichita Soil and Water Conservation District to the Region B Water Planning Commission. Wilson's slogan in all his conservation efforts was "take care of what takes care of you." But he took care of more than that. He loved young people and was a big supporter of FFA, 4-H, Boy Scouts and others. He helped secure scholarships for graduating seniors. As a widower, Wilson "added to his family" on November 7, 2009, with a late-in-life marriage to a dear, lifelong friend, Ann Adams. Together they carried on Wilson's enthusiastic support of Clay County. One of Wilson's favorite leadership positions was with the North Texas Rehabilitation Center (NTRC) in Wichita Falls where he began serving in l975. He was Trail Boss for many years over its Livestock and Merchandise Auction. He and Ann both served on its board, and he was a lifetime director of both the Rehab Center Operating Board and its Foundation Board. Ranches who compete in the NTRC's main fundraiser, the Texas Ranch Roundup, voted to give Wilson the coveted Trailblazer Award. In addition, he was recognized as Individual of the Year by the Clay County Chamber of Commerce. "Giving back" motivated Wilson, whether serving in his church (Trinity Episcopal) or in the United States Army Reserve from 1961 to 69. He continued to support the military through his involvement in the "Dove Salute" for enlisted men and women at Sheppard Air Force Base. He appreciated and supported all who worked to help others, including area volunteer fire fighters. He is survived by his wife, Ann, and her son, Duncan Arnhold of Florida; his sister, Sally Scaling Gray of Wichita Falls; Scott Schroeder of Scaling Ranch in Clay County; and many beloved cousins, relatives and friends.
Sencindiver	**2026**	**Dr. John Coe Sencindiver** (78) of French Creek, West Virginia, passed away with family on October 21, 2026, at his home. He was born on August 21, 1948, in Martinsburg, West Virginia, the son of the late John Lee and Mary Lee Hollida Sencindiver. On November 3, 2001, he was united in marriage to Sharon Ann Trainer, who survives. John was

		in ROTC in his college years & transitioned to the Army Reserves and was a proud veteran. He received an Associate of Arts degree from Potomac State College and a Bachelor of Science degree from West Virginia University (WVU) in Soil Science. Working with Richard M. Smith, John received his PhD and was a pioneer in mine soil classification. After a short stint with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service, he was hired at WVU where he taught a variety of classes including soil development, soil survey, soil physics, and land reclamation, and he earned several outstanding teaching awards. He trained the WVU soil judging team for annual collegiate competitions and advised the Plant & Soil Science Club. He was also active in numerous professional societies and often served in leadership positions in the American Society of Reclamation and the Soil and Water Conservation Society. He was a founding member of the Mine Drainage Task Force and worked closely with the National Cooperative Soil Survey. John received many awards including induction to the WV Agricultural and Forestry Hall of Fame, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Reclamation, Fellow of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and the Silver Spade Award. In addition to his wife Sharon, survivors include two daughters: Susan Shelton (Craig) of Flemington, West Virginia, and Amy Rhodes (Matt) of St. Albans, West Virginia; son Matt Sencindiver (Jacie) of Fairmont, West Virginia; stepdaughter Alexis Sabo of Marshall, NC; two stepsons: Jeremy McGill (Elaine) of Buckhannon, West Virginia and Ian Sabo (Alex) of Hot Springs, North Carolina; twelve grandchildren and two great grandchildren.
Shafer	**2026**	**Bernard "Bernie" Shafer** (78) of Fort Collins, Colorado, passed away after a brief illness, with his wife, Connie, by his side, on August 24, 2026, at Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins. He was born on December 25, 1947, in San Francisco, California to Glenn "Tine" Shafer and Rose Shafer. In 1969, he graduated from Montana State University (MSU) in Bozeman, earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Geography, then went on to get his Master of Science in Meteorology/Hydrology in 1971. While there he met and married Connie, the love of his life, on December 30, 1970. They celebrated 56 years of marriage this past December. He began his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service in snow surveys in Montana, working in the mountains he loved. He helped install snow measuring sites in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming, responsible for water supply forecasting for the Western United States. He was a regional, then national hydrologist before launching the Information Technology Center in Fort Collins. He and then Chief Information Officer Tom Christiansen led the development of Future Directions, which guided NRCS into mainstream architectures leading to NASIS, PLANTS, Web Soil Survey, Customer Service Toolkit, Protracts, and many other automated tools, still in use or precursors to those used today supporting agency program delivery. Throughout his career, Bernie was widely respected by his colleagues for his technical expertise, leadership, and dedication to public service. His first retirement was in 1999 from what was now the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He then worked in the private sector until his second retirement in 2003, and finally retiring for good from private consulting in 2006. Bernie was known for his love of the great outdoors – hiking, hunting and above all – fly fishing in Montana and the streams and lakes of Colorado. He was never more at peace than when he was drifting down a river or standing in the middle of a stream with his waders on and a fly rod in his hand. In addition to his wife Connie, he is survived by two children, Codi (Todd) Kaji, and Josh (Julie) Shafer, and his four treasured grandsons, Benjamin and William Kaji and Oliver and Arlo Shafer.
Short	**2026**	**James Wayne Short** (75) of Littleton, North Carolina, passed away on August 30, 2026. He was born April 30, 1951, to James and Alma Short. Wayne married Alice Mustian in 1972 and together they built a life and raised three children. Wayne was a longtime well-respected District Conservationist in the Halifax Field Office for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. He was strong technically and knew how to put conservation on the ground. He took great pride in his family and found particular joy in being a granddad. Wayne is survived by his wife, Alice; his children, Jim Short (Brandi), Brian Short (Jennifer), and Susan Buenaventura (Patrich); and his cherished grandchildren, Bella Short, Tristan Short, and McKenna Buenaventura.
Smith	**2020**	Member **Harry Lee Smith** (82) of Early, Texas, passed away October 19, 2020. Harry was born October 8, 1938, in Post, Texas to Arvil and Eula Bee Smith. He received a bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University. He married Nelda Joy Townsend on August 15, 1964, and they began a life together that blessed them with two children. Harry worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service as a planning engineer, retiring in 2006. Harry loved working with kids and taught 2nd grade and Jr. High Sunday school classes. He was frequently seen walking around the church singing children's Bible songs. Harry gave much of his spare time to the church. Long hours of mowing grass, fixing sprinkler heads and filling in where needed. Harry served as a Deacon at the Coggin Avenue Baptist Church in Brownwood. Harry is survived by his beloved wife, Nelda Joy Smith of Early; sons, Ryan Lyle (Alicia Smith) of Rockwall, Texas, and Reed Evan (Midge Smith) of Conroe, Texas; grandkids, Ashley Smith of Alexandria, Virginia, Amanda Smith of Cheyenne, Wyoming, Andy Smith of Ft. Collins, Colorado and Garrett Smith of Rockwall.
Stierna	**2026**	Life Member **John H Stierna** (83) of Santa Rosa, California (formerly of Hidden Valley Lake, California), passed away peacefully on September 27, 2026. John was born April 27, 1943. He attended Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan from 1961 to 1963, and then went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University. He worked as an Economist for the Midwest Research Institute from 1967 to 1970 and the National Water Commission in Washington, DC where he provided analysis and policy recommendations for the Commission's report to the President and the Congress. He then went to work for the Bureau of Economic Analysis Under the Department of Commerce from 1972 to 1975. From 1975 to 2004 he worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a Senior Economist where he worked on economic and policy analysis for conservation issues affecting agricultural and rural lands. After retiring from NRCS in 2004 he went to work for the American Farmland Trust working on policy for the Conservation Title of Farm Bill and related work. John served 16 years on the Board of Trustees for Finlandia University and served as Chair of the Board for over five years. Survivors include his wife Ruth and children. A memorial service will be held November 28, 2026 at Galilee Lutheran Church in Kelseyville, California. Donations in memory of John can be made to the Lake County Land Trust may www.lakecountylandtrust.org.
Thomas	**2026**	Life Member **Edward (Ed) Earl Thomas** (94) of Bryan, Texas, passed away peacefully on June 30, 2026. Ed was born on January 14, 1932, in Runningwater, Hale County, Texas, to Findley Hubert Thomas and Inez Hill Thomas. In September 1949, Ed entered Texas A&M College. Because of the large number of World War II veterans enrolled at the college, his freshman class was housed at the A&M Annex (now the RELLIS Campus). During his college years he worked as a waiter in Duncan Dining Hall and eventually became Doorman his senior year. He played the clarinet in the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band and earned a varsity letter as a high jumper on the Southwest Conference Championship Track Team in 1953. His lifelong devotion to Texas A&M began during those years and remained one of the defining passions of his life. After receiving his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education, Ed

		accepted a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army while beginning his career with the USDA-Soil Conservation Service (SCS). Entering active duty in June 1954, he trained at Fort Eustis, Virginia, served sixteen months in Pusan, Korea, and completed his service at Camp Leroy Johnson in New Orleans before receiving an honorable discharge as a 1st Lieutenant in June 1956. On June 16, 1956, Ed married Mary Esther Farlow, the love of his life in Fort Worth, Texas. Following military service, Ed resumed his career with SCS, beginning in Wellington and Wheeler, Texas, before serving as District Conservationist in Jayton and Morton, Texas. His leadership abilities soon led to appointments as Area Conservationist in Pecos, Texas and Harlingen, Texas, Assistant State Conservationist in Temple, Texas, Deputy State Conservationist in Nashville, Tennessee, and in 1972, State Conservationist of Texas. In 1975 he was appointed Assistant Administrator at SCS National Headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he later served as Assistant Chief responsible for the Southern States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. During his distinguished federal career, he also accepted temporary international assignments with the Food and Agriculture Organization and other conservation programs in Rome, Peru, Egypt, South Africa, and Lesotho. Ed attended Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government in 1976, graduated from the Federal Executive Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 1977, and in 1979 became a Charter Member of the Federal Government's Senior Executive Service. During his final year with the Soil Conservation Service, he served as Deputy Chief of Technology before retiring in 1987 after more than three decades of distinguished public service. Retirement brought Ed and Mary back home to Texas and they chose to live in Bryan near the university they loved so dearly! Retirement gave him more opportunities to serve others. A dedicated Christian, Ed was a member of the A&M United Methodist Church but for 37 years was a devoted member of First United Methodist Church of Bryan and held numerous church leadership positions. He volunteered for many years as an official at Texas A&M track meets, audited university courses—including turfgrass management—and remained an enthusiastic supporter of Aggie athletics, faithfully attending football, baseball, and basketball games with Mary for more than twenty-five years. One of Ed's greatest joys was restoring antique horse-drawn farm equipment. What began as a hobby became a backyard miniature museum where he carefully restored mule-drawn implements and proudly shared them with visitors, preserving an important part of America's agricultural heritage. He is survived by his devoted wife, Mary Esther Thomas; his sons Edward Earl Thomas (Penelope Sue "Penny") of College Station; James W. “Bill” Thomas (Donna) of Corpus Christi, Texas, and Lee Merrill, surviving spouse of Ed’s predeceased daughter, Susan Elizabeth; grandchildren Julia (Clint) Bell, Sarah (Bryan) Jody, Laura Thomas, Brice (Ashleigh) Thomas, Kyle Thomas, Ryan Thomas, Karen (John) Griffin, Bryan (Chandler) Merrill and Ellen (Stephen) Reynolds; and eleven great-grandchildren.
Thomas	**2024**	Life Member **Jimmy Denton Thomas** (88) of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, passed away at his home on January 24, 2024. Jim was born on April 22, 1935, in Paris, Arkansas alongside his twin brother, Benny, to Robert Fay and Norma Pansy (Cooper) Thomas. Jim's life was marked by a deep sense of duty, and he proudly served our country in the United States National Guard at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. Jim found love with his wife of over 40 years, Lillian F. Thomas, whom he married on February 12, 1982. Jim's career started with the USDA-Forest Service and continued as a surveyor for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service where he retired after 30 years. He then went to work for the State of Oklahoma Conservation Commission Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation (AML) Program as a field inspector until he again retired. An avid lover of all-things sports, Jim can be remembered as having coached his son's little league baseball teams, refereeing the high school basketball games, running the chains during the high school football games, as well as playing softball well into his 50s. Additionally, Jimmy was a proud lifetime member of the Okmulgee Elks Lodge. In his retirement, through his wife Lillian, he became involved in various activities and organizations within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation including volunteering to work at the Senior Citizens Gift Shop, driving the van for the Elder Services field trips, volunteering at several Education Services challenge bowls, and participating with his wife in the walking program. Jim was preceded in death by his twin brother, Benny Lenton Thomas, and his eldest son, Dean Keith ("Deke") Thomas. Survivors include his wife Lillian Thomas, son Michael Thomas (Teresa), daughter Renae Raburn (Perry), daughter Shelley Aary (Doug), daughter Roberta Lynn "Robbie" Thomas, stepdaughter Natalie Garrett, stepdaughter Lila Garrett, grandchildren Jeremy Thomas, Chris Thomas, Eden Pettus (Dustin), Jesse Bear, Sean Raburn, Haley Raburn, J.T. Binning, Elliott Garrett, and a host of great-grandchildren and other loving relatives.
Wadleigh	**2026**	Member **Ralph Stuart Wadleigh** (91) of Aloha, Oregon passed away on February 12, 2026. An official obituary was not published; however, his Celebration of Life service was posted on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5RCZrm7YLk&t=2545s. Ralph was born January 17, 1935. He worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service as a Hydraulic Engineer, retiring in 1990. From the video we know that Ralph married Janet Ruth Tripp on August 24, 1957. She preceded him in death. Ralph received his engineering degree from the University of New Hampshire.
Webb	**2026**	**Carolyn Gladys Webb** (86) of Bristow, Oklahoma, passed away September 20, 2026. She was born October 23,1939 to Stacy L. and Gertrude Ann Masters in Bristow. She married her high school sweetheart Bob Webb on Valentine’s Day, February 14,1958. She worked as a Secretary for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service and Creek County Conservation District. When she traveled, she always had a pocket full of $20s to give to any military service person she would see and made sure to chat with them and tell them how proud and grateful she was for their service. She volunteered at the hospital and was a substitute teacher at the Bristow schools helping young people with their reading. She quietly paid for school photos, gym clothes, and beautiful prom dresses for those who could not afford them. She wanted everyone to participate. She was an active member of the first Church of God for many years, helping with bean dinners, funeral dinners, she helped with Sunday school classes and many other activities too. She organized the Red Cross blood drives in Bristow for years and for the last many years, she absolutely loved volunteering at the Bristow Historical Society and Museum at the Train Depot. Survivors include her husband, Bob Webb; son, Robert Webb, and his family June Kwark, Tyler Webb, Bryan Webb, and Aden Webb; favorite daughter, Sue Ann Coberg and her family Thom and Natalie Scout; favorite youngest son, Stacy Webb, and his family Michael Hodge.
Wright	**2026**	**Juanita Huff Wright** (101) of Winona, Mississippi, passed away on June 22, 2026. She was the wife of late Wilson Kermit Wright, former Conservation Technician for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service. Juanita was born in Lowndes County, Mississippi, on February 2, 1925, to Grady and Mary Landin Huff. She was a graduate of Caledonia High School in Caledonia, Mississippi and Draughn’s College in Jackson, Mississippi. Her husband Wilson passed away in 1999. Juanita is survived by her two sons, Frank Wright (Carla) and Grady Wright (Regina); five grandchildren, Mitchell Wright of Brooklyn, New York, Brae Wright of Freeport, Florida, Lezlee Wright of Greenville, North Carolina, Brantley Wright of Albemarle, North Carolina and Chandler Witherington of Raleigh, North Carolina; nine great-grandchildren, Baylor and Parker Wright of Cumming, Georgia, Brady Wright of Freeport, Florida, Alexandra Wright of Garner, North Carolina, Brooklyn and Easton Marks of Sneads Ferry, North Carolina.