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NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter For Retired SCS And NRCS Employees

Vol. 38, No. 2

March/April 2011

NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

Lennie Losh

President Obama's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform – The report appears to be the sounding board for future actions by the Congress. The report proposes major tax code changes, dramatic changes to Social Security, cut federal civilian and military retirement over 10 years, shift an increasing share of health premium costs to federal workers and retirees, freeze federal pay, and reduce the federal workforce by 10%. For Social Security, benefits would be reduced to upper income recipients (a means test). The retirement age would be increased. Whether the 112th Congress will be receptive to Commission proposals remains to be seen.

House Budget Hawks on Cuts and Reforms - Hopefully by the time you read this, the House Republicans and Senate Democrats will have negotiated spending cuts for this fiscal year in exchange for the increase in the national debt currently at \$14.025 trillion. The upcoming 2011-2012 fiscal year funding will be the next battleground.

Affordable Health Care Act - Republicans are determined to stop implementing provisions in this legislation by using the annual appropriations process to reduce, and/or eliminate the funding in the current budget sent by the President to the Congress.

Knocking On The 400-Bushel Door - The best guess now is that the world population (9.5 billion in 2050) will need 80-100% more food than the world is now growing. In the United States, the latest innovations, research, and technology are resulting in huge crop yield increases. The state corn yield contest in North Carolina recorded 399 bushels per acre. Soybean contests have reached 160 bushels per acre. Current average state yields for corn range from 124 to 165 bushels per acre and soybeans from 40 to 60 bushels per acre. Agronomists are optimistic that the United States can meet the challenges for the year 2050.

“Tell me a fact, and I’ll learn; Tell me the truth, and I’ll believe: But tell me a story, and it will live in my heart forever.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Jerry Hytry, Historian

It was the summer of 1984 when **Bill Russel** and **Mel Cohee** were having lunch in Wisconsin that the question was raised as to who was the oldest living former SCS employee. **Mel** claimed to have known a lot of SCS “Old Timers”. He then wrote letters to some 15 SCS retirees, ages mid 80s and older. **Ken Blair** of New Mexico claimed to be the oldest (age ?). **Bill Russel** and “**Herb**” **Flueck**, Minnesota, contested this as being factual. That started the search for the oldest living SCS retiree. **R. Y. (Dick) Bailey** of Alabama was declared the oldest, age 92. This was the birth of the now “Senior Conservationist” designation. (I will have more on this subject in subsequent newsletters)

ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tom Badger, President

Those of us in this part of the world are finally experiencing what might be the first signs of spring. Today the northern United States are experiencing cold and heavy snow that is expected to move into the northeast this next week. While our winter has been bad enough, I can't imagine what those of you in the northeast had been through.

One of the nice things about Kansas is you normally don't have to wait too long for things to change. Two weeks ago, we went from below zero to mid 60's in two days. When we were basking in temperatures in the upper 40's, our daughter in northern Florida was complaining about how cold it was with the temp, you guessed it, in the upper 40's. It is all a matter of perspective.

This past week, much has been written and spoken about budgets and how state, local, and the federal government are facing mind boggling deficits in the years to come. Most of the blame is being placed on the "government" employees and their lucrative pensions and other benefits. Without wanting to get into a political discussion about the above, I personally think that my fellow employees, both retired and active, made a commitment that results are more important than the benefits. We all sacrificed to make a difference and I don't feel we should be ashamed with the benefits we have now. Fellow ARCSE'ers, hold your head high and be proud of the work you have done.

A couple of reminders, nominations for the Outstanding Community Service Award and the President's Distinguished Service Award are soon due. Again, please take the time to nominate a fellow retiree who is doing outstanding work in their community and individuals who have contributed greatly to the advancement of our organization.

I would also remind members of the Annual Meeting to be held at the Omni Shoreham in Washington D. C. on July 18 -19, 2011. Make plans now to attend this meeting and spend some time in our nation's capital.

**DEADLINE FOR
MAY/JUN 2011
NEWSLETTER IS APRIL 25**

MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

ARCSE REPRESENTATIVES

Ron Marlow, Secretary-Treasurer

State Representatives are encouraged to keep a close working relationship with someone in the NRCS State Office. Many of you do this by having the State Conservationist or other State Office representatives attend local ARCSE social events. If you have not had an opportunity to ensure that close working relationship recently, now is a good time to schedule a visit. This will also provide an opportunity to pass along a supply of the ARCSE brochures for placement in each retiree's packet. To further improve communications, some Representatives have their Email address added to the State Office's emailing list for newsy items. This gives you another venue for finding out about new retirees and deaths of retirees.

Many of you are planning your annual state retiree social function. These functions provide a good opportunity to make our ARCSE membership brochure available to retirees. If you need additional brochures, please send a request to Ron Marlow at arcse@cox.net.

Finally, I want to welcome a new state representative on board. Upon **Loren Spencer's** retirement as the Representative for Nevada, I am pleased to report that **Chuck Houston**, retired State Conservation Engineer for Nevada, has agreed to replace **Loren**. The Board extends its thanks to **Loren** for his service to the ARCSE and the retirees of Nevada.

Please be sure that your dues are current by April 15, 2011 to ensure that you are listed in the annual directory. It will be distributed with the May/June Newsletter. If you are not sure if your dues are current, please take a look at your mailing label. If the number to the right center above your name is a **C10** or **10** or less, then your dues are now past due. If the number is **C11**, **11** or higher including any of the three digit numbers **995** through **999**, no action is needed. Checks for dues should be written to ARCSE and mailed to ARCSE, P.O. Box 7454, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454. If you believe your dues designation number to be incorrect, please contact the Secretary-Treasurer.

ARIZONA

Glen Johnson, ARCSE Representative
Email: gljoh4@aol.com

AZ ARCSE members met for luncheon Feb. 16 at the Hometown Buffet in Scottsdale. Those present were **Vern & Carolyn Bathurst**, **Marion Strong**, **Glen Johnson**, and guest **Cathy McGuire** from the Arizona State Office who discussed current trends, and guests **Robert & Leena Kudlacek** and their son **John**, and **Jerry & Phyllis Richard**. Old times were reminisced and **Cathy** brought us up to date on current changes especially in soils survey and use. We also had a chat by cell phone with **Mel Davis** who was unable to attend from Yuma. **Glen** announced that he has resigned as AZ representative. That leaves an urgent need for a replacement. Arranging for meetings may not be necessary but someone is needed who can gather information from members and forward it on to **Mike Nethery** for the Newsletter. One need not live in a metropolitan area to do this, just have e-mail and post office address. Meantime members may send reports of important events in their lives directly to **Mike Nethery** at EditorMike@digis.net.

FLORIDA

ARCSE Representative - Vacant

The Florida retirees started out the New Year with a luncheon meeting in Orlando, FL. **Jerry Hytry** made arrangements for the group to get together at the local Olive Garden. Attendees included **Ida Cuthbertson** who continues her travels which now include visits to seven continents. **Irv & Betty Jo Ross**

also continue their travels. They have now visited all 50 states and played golf in 38 of them. **Bill & Irene Frederick** continue their travels after settling in the sunshine state from MI. **Bill** is the former MI State Soil Scientist. His e-mail address which is augerchief@aol.com pretty well says it all. **Bob Halstead** represented the family since **Sue** was under the weather. **Bob** says he is now grounded as far as overseas travel so remains active in the church food pantry and out reach activities. **Jerry Hytry** volunteers at the local Hospital and is doing a great job as ARCSE historian. Many notes of regret were read and the group scheduled the next luncheon for June 1, 2011 at 11:30 am at the Olive Garden, Orlando, FL.

Seven-continent traveler **Ida Cuthbertson** joined a New Zealand tour last Sept. During her two weeks in that beautiful country she experienced warm days, rain, and snow. Lambing season was in full swing, with new kids weathering cold days and nights. All animals live outdoors year-round. Milk solids are now the leading product in that country, surpassing chilled lamb as the country's biggest dollar earner. Deer (venison) is the 4th largest crop. During two visits to Christchurch **Ida** experienced continuing earthquake aftershocks, one measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale.

Ida then flew to Cairns for independent travel in Australia. While in that seaside city she spent a day at the Great Barrier Reef and another in the tropical rain forest. Next was a stay at Ayres Rock resort, where the desert was green from recent rains. Sunrises and sunsets at Uluru were unbelievably captivating. She then rode the bus to Coober Pedy, the opal mining capital of the world where houses, hotels, and churches are underground. Touring the mining areas revealed a dangerous, barren workplace.

After a day in Adelaide **Ida** flew to Canberra, the relatively new national capitol. There a security guard mentioned his daughter who is at Troy State University (AL) on an athletic scholarship. A highlight of the visit in Australia was attending Floriade, the flower festival in the capital city. Five days in glorious Sydney completed the trip. While visiting Toronga Zoo she heard someone call her name -- it was a woman who had been on the tour in New Zealand, who works at the Zoo one day a week - the day **Ida** chose to go there! But for the 13 1/2 hour plane ride, she would be a frequent visitor to that prosperous country.

GEORGIA

George Norris, ARCSE Representative
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The number was small but fellowship large as retirees from the Athens area lunched together on January 27, 2011. Visiting together were **Rick Main, Marge Lucas, Bill & Rue Player, Bill & Norma White, Cecil & Gene Martin, Edna Firor, and George & Ellen Norris**. Weather of recent days was a major topic of discussion when snow and ice kept all confined to their home for a week or more, very rare for GA.

Working with Boy Scouts is an important volunteer activity for **George Norris**. **George** has served as Sponsoring Organization Representative for Life Springs United Methodist Church to the Flint River Council, BSA since 1996. The program has grown from a fledgling Cub Scout Pack to now include a Boy Scout Troop and a Venture Crew with a total of 76 youth and 28 adult leaders registered. Since 2003, the Troop has seen 15 of its number advance to Eagle Scout and two of its leaders recognized as Silver Beaver. Seven Scouts and eight leaders of the Troop attended the 100th Anniversary of Scouting National Jamboree at Fort A P Hill in Virginia last year. Our Crew leader served as Scoutmaster for a Composite Troop from Georgia. Three leaders served as assistant Scout Masters and the other leaders served on the Jamboree staff. The Program is providing well grounded citizens and leaders for tomorrow.

IDAHO

Stan Hobson, ARCSE Representative
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Sharon Norris reported that retirees gathered the week before Thanksgiving for lunch and visiting. Attending were **Dennis & Mary Froeming, Shelby & Marjorie Brownfield, Glen & Florence Logan, Don & Maxine Stewart, Darrell & Clydene Gallup, Frank Fink, Paul Malone, John Kendrick, Jim Cornwell, Wayne & Jerry Faude, and Sharon Norris**. **Stan Hobson** stopped by for a brief visit. We were all glad to see him looking so good and were happy to learn his recuperation is going great.

Retirees attending our December luncheon included **Amos Garrison, John Kendrick, Darrell & Clydene Gallup, Jim Cornwell, Don & Maxine Stewart, Wayne & Jerry Faude, Lee Holstine, Jerry Larson, Gene Crisman, Dennis & Mary Froeming, and Sharon Norris**.

From 50 degrees to mid-twenties in few days keeps the snow tires on and coats and hats handy. In spite of that we had about 16 folks show up for the Feb. lunch. It's great to see the regulars like **Don & Maxine Stewart, Darrell & Gladine Gallup, and Wayne & Gerry Faude**. For milestones, the **Stewart's** win the prize for the whole year: They celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary with us on the 24th. CONGRATULATIONS, **Don and Maxine!** **Darrell & Gladine** are soon to divulge their military history during WWII. They are both veterans; one Navy and the other Army. We will get their stories for the Veterans History Project some time next month. **Gerry Faude** bragged on **Wayne's** prowess in trap shooting. He's gotten trophies galore and with a score of 94 out of 100 he finished second in the State competition this year. Now that's a BIG SHOT!

John & Charmain Kendrick and **Kathy** and I completed the duets at the luncheon. **Lee Holstine, Floyd Bailey, Paul Malone, Ellen Nutt, and Jim Cornwell** made up the singles in attendance. **Paul & Kip Malone** had a wonderful mid-winter visit to Yellowstone, for snow-shoeing, snowmobiling, and minus 38 degree temperatures.

Floyd Bailey is still cowboying in UT and he and a grandson floated the Salmon River recently. **Jim Cornwell** is heading to Arizona to hike down to the Colorado from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. He and six others from around the country will take a couple of weeks for the trip. We all await his return and report.

ILLINOIS

Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative
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We welcome several more recent NRCS retirees to the life of ease. **John Quinn**, SCT at Nashville; **Steve Nuppenau**, SCT at Mt. Carroll; **Doyle Green**, SCT at Fairfield; and **Bob Dean**, ASTC for Field Operations at Galesburg recently retired. Also, I recently learned that **Dave Brandt**, DC at Woodstock retired last year. We welcome you to your post NRCS career.

We also lost three retirees recently. **Harold Davis**, retired SCT, passed away on Nov. 7, 2010 in Virginia, IL; **Nelson Torbeck**, retired SCT from Vandalia passed away on Jan. 3; and **Lois Palma**, retired Personnel Assistant passed away on Jan. 20 in TX where she had been living the last few years. We extend our sympathy to their families.

Our next retiree gathering in Champaign will be April 7, 2011 at Ryan's Steakhouse on 1004 W. Anthony Dr, Champaign. Doors open at 11:00, lunch at 11:30, and we have the room until 3:00. Everyone is invited.

KANSAS

Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative
Email: rlull2@cox.net

In January three more retirees joined our ranks. **Susan Nevins**, Area Office Assistant at the Hutchinson Area Office, retired after 40 years of federal service. She started working for the SCS in 1970 at the Hutchinson Area Office as a clerk typist and was promoted to area clerk in 1983 where she served under several titles until her retirement.

Kathy Razak, Human Resources (HR) Assistant, retired from the KS State Office after 19 years of Federal service. She began her career as a personnel clerk with the SCS in 1992 and worked her entire career as a member of the HR staff in the state office.

Milan Reimer started working for the SCS as Soil Conservation Technician in 1991. He served 20 years at the Leoti Field Office.

Some nasty Kansas winter weather was the cause of **Robert Hagen's** (former State Administrative Officer) fall in his driveway while he was shoveling snow. He broke his pelvis in five places and was moved to Wichita to be near his daughter during his recovery period. **Dorothy Gerdes** (former Personnel Management Specialist in the Kansas State Office) also fell this month crushing several vertebrae. Both **Dorothy** and **Bob** are in rehabilitation for their injuries.

We hear that wedding bells are ringing for **Robert Griffin**, former KS State Conservationist. **Bob** has moved to Pocatello, ID, to marry a long-time friend **Jerry Younkin**, the widow of **William Dale Younkin**.

We were saddened to hear of the deaths of **Norma Gibson** and **Betty Jean Wentz**. (See IN MEMORIAM.) **Joel & Betty** were very special to me. They came to KS when **Joel** accepted the staff leader position on the Watershed Planning Staff. During the 10 years that **Joel** served as my supervisor, **Betty** and I became good friends and she will be missed.

MICHIGAN

Roger Howell, ARCSE Representative
Email: rogerhowell@acd.net

The annual Upper Peninsula SCS/NRCS retiree luncheon was organized by **Bobbie Hartman** and held at the Jasper Ridge Brewery in Ishpeming on Aug. 16, 2010. Attendees included: **Bernie & Diane Huetter; Fred & Margaret Kekko; David & Mary Ann Ottosen; Tom & Jean Immonen; Randy & Rosie Wilkinson; Loren & Trudy Berndt; Bobbie Hartman; Del Meister; Walt Summers; Gary Aho; Bruce Petersen; Gerry Wigger** (retired FS soil scientist); and **Bill Fude**. **Bruce Petersen** was the most recent retiree attending, having retired on July 31, 2010. Everyone updated the group on their activities since the luncheon last year and all very much enjoyed the lunch and conversation.

The Thirty-Eighth Annual Michigan Retirees' Luncheon, was at Maxfield's Restaurant, three hundred seventy five miles east and south of Ishpeming, near Wyman, MI. People attending this luncheon were: **Thad & Delores Piwower; Loren & Trudy Berndt; Jim & June Squires; Tom & Claudia Purkey; David & Charlene Newkirk; Russel & Connie Bauerle; Tim Cattron; George Heffner; Dan Kesselring; Joe Luellen; Julius Pigott; Don Meister; Bonnie Kilgore; Mary Jane Clark; Russ Shepard; Jerry Keller; Roger Howell; Bill Fude; and Monica Wymer**, Resource Conservationist, representing the state office.

After lunch **Monica** told the group about the recent Great Lake Restoration effort by the NRCS and the Environmental Protection Agency. NRCS received 8.9 million dollars from

EPA last fiscal year for technical and financial assistance for Great Lakes restoration work which includes a special effort to address an erosion problem caused by feral swine. The population of this terrestrial invasive species has exploded in Midland, Gladwin, Bay, and Arenac Counties in which the special eradication program is focused. The aggressive rooting of these wild hogs causes new and serious erosion problems on land that drains into Saginaw Bay. The program also involves the Michigan Nature Conservancy.

Each retiree then reported on events in their lives during the past year. **Jim Squires** had fallen from a ladder. **Julius Pigott** began his retirement June 30. **Russel Bauerle** announced that he was retiring from farming and had scheduled an auction to sell his farm equipment. **Joe Luellen** talked about his Technical Service Provider work. **Tim Cattron** had 5-way by-pass surgery. Most, however, talked about trips taken and their grandchildren.

The only real decision made during the meeting was to return to Maxfield's next year. **Bobbie Hartman** and **Bill Fude** contributed to this story.

MINNESOTA

Marlene Mechelke, ARCSE Representative
Email: mechgram@aol.com

A cold, snow-burdened retirees' group gathered for lunch on Jan. 12th at Pippins in Roseville: **Bud Finney, Dave & Kay Breitbach, Gloria McCalip, Cathy McCormack, Al Giencke, Ordean & Dorothy Finkelson, Howard Midje, John Handler, Barb Nesbitt, and Marlene Mechelke**.

Gloria McCalip has been recovering from two knee replacement surgeries, one in May and one in Oct., so she's been quite quiet for the summer, fall, and winter. But she was recouped enough to make it to lunch with us. **Cathy McCormack** and her husband, **Don**, have entered the 21st century, finally – joined Facebook, bought two HD digital TVs, and a digital camera.

John Handler has been retired for a year and has only one regret – “why didn't I do it sooner? I realize that now is the time to do what I want, when I want, and for as long as I want - it wasn't just a pipe dream – it's actually true.

“Several NRCS employees considering retirement have asked me how it felt that first morning. Well, for about six minutes as I sat enjoying a leisurely cup of real coffee, I was thinking about all those things that I wasn't doing, because I wasn't in my cubicle! And I haven't looked back since. I spent the better part of the past 50 years 'discovering' what I like to do (hobbies and volunteering come to mind?), and those things I don't like to do. And from the seventh minute of retirement on, guess what I've been doing.

“Volunteering with the Boy Scouts has become the perfect way to transfer and teach the past 50 years' worth of life experiences. I've discovered that Boy Scout Merit Badges are nothing more than life skills. So, courtesy of those 50 years of experiences, I possess the life skills to assist Scouts earning Merit Badges in Electricity, Forestry, Genealogy, Home Repairs, Orienteering, Public Speaking and Railroading.

“Travel is a hobby, right? Visits and volunteering on soils related topics (and camping, of course) in Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Hungary this year satisfied that passion. Using a device obtained in Hungary, I can now make steam brewed espresso without the use of a campfire or electricity – much better than the 'cowboy' coffee usually brewed on our campfires! (Yes, we go camping, no RV'ing.)

"Three of my motorized 'toys' I've collected over the years were also ready for retirement. The 1969 model snow blower gave up last March, the 1972 chain saw made its last cut in May, and the 1967 lawn tractor's transmission croaked. All had been purchased used many years ago, and I've managed to keep them all alive and functional until this year, when the repair parts needed for the snow blower and lawn tractor were not available, and it would have cost more to fix the chain saw than it was worth. But instead of buying used replacements, I 'treated myself' to new everything, which I had not done previously, because I enjoyed repairing things (really!). I even downsized by purchasing a walk-behind self-propelled lawn mower (great way to get exercise). I have to admit that not having to constantly tinker on old machines to keep them operating is very nice, even though those learning experiences (that my Scouts are now benefiting from) are gone."

Al & Ro Giencke decided that a winter wonderland of snow and ice would be traded for a warm, sunny Christmas in Key West, FL. They traded Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer for Flipper the Red Nosed Porpoise. Their family also joined them during the holiday making a warm and joyous vacation for all. **Al** has also been busy in his annual ritual of drilling holes through 2 feet of ice trying to catch a fresh supply of fish.

Howard Midje got an interesting email from his daughter, **Heather**, who is in Shanghai, China. (All three of **Howard's** daughters are engineers and two of them work for General Mills. I was always interested in **Howard's** daughters because all three were musicians – good musicians.) **Heather** had visited the Wanchai Ferry dumpling plant and observed 1000 employees hand forming dumplings at a very fast rate – 3000 dumplings per employee per hour over a 12-hour work shift. Talk about a tedious job! She was then going on to a Haagen Dazs plant.

Vic Ruhland was not able to be with us as he had to be at Mayo Clinic with his wife, **Jean**. He has been spending some time the last several weeks transferring musical performances of a polka band he played with (Milo Edel Concertina Band) from two tapes he made with a reel to reel tape recorder at dance jobs to CDs. They were recorded during the 1960's. He can't remember when he last listened to them but could be 35-40 years ago. He was pleasantly surprised hearing the recordings again. It sounded better than his long ago memory told him.

He likes to think that playing for dance jobs was more fun and relaxed than playing for a recording or a concert. So you hear a few bad notes and bad starts, but that didn't matter for the crowd. They kept on dancing and the music kept coming. He ran into **Milo** a year and a half ago and had an interesting discussion with him about those years. He learned that **Milo** had no recordings of the band (amazing, for it was his tape recorder that **Vic** borrowed to make the tapes). Well, he would like to get a copy so he and others can start enjoying their music.

Bud Finney reports: "REAL winter began Nov. 13th when 8 inches of heavy wet (redundant) snow fell. Three days before the temperature rose to 68 degrees, and that marked the end of a very pleasant autumn. December's snowfall of about 35 inches set a record for that month. My main physical activity the past two months seems to be shoveling snow. My (I am captain) bowling team at the University of Minnesota tied for first place in wins and losses for the first half of the season. However, we ended that half in second place because the rules state that the team with the most pins wins when there is a tie. I also bowl with a fun group of older adults in an informal league. My dear friend, **Jan**, helps to make my life interesting."

We did have a couple of retirements in MN in Dec. **George Mohrhauser**, Soil Conservation Technician in Waite Park

Field Office (St. Cloud), retired on Dec. 31st, after 34 years of service. Congratulations!

Al Gustafson, Area Resource Conservationist, Thief River Falls, also retired in Dec., and ended up with a 12-day stay in the hospital around Christmas. **Al** is getting chemo treatments for cancer, which brought on some colitis, but he's back up and about and of course – going to hockey games!! Better yet, I guess he's back to eating a burger from the Schooner (a little hole in the wall bar and grill with good burgers). We wish him well!!

MISSOURI

Dave Rastorfer, *ARCSE Representative*
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New retirees at the beginning of the year include: **Jean Herman, John Turner, Jay Lingwall, Bob Ball, Ricky Mongler, Larry Fisher, Russell Titus, John Baker, and Joyce Rogers**. We welcome you to the ranks of the retired!!

Ross Braun is volunteering at a therapeutic riding center in Franklin County and they are expanding their Horses for Heroes program. The program offers therapeutic horsemanship sessions for veterans and active duty military. The center will host an open house for all veterans in April. If you are a veteran or know veterans in the St. Louis metro area, please contact **Ross** at rbbraun48@yahoo.com or 573-228-1040.

Paula Price says: We just want to say thanks again for all the prayers and concern for **Alan's** wellness journey. We found out Christmas week that his immune system has been fully restored. Translated means . . . the stem cell transplant has been a success. **Alan** is excited because he can now go to Olive Garden and eat salad. He's still working through the Guillian-Barre' Syndrome with physical therapy and is receiving photopheresis treatments for the Graft vs Host Disease. The hip break of November has healed. We continue trips to KU Med and Cancer Centers on a regular basis and have faith all will be well at the end of 2011. God has a purpose; HE loves you and so do we!

Since the last newsletter **Jack Schneider** had cataract surgery on both eyes. "I came out of it with perfect vision both near and far without glasses. Due to all the follow-up appointments, we stayed pretty much at home. All of the family was here for Christmas. We're heading for New York State the end of February for skiing and visiting family. I've certainly had a good workout shoveling snow this winter."

Jay Lingwall (newbie) reports from FL, "It has been busy for the six weeks since retiring, remodeling the house in Bokeelia, FL. We're almost done with the kitchen. **Leigh's** mother passed away three weeks ago. It was a blessing but still hard for the family. So we did get some of the cold while back in MO and now it has found us down here. It has been chilly in the mornings and only warms up to 68. Oh, retirement is even better than what I thought it would be."

What a winter it's been for **Jim Andrews**. He says he's been to the emergency room twice and a kidney stone operation last week. He's doing fine now and hopes it stays that way for senior golf starting in March.

Alton Taylor says, "**Vena** and I had our 5 year old triplets in TX for that snow and cold in MO. We had some of it here but it was just your overflow. I'm starting my 24th year as a tax aide for AARP. It's still worth every cent you pay for it since it always free. If you just have a question, call your local Tax Aide people. Hope the warm up produces some fishing days."

Neil Pellmann reports from IL that he had hip "revision" surgery. He went back in to replace some parts from the first surgery

(fall, 2003) on his right hip on Jan. 4th. He's in rehab and doing very well, thanks to **Jan's** help and support.

Springfield Chapter report from **Lane Thurman**, "I am sorry to tell you that we don't have any news from the chapter, we did not have our quarterly meeting due to the snow and ice coming in that day, it was really miserable here and we didn't think anyone would get out and come, so we cancelled, but one determined individual decided to come anyway and wondered why they were by themselves at the meeting, couldn't understand why no one else was there, and that individual had to be an engineer, our own **Forrest Tindall**. Makes you wonder about engineers sometimes! (ed. note...*Oh no it doesn't, Lane!!*)..... Nothing else new from here except the cold and snow, we have our share and someone else' share as well. We are all ready for it to go and become spring so we can go fishing. **Nancy** and I are headed south to Louisiana for a few days in March to watch one of our talented grandsons play baseball. They get to start a lot earlier down there. On the way back we will be stopping in Little Rock for a couple of days to go to the Clinton Museum and Library. We've never been to a presidential library before, so this should be different for us. Then it will be time to start fishing and I am ready for that to get started. Everyone have a good spring!"

From **Buck & Carolyn Burch**. "We have moved to Columbia. We are scheduled to move into our new house on Feb. 15th. We have lived in the Marriott for the past 6 weeks weathering the worst winter in Columbia history. Since we survived that challenge, now perhaps, I will have the chance to get even with **Jack Cronhardt, Dave Rastorfer, and Darlene Edwards** for all the help they provided during my career. We are happy to be here and appreciate their support."

The "Twelve Days of Christmas" took on special meaning for **Hugh & Sharon Curry** and their children and grand children this year. This group of 12 spent 12 days 1200 miles south of the United States border in the Central American country of Costa Rica. Rain forests replaced snow banks and Pacific beaches replaced frozen lakes. No reindeer, but plenty of monkeys, tropical birds, and iguanas. Banana plantations, pineapple farms, and hillsides covered with coffee trees made it a unique and enjoyable experience for all. Warm weather in Costa Rica was so enticing, **Hugh & Sharon** quickly locked up the house in MO and left with their trailer for sunny AZ. Temporary residence has been set up in a Mesa RV Resort where they enjoy the many warm weather activities offered by the park.

Al Wolfe spent all day on Valentine's Day, singing with a barbershop quartet delivering singing valentines to people in Columbia, Ashland, and Jeff City. "We caught these unsuspecting folks in their offices, restaurants, schools, and homes. On behalf of the sender, we would sing two short love songs and give them a card and roses. It was a lot of fun and very rewarding."

Bill Pauls, "We're just back from the Mercedes Marathon in Birmingham, AL. Took some ol' friends from our Bethany days. We stopped in Nashville on the way down and had a fun night in "Music City". The weather in Birmingham was perfect for marathon running. I was happy to get out of the snow for awhile. It was a good run, 10th anniversary of the race... good bling also since Mercedes-Benz sponsored the race. We stopped in Tupelo, MS on the way home, visited Elvis' boyhood home (neat place). Great testimony to America's greatness, that a poor MS boy like "E" could achieve so much. Too bad he messed it up. We also stopped in Oxford, MS, saw the Ole Miss Campus...then on to Tunica, MS for a "little" gamblin' while hobbling about on stiff legs. Kris won \$20 though...probably could've won more but we were both tired & had a great bed waiting for us. She's VERY lucky at casinos... I should've retired in my 30's & followed her on the "gambling"

circuit :) By the way, MS has the very best welcome centers of any state in the union. My next 2 marathons are in OH & SD. Still volunteering & making some trips to IA as mom had to go to a care facility up there; at least until spring, falling issues at home. We still have some IA farm ground in central & northwest IA to check on as well when up in that neck of the woods. We're headed to Polo, MO tonite to see our friend's grandson play basketball. Then doing the CVB welcome table at the MO state wrestling tourney later this week. My lovely young bride of almost 40 years (**Kristy Jane**) is still working mornings at computerized embroidery shop & enjoys that... LIFE IS GOOD! Stop by & shoot some pool if you are in our neighborhood, 306 Whitetail Drive, Columbia, MO. Stay out of trouble, but if U don't, U can call me 4 bail money."

Charles Eddy reports that he's "been pushin' snow, sittin' by the fire, knockin' down icicles, getting' stuck in the snow, haulin' hay, and havin' fun, etc."

Ken Benham reports, "I had a little problem during the deer season last fall. Bucks must have a minimum of four tines on one side to be legal in the county where I hunt. I finally saw two legal bucks during the season; one was a 10 point, and the other an 8 point. I fired one shot at each, and didn't get either one. The shooting conditions weren't excellent; but I should have got one of the two. I narrowed the problem down to poor eyesight, or poor shooting. I got cataract surgery in one eye last month, and the other one is scheduled this month. I've noticed two changes already. I can now watch TV without my glasses. Also, it turns out the ivory colored walls in my hallway are just plain white. I liked the ivory color better. The real test will be next fall. If I go deer hunting and still can't hit the side of a barn, then the reason will be obvious. The farming situation has changed this year. I can no longer afford to put fertilizer on Fescue hay land. The fertilizer costs more than the hay is worth. So this year I'm spreading lime and seeding Red Clover. I hope that works."

Pat Beneke reports from the Lake of the Ozarks, "What a winter this has been. We had a 22" snow at the lake. It's a good thing we had two snow shovels. **Bill** and I could not see what was happening during MO's "historic snow storm" as we lost our cable TV, landline, and internet reception from Charter for 3 days. Fortunately, we had electricity and cell phones. Snow shoveling turned out to be a welcome activity. After shoveling off the dock roof, decks, sidewalks, a path to the garage and from garage to road, we decided that we had enough of MO's snow and drove to CO to check out their snow for skiing. Actually, skiing is a lot more fun than shoveling. We did not see much snow depth until we got to the ski areas. **Bill** and I spent 3 days in Salida skiing at Monarch and moved to Leadville to ski another day at Ski Cooper. We now qualify for senior citizens discounts on lift tickets! The weather had really turned sunny and warm and it was almost like spring skiing. Now we are home enjoying the warm weather and working on a water feature in our landscaping. I anticipate this will be a very long term project. Hope everyone is enjoying this preview of our coming Spring."

Norm & Linda Klopfenstein left the snow and ice and spent eight days on the beach in Cancun. They reported sunshine, 85 degree temps, friendly people, cold beer, and good food. This appears to be a trend they will repeat.

Frank Miller says, "We haven't done much except stay around home and make our trips to the doctors for checkups and getting **Kay's** back straightened out. We plan to go to Branson the 2nd week of March to see the sights there along with a show or two. An extended trip to AZ and NM are planned to the first of May to visit **Kay's** Aunt & Uncle in Phoenix, then her brother in Tucson. Then we'll go to Las Cruces to our Granddaughter Jennifer's graduation from New Mexico State University."

From one of the "newbie's" **Bob Ball**, "A local remodeling contractor moved into our home the week following my retirement and they've become a part of family. The work has gone a little longer than what we imagined. We're not feeding them, but they just keep coming back. If they only knew that I've not received a dime from the Government since retiring, they just might leave. **Lenore** and I have decided to build a second home on our farm in OH. We've staked out the site, installed all needed utilities, purchased plans, and I interviewed two contractors last week while in OH. It sounds like we may be able to get started in April/May with a 4 month build time. This is a modest sized home that will give us a place to stay when visiting the farm. We completed a metal farm building last fall that will also serve as a garage for the house. I just returned from the farm after seeding two pastures with lespedeza and red clover and seeding a 15 species pollinator mix to comply with enhancements in my Conservation Stewardship Program contract. On the administrative side, I have been assisting Tatanka Resources in preparing a Conservation Innovation Grant proposal to NRCS NHQ that addresses greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration. This was a challenging project, and we're hopeful it will be funded. Recently, I was elected to the position of Vice-Chair of the Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council (MoFRAC) which meets quarterly, plus I'm also serving as the chair of the website committee for the Forestry and Woodlands Association of Missouri (FWAM). Possibly the activity I'm most pleased with is my nomination of a high school classmate for an "Academic Achievement Hall of Fame". This person is a leading biochemist responsible for several amazing discoveries, and I felt his story needed to be told back in our community to stimulate local high school students that they too can be successful."

A report from former Missourian, **Jess Epple**, "All is well here at J & P Ranch near Warner, OK. We are dry and were happy to have 12" of snow. Our livestock survived the sub-zero temperatures we had in Feb. Because of heavy snow, the Jan. retirees meeting in Springfield, MO was called off. **Phyllis** & I will plan to attend the April retirees meeting. We are now looking forward to spring calving. Our cows should start having calves real soon. Beef prices are going up, but so are all of the input costs. As a matter of fact, nearly all food prices are going up -- where's our COLA? The ranch hands at J & P Ranch wish *you all* lots of happiness, good health, and fond memories of those 'by gone days' when we helped farmers/ranchers care for their land."

The Columbia area breakfast group met at the Country Kitchen in Columbia on Feb. 9th. Those in attendance were: **John & Carol McCarthy, Richard & Marjorie Koenig, Robert Hummel, Bob Cheshier, Roger Hanson, Jean Herman (newbie), Alan Wolfe, Don Williams, Bob & Rosie Herschbach, Frank Miller, Bob Ball, Bill Pauls, and Dave Rastorfer**. Everyone is ready for spring and we griped about the 18" - 22" of snow we've had the last few days and the shoveling that goes with it. *[It reminds me of my good ol' days with the fine folks in MN, (except this snow happened during the winter instead of spring and fall)].* **Jean Herman** was happy to attend her first breakfast as a retiree but did say it was too early in the morning *(and I agree)*. **Bill Pauls** was getting ready to attend a MAPSS annual meeting after the breakfast. **Frank & Kay Miller** reported that they celebrated their 50th anniversary in Nov. with their family. **Robert Hummel** returned home from Gulf Shores just in time for all the snow. He spent some time in Pensacola helping to rehab PB4Y(?) gun turrets in a naval museum there.

Hope everyone is ready for spring and some green stuff growing. Also time to get out to the golf courses and fishin' holes!!!

MONTANA

Dick Gooby, ARCSE Representative
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Scott & Nancy Hoag report from Las Cruces, NM that they've been building there for going on 6 weeks (and they've also learned to deal with sub-zero temps in an RV), but on Feb. 26 they will head for Mason, TX to build for three weeks, then possibly to Phoenix City, AL, although they're eager to be in VA and may build in Lexington for the entire month of April, instead. After Lexington, they're scheduled to build in Waynesboro, VA for 3 weeks.

Meanwhile, **Scott** was offered the Construction Supervisor's slot in Las Cruces but declined, because it's not where he and **Nancy** want to live nor is he interested in a 6-day-a-week position. **Nancy** continues to write and to be published, for which she is grateful (keeps her at the laptop instead of on her knees laying tile), but they're also taking one day at a time with **Scott's** mother in a MT nursing home with Alzheimer's and now cancer.

Recently **Scott & Nancy** met **Luther & Dorothy McDougal** in Deming, NM for lunch and catching up. **Luther** was an engineer in MA and the SNTC. They are well and having fun.

Gordon Decker and **James Johnson** were not able to report on the retiree's breakfast. It snowed the night before and they and everyone else headed up Bridger to hit the slopes.

Gordon Decker says not much going on until Mar. and Apr. when we plan to attend some of the SF Giants training camp games in Scottsdale in March, then on the NV to see grand nephew motor bike races in Mesquite and some shows in Las Vegas in April. Will report that next time.

Dan Himsworth, said he is putting together a swimming meet in Bozeman and he is going to do the 200 yard breast stroke. He invited **Mark Spitz**, the Olympic Gold Medalist, to the meet and he agreed to attend since he wanted to do some skiing while in the area. Then he found out he and **Dan** would be in the 200 yard breast stroke competition and backed out.

Gooby Ranch Report: They must be getting a lot of snow up north. We have thousands of geese in our fields eating the alfalfa aftermath. I think we have all the geese that summered on every golf and park north of us. The other day **Mary Ann** took some old net wire and made it into a semi circle then covered it with hay so we had a goose blind. She fixed it up so she could carry it. After she got done feeding **Mary Ann** got my favorite shot gun and a box of bullets ready. Then we went out to see if we could get some meat to eat beside ground squirrels and wolf meat. We got inside blind and walked out in the field and it wasn't long before we had 20 geese to put in the freezer. **Mary Ann** noticed there were a lot of goose droppings on the ground and every time the geese get ready to take off they'd drop a load to lighten their weight. Then **Mary Ann** got the idea that since we were providing them free pasture that she would use them to fertilize the fields. When the geese land she gives them 7 minutes to eat then she walks towards them and they all drop a load and fly a little ways then land again. So far she has three fields fertilized but it's taking a lot of her time.

We have a cotton tail rabbit that started hanging around the buildings. After seeing him several times I couldn't understand why he was still around. **Mary Ann** has several cats around the place to keep the mice and ground squirrels under control. That is also part of the dogs' job when they are not out helping with the cattle.

My curiosity got the best of me so after **Mary Ann** would head out to do the chores in the morning I would keep my eye out the window and watch what was going on. Sure

enough every morning here would come the rabbit. The cats and dogs could see him but they didn't chase him or try to corner him. After **Mary Ann** throws the alfalfa out to the bulls he hops in and helps the bulls devour the hay. Then he hops over and helps **Mary Ann's** Ramblin Rose Drill Team horse eat his grain. In the meantime the dogs and cats could care less. It's obvious they have worked out some sort of deal to where the rabbit is now part of the team. I'm not sure even NRCS's Management level 6 course has an answer to explain how they were able to team up.

Then I noticed that every time **Mary Ann** headed out to move the geese the rabbit would go with her. Eventually **Mary Ann** had the rabbit trained to go move the geese by himself. Every once in a while a coyote comes by looking for a tasty rabbit or goose but the rabbit is too fast for him. I think early on the dogs and cats knew **Mary Ann** was going to require someone to move the geese so she could do other tasks. Apparently they knew the rabbit could outrun the fox and they couldn't, so they kept him around to help **Mary Ann** with that job.

Mary Ann has a policy that says "If you don't earn your keep, you're history." I've often wondered why she has it posted on the refrigerator.

The Indian Nations Conservation Alliance which is made up of the Tribal conservation districts and Tribal conservation advisory councils held a Tribal conservation district training session in Bozeman, MT, Feb. 15-17, 2011. **Jennifer Perez Cole**, Public Affairs Specialist/Outreach Coordinator for the Farm Service agency in MT, did an outstanding job putting everything together for the training. It makes you feel good when a USDA employee goes the extra mile to help.

Carrie Mosley, Assistant State Conservationist, NRCS did a fantastic job explaining how the various USDA programs can work in Indian Country, what was needed to qualify for the programs, etc. She was able to answer the questions so all of us could understand how to make the programs work. She must have graduated from NRCS Management Level 6.

NEBRASKA

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The meeting was called to order by President **Paul Smith**. There were 19 members present. **Paul** thanked the new callers for calling for the Jan. meeting and thirty members were present for the Feb. meeting.

Dave Langemeier and wife spent a week in Austin, TX, over Christmas with their daughter and family. **Steve Stover** and wife spent time with their sons and families in Cincinnati, OH.

Donna Dornbusch reported that sympathy cards were sent to **Harold Ullsberger** and **Bob Koerner** on the deaths of their wives, **Gladys** and **Mary Ann**. **Paul Reynolds**, a retired technician from the Soil Mechanics Center, passed away. **Bev Petri**, retired secretary, passed away on Jan. 17.

She also reported on the "Happy 90th birthday" picture of **Frances King** in the Lincoln Journal Star, and also reported that three members had perfect attendance in 2010: **Dave Langemeier**, **Joe Kuenning**, and **Chris Chapman**. They are entitled to a free breakfast.

Volunteers are needed for the science bowl sponsored by the NRCS. Contact **Arlis Plummer** in the State Office if you can volunteer.

Henry Mount was present after 14 months of helping his wife while she was recovering from cancer. He is finally able to

attend meetings and events. **Val Bohaty** had a pacemaker put in but is back at his regular activities.

Chris Chapman just returned from spending five weeks in New Zealand with her son and his family. **Dave Camper** spent time in MT in ski country. **Paul Smith** is going to Omaha to watch his grandson play in the high school tournaments.

The spring banquet will be held on April 28. The third Thursday which is typically our spring banquet is also Maundy Thursday, part of Holy Week. So it was decided to hold the spring event the following week. It will be held again at the Cotner Center.

Gus Dornbusch made a pitch for teammates. He is very active in teammates and has been featured as the teammate of the month on television. **Paul Smith** is the treasurer of the Nebraska Chapter Soil & Water Conservation Society and asked that members consider giving monetary donations for expressions of sympathy or congratulations.

Gerry Doe has a new great-grandson whose name is **Timothy Kenneth** after her husband. **Rob Kudlacek's** picture was recently in the paper as he celebrated his 90th birthday.

The March meeting will again meet at 7:30 instead of the 8:00 meeting time for Dec., Jan., and Feb.

NORTH CAROLINA

Jim Canterbury, ARCSE Representative

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On Jan. 27, twelve retirees and guests from the Raleigh area met at the Farmers Market Restaurant for breakfast. This event takes place a couple times each year. Attending the breakfast were **Jim Canterbury, Dr. Maurice Cook, Dick Gallo, Coy Garrett, John Garrett, Charles Godley, Ed Helmey, Dora Richardson, Larry Stephenson, Cecil Settle, Horace Smith, and Plummer Vines**. **John Garrett**, and **Caroline Hiovich** were responsible for making the arrangements for breakfast.

OREGON

Donald Stettler, ARCSE Representative

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Attending the January 26th lunch were **Clifton & Marva Deal, Len & LaVonne Dugan, Gary Formanek, Tom Fujii, Rosella Girton, Jack Inhoff, Dave Johnson, Lowell & Marian Kenedy, Roy Mann, Phil Pasteris, Frank & Elisa Reckendorf, Joe Sahfeld, Pat Straka, Gene Sturtevant, Wendell & Jan Styner, Eldena VanderZanden, Ralph Wadleigh, Don & Diana Wallin, Bill White, Beth Zetter**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**. **Bill White**, Leader of the Technology at the OR State Office, updated us what is going on in technology. It was interesting to hear about the new tools that are currently being used for conservation planning.

The next lunch will be on April 27th at the Clackamas The Old Spaghetti Factory. Please mark your calendars.

TEXAS (NORTH AREA)

Arnold King, ARCSE Representative

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Forty members and guests were present for the Dec. 17, 2010 meeting: **Dennis Erinakes, Dorthy Green, Jim & Jere Rickman, Dave Drennan, Elaine Davis, Rocky & Del Rockenbaugh, Dennis & Kathy Gaster, Bernie & Maxine Owen, Bonnie McKee, Don & Helen Shanklin, Bernelle Baxley, Mary Mattinson, Jim & Carol Robinson, Billy &**

Phyllis Teels, Earl Blakley, Harland & Anita Dietz, Dave Stockbridge, Don Kapalka, Alex & Faye Alexander, Arnold & Willeene King, Jerald & Anita Plummer, Joe Nichols, Wes Fuchs, Betty Sisson, Mark Boysen, Joyce Petty, and Ken Twitty. Guests were **Julia & Mishka Ann Parr** (granddaughter & great-granddaughter of the **Twitty's**).

President **Dave Drennan** presided over the business meeting. New club officers were sworn in. Club business included a treasurer's report from **Elaine Davis**. The club has \$1411. **Bernie Owen** gave his last news letter report. He and **Dave Stockbridge** made contact with several recently retired NRCS employees. **Maxine & Bernie** did a great job with the news letter over several years.

The program consisted of drawings for prizes, 16 of which were poinsettias donated by **Earl Blakely**. Every family got at least one prize. In addition, everyone attending received a hand made pin by **Del Rockenbaugh** and a card with a calendar from **Dorothy Green**. Refreshments were supplied by everyone, and included many great choices.

Horned Frog fan, **Betty Sisson**, is going to the Rose Bowl and Rose Parade in Pasadena, CA on Jan. 1, 2011! Yea TCU.

Harland & Anita Dietz visited their daughter and family in Colorado Springs Thanksgiving. A special treat was a turkey dinner at a granddaughter's home. For Christmas son & family will be coming to Fort Worth.

Billy & Phyllis Teels will visit their oldest son & family in Fayetteville, NC for Christmas. They visited Rose Hill, KS for Thanksgiving seeing two sets of children & grandchildren.

Dave Drennan & son Mark attended an AL Championship Playoff game, Rangers vs Yankees and a World Series game, Rangers vs Giants this year.

Don & Helen Shanklin reported the following news: **Don** has finished up working for M & E (Medlin & Erion) Consultants for this year. His role was to assist M & E Inspectors on TX NRCS construction contracts for the rehabilitation of old flood control dams. He enjoyed the work and enjoyed watching the cotton grow in Ennis, Hill, and Johnson Counties this summer. There will be more work from M & E in OK this coming year. **Don** is also an ACE helping update the Construction Inspection Manual (645) at the old office in Ft. Worth.

Doug Lowe wrote: "The year 2010 has been a good one in the panhandle – south plains areas of Texas. Farmers made excellent crop yields and prices were high. My health is good for my 81 plus.

Twenty two members were present for the Jan. 21, 2011 meeting: **Richard Heizer, Mary Mattinson, DeWayne Williams, Earl Blakley, Elaine Davis, Dave & Barb Stockbridge, Rex & Barbara Gillum, Morris Lobrecht, Billy Teels, Dave Drennan, Don Kapalka, Bill Adams, Anita Plummer, Harland Dietz, Wes Fuchs, Joe Nichols, Jim & Jere Rickman, and Bernie & Maxine Owen.**

President **Dave Drennan** presided over the business meeting. Club business included a treasurer's report from **Elaine Davis**. The club has \$1561. **Dave Drennan** requested an audit. **Barbara Gillum** and **Jere Rickman** volunteered to conduct the audit.

Maxine Owen asked about the practice of forwarding news of SCS retirees, regardless of whether or not they were members. The consensus was that all information on SCS retirees will be forwarded to all those that we have email addresses for, because many members wish to know events about fellow co-workers and friends. **Maxine** printed out a

notice of the retirement of **Don Gohmert**, who has had an outstanding career with SCS/NRCS, and passed it around.

Bill Adams retired Dec. 31, 2011 after 41 years with SCS/NRCS. He started as a student trainee in Stanford, KY. He has worked in KY, VA, TN, CO, and TX. He and his wife, **Emma** have 5 children and 9 grandchildren. Their grandchildren live in NC, TN, and AL, where they intend to visit this summer. **Bill & Emma** live in Mansfield, TX.

Morris Lobrecht had a great duck hunt in AR in Jan. There were 12 hunters and they harvested about 115 ducks in 2 days. The drive home was through 200 plus miles of ice and snow. The grandkids visited over Christmas.

Richard & Sara Heizer are looking forward to taking a train ride up to Oklahoma City in mid Feb. to visit daughter **Amy**, her husband **Kyle**, and grandson **Carter** for about 4 days, and then the return ride back to Fort Worth, TX.

Rex & Barbara Gillum reappeared following approximately 6 months absence. They took a fall trip to Sante Fe, NM, Benson, AZ, Williams, AZ, Wilcox, AZ, Blythe, CA, and Palm Springs, CA. They took a road trip to the Grand Canyon where one of **Rex's** cousins almost got pushed over the edge by a young man who was in too much of a hurry to take the pathway. He fell from one level to the next, falling and hitting the cousin in the knees. This knocked his camera over the short rail to within an inch of "over the edge". **Barbara** says this is much more excitement than she wanted from the whole trip! They went to Palm Springs to The Follies! The total age of the dancers was 1012! The youngest was 57 and the next youngest was 72, with several at 84 years. **Barbara & Rex** thought it was a fantastic show and recommend it for everyone to see.

Dave & Jean Drennan attended the production "River Dance" at the Verizon Theater in Grand Prairie on Jan. 15th. The show was very entertaining. The dancing and the music were outstanding! Recommend you go and see if you can.

During the meeting the world record of tapping was brought up. In February 1998, Michael Flatley broke his own Guinness Book record by achieving an amazing 35 taps per second. The question came up "Who could count that?"

Glen & LaVerne Black wrote the following letter to **Elaine Davis**: "All is well with **Glen & LaVerne Black**. We are happy to go into a new year looking forward to seeing many of you in New Braunfels in April. Our big news of 2010 was the birth of our first great grandchild, **Emma Grace Black**, born to grandson **Glen** and his wife **Elena** in Greeneville, TN. Thank you for your work keeping the organization moving forward."

The following letter was received from **Marie Lane**, of Austin, TX: "Hi to All. Well, I've made it through another year. Hope to make it through 2011. My son **Gary** has been a great help. He's in his 32nd year of coaching and was one of the two top coaches in state of TX last year. He still has one son in college. My 2 girls are still in CO and WY and going great. Oh, and I now have 7 great grand children in CO & WY. I go to Silver Sneakers Fitness classes twice a week. Miss all of you."

WASHINGTON

Jerry Richard, ARCSE Representative
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Hans Krauss, retired State Agronomist, has been taking 35mm photos since he went in the army in 1954. In 1966 he attended the dedication of the newest dam on the Columbia River, the Wanapum Dam. It was named after the Wanapum Indian Tribe who lived in the vicinity just south of Vantage on I-90. Many still live in this area but do not

have their own reservation. **Hans** took lots of photos of the celebration that day and of the many Wanapums attending. One of those Indians was **Alba Shawaway**, a tribal elder, who proudly displayed the Lewis and Clark medal presented to the tribe when they gathered at the confluence of the Columbia and Snake Rivers to celebrate the expedition's reaching the last leg of their epic journey. As far as is known the Grant County PUD has possession of the medal for safe keeping. A complete set of all **Hans'** photos taken at the dedication of the dam were presented to the Wanapums (and the PUD) and many are displayed in the Visitor's Center at the dam from time to time. **Hans** gave each attendee at our monthly luncheon a 5x7 framed color photo of the elder with the medal. A drawing was held for an 18x24 inch enlargement of the photo and **Robert Olson**, retired State Forester, was the lucky winner.

Ed Nurmi recently celebrated his 98th birthday at the Good Shepherd Villa in Mesa, AZ. Present were some old time friends and co-workers that live in the Phoenix area, plus all of **Ed's** good friends at the Villa. **Jack & LaRee Rasmussen** were working on their tans as they soak in the sun in Hawaii during Feb. and part of March. **Jerry & Phyllis Richard** also journeyed south to Mesa and helped celebrate **Rob Kudlacek's** 90th birthday in Feb. **Rob & Leeana's** son **John** flew in from Bangkok, daughter **Mary** and her spouse and family from Omaha and Denver and brother **John** from KS were all there plus many friends in **Rob & Leeana's** neighborhood. **Rob & Leeana** and **Jerry & Phyllis** also attended the AZ ARCSE meeting in Scottsdale and enjoyed the program that **Glen Johnson** presented.

WASHINGTON DC NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

John Peterson, ARCSE Representative
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Marc Safley asks if I would remind members of ARCSE that volunteers are needed for the upcoming SWCS Annual Conference that will be held in Washington, DC, this coming July. If anyone is interested they can contact **Marc** by email at marc.safley@gmail.com or by phone at 703-494-8074. He will take their name and contact information and pass it along to the SWCS National Capitol Chapter Volunteer Coordinator. Retirees traveling to Washington at that time are also encouraged to help by volunteering. Many of us are long-time SWCS members.

Carl Bouchard just returned from his annual trip to Clemson working with other dozen or so agricultural engineers from around the country at the National Council of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors (NCEES) preparing the professional engineering exams for Agricultural Engineers. The exams are given once a year for AE's in Oct. Although the numbers taking the exam had been down in recent years, they did manage to have 41 exam takers this past Oct. They usually have at least 3 exams on the go at any time (just like the budgets) plus many additional questions in the bank for future use. Preparing these exams and questions sure does tax your brain and after doing this for the past 25 or so plus years **Carl** keeps saying this is the last year. Two NCRS employees, **Scott Mueller** of WI and **Sonia Jacobson** of MN, also participated this year. **Sonia** is the President-elect of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers. After the meeting **Bouchard's** had an enjoyable visit with **Niles & Carolyn Glasgow** in Columbia, SC. **Niles** and **Carl** reported to work in DC within a couple weeks of each other in 1983. From there **Bouchard's** went on to FL visiting both coasts and central FL visiting old friends and **Carl's** elderly relatives who have given up on ME during the summer and now primarily reside in FL year-round. One of his Uncles at 89 served in the Battle of the Bulge and the other was in for the occupation. His two Aunts who are recently widowed are also making FL their permanent homes. They then visited Edisto Island, SC and Williamsburg, VA before

returning home. **Carl** says the temperature never did get above 70 during their trip except for one day, but they were greeted with a 70 degree day upon their return home. Of course, it was in the teens and twenties in DE most of the time they were gone.

John Peterson attended the International Erosion Control Association's (IECA) annual North American Conference in Orlando, FL Feb. 20-23. The conference is billed as "The World's Largest Soil & Water Event" and attracts attendees from over 30 countries, and has 130+ exhibitors. Another retiree who is usually at these IECA Conferences is **Earl Norton** of AL. **Earl & John** enjoy reminiscing when they get together at these conferences, and they did again this year. **John** is a 3-time (past) president of IECA, currently chairs their Government Relations Committee and is the president of the IECA Mid-Atlantic Chapter (PA, NJ, MD, DE, WV, VA, and DC).

WEST VIRGINIA

Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative
Email: pegreesevw@gmail.com

Ted Hanson, Soil Conservation Technician, Lewisburg FO retired this summer. **Hanson (Duke) Kennedy**, Civil Engineering Technician, Phillipi FO and **Ernest Morgan**, Soil Conservation Technician, Franklin FO retired this fall. Retiring in early Jan. are: **Stephen Carpenter**, State Soil Scientist and MO-13 Leader; **Debbie Chase**, GIS Specialist, State Office; and **Mike Gasper**, Mountain RC&D Coordinator, Oak Hill.

Paul Brant, former Mountain RC&D Coordinator passed away on Oct. 13th. And **Sull McCartney** died on Sept. 26th. **Randall Jones'** wife **Sue** passed away on Oct. 4, 2010. Read the "In Memoriam" section of this newsletter for more details.

During a regular mammogram, **Shirley Austin**, was diagnosed with breast cancer. **Shirley** reported that "Since then, I have undergone surgery and eight weeks (5 days a week) of radiation. I am blessed that the prognosis is very good as the cancer was caught very early. The point of this story is for all females to please get mammograms regularly." On a happier note, **Shirley** said "After a very long winter and the long cancer ordeal, it was great to do some travelling i.e. Lancaster, PA to Amish Country, a trip to New Boston, MI to visit relatives, a state conference at Jackson's Mill. So far life is good."

Judy Fairbanks writes that her 'almost' 97 year old mother, **Evelyn Barr** died on Dec. 13

Twenty-four people attended the West Virginia Chapter's meeting of the Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE) at the NRCS State Office on Nov. 3rd. State Conservationist **Kevin Wickey** gave an overview of the extensive work done by NRCS during the past year. WV received more American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds than any other state. The \$35 million was used primarily on flood plain easements and other watershed work. The Soil Survey Staff is working to assess the level of organic matter in the soils in West Virginia. The baseline inventory of soil organic matter will assist NRCS in developing and encouraging conservation practices that will increase soil organic matter. **Kevin** asked retirees for assistance with this endeavor as well as helping to feed the hungry through the "people's gardens" project. Many of these gardens are located at NRCS offices.

Don Summers, the President of the Mountaineer Chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) and former SCS employee, gave an overview of NARFE and their legislative initiatives. At the national level, NARFE is seeking parity between social security and federal employee benefits and defending the integrity of the federal retirement systems. In WV, NARFE is working with legislators to increase the tax exemption for retired federal employees.

The Mountaineer Chapter meets at 1:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month at the Shoneys in Morgantown.

Alan Staddon gave a virtual tour of the Grand Canyon through a Powerpoint presentation called "The Grand Canyon: From the Bottom Up." The beauty of the Canyon shone in the presentation.

During the business meeting, **Jim Clevenger** and **Shirley Jordan** volunteered to organize next year's meeting and **Peg Reese** was re-elected as president. Lunch at Madelines restaurant was the final event of the meeting.

Also attending the meeting were: **Gordon Bayles, Dave & Patty Burns, Charlotte Elliott-Friend, Bill Hatfield, Elaine & Russell Hayhurst, Gene & Jennie Kessel, Dick & Annette Judy, Orland & Patty Parks, Roseanne Kennedy, Peg Reese, Lynn Shutts, Glenda Summers, and Rollin & Helen Swank.**

Sam Sheets, District Conservationist at Spencer, and **Steve Carpenter**, State Soil Scientist and MO-13 Leader at the State Office, retired at the beginning of the year. **Edward Wright** retired recently and plans to stay in Jacksonville where he has lived for some years. **Ed** was a Soil Scientist, District Conservationist, and RC&D Coordinator when he worked in WV.

Mary Elizabeth Williams Yoho, wife of **Denver Yoho**, passed away in January. Read the "In Memoriam" section of this newsletter for more details.

Eileen Hayhurst and her husband, **Russell "Bob,"** spent a week in Sept. at her son's in Tucson, AZ. **Tim Toothman**, **Eileen's** youngest son, is Assistant Activities Director at the Arizona Theater Company and his wife, **Jessica Andrews**, is the Managing Director. While there in Sept., **Eileen & Bob** saw the play, *Backwards in High Heels*. It was about Ginger Rogers who complained that she got paid less than Fred Astaire and she danced backwards in high heels.

After a week in Tucson, **Eileen & Bob** flew to Houston, TX for his 484th Bomb Group Reunion. While there, they toured the George Bush Presidential Library and had lunch on the Texas A&M Campus. They also toured the San Jacinto Monument, where TX won independence from Mexico.

There were 92 people at the reunion, but only 19 Veterans. The rest were wives, children, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren.

"**Curtis Sharp** and several former co-workers are headed for the grasslands of WY and MT in late May for their fourth "For the Love of Grass" trek. As with most grand tours a pre-assembly route is planned, including the old lakebed of Lake Missoula, Havre, MT where Critana thickspike wheatgrass was originally collected, Little Big Horn country, Thunder Basin National Grassland, etc. The tour guide this year, **Larry Holzworth**, is thinking about a Lewis and Clark trek down the Missouri. Accordingly to their journals they saw lots of grass. Other likely participants are **Bob MacLaughlan, Jack Carlson, Cliff Williams, and Wendell Hassell**, as well as un-retired **Wendall Oaks**"

Jim Cooper is getting ready for spring, by building a mini-portable greenhouse for tomato seeds. He has been growing tomatoes from seed for more than 40 years. Last year he grew thirteen varieties and one plant grew eight ft. tall. **Jim** said "By the way, turning 80 didn't hurt too much and am still on the right side of the grass."

SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

Senior Conservationist Rayford Brister was born April 17, 1927, in Mertzon, Texas. (Mertzon is about 30 miles southeast of San Angelo.) **Rayford** attended local schools, and after graduation from high school, he joined the Navy where his duty was base security. He did farm and ranch work for about two years after his discharge from the Navy. He began university studies at Tarleton State University and assisted with peanut breeding research during his summers there. He transferred to Texas A&M University. While at A&M **Rayford** continued his work with peanut selection and also worked for ASCS in the summertime. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy degree in 1952. That was also the year he married **Helen** and began his career with SCS. He retired from SCS in 1982 after having served as District Conservationist in Edwards, Real, King, Kerr, Maverick, and Medina Counties in Texas. From 1958 until 1963 **Rayford** took leave from SCS to work with first the International Cooperation Administration then the US Agency for International Development in Pakistan. His first assignment was to Rawalpindi as the agronomist on a 4-person team devoted to soil survey, range management, and engineering. After that program was closed he was transferred to Peshawar (Northeast Tribal Territories) where he participated in a project to determine suitability of hybrid seed corn varieties to local conditions and to hybridize varieties that showed promise. **Rayford** has remarked that "Every day [there] you could see something you had never seen before." He returned to the US and to SCS as District Conservationist until his retirement.

Following retirement he worked as a real estate appraiser of both residential and agricultural properties. He has also enjoyed fishing and hunting and travels with his family. **Rayford & Helen** reside at 3126 War Arrow, San Antonio, TX. They have three children, three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Rayford is proud of his careers both with SCS and with the State Department in Pakistan. His career has improved and sustained the wellbeing of all those with whom he worked. About Pakistan today, he writes: "It is disappointing to hear of the disturbances and fighting in the region where I have been. ... Recently I was watching a television news commentary in Pakistan and it showed a small segment of news on agriculture about corn planted in rows with a tractor. The corn looked as good as any corn growing in the U.S. This indicated to me that we did show some success."

WISCONSIN

Jim Enlow, ARCSE Representative
ljenlow@att.net

Ken Lubich reported that there was a nice turn out for the Feb. 10th retiree's luncheon at Fitzgerald's in Middleton, WI. Thanks to everyone who came and especially to **Pat Leavenworth** for taking the time out of her busy schedule to come and update us on current activities. **Pat** also passed out copies of a booklet on the 75 years of conservation, and a few other things of interest. Hopefully we can have more of the booklets at the next luncheon which is scheduled on Apr. 14th in Port Washington.

DIRECTORY CHANGES

New e-mail addresses:

Sam Sheets - ssheets46@hotmail.com
Bill & Janice Hatfield - fieldj@windstream.net
Don & Jane Wood - dandjw@frontier.com
J Sheldon Findley - jsfindley47@hotmail.com
Jim Dove - jdove15@frontier.com

NEW SENIOR CONSERVATIONISTS

We welcome two new Senior Conservationists since the last Newsletter. They have reached the minimum age of 83 years of age and have completed the Senior Conservationist Questionnaire. Congratulations!

Their names and home states follow:

M. Scott Argabright, Nebraska
Westal W. Fuchs, Texas

The Senior Conservationists who left us since the last Newsletter were:

Ashley A. Thornburg, Colorado
Arthur H. Curtis, Georgia
Frank Harris Lowery, Sr, Georgia
Lois Jones Palma, Illinois
Edwin V. Brown, Indiana
Wilbur Crain, Indiana
Olin Thomas Seely, Ohio
John D. Griffin, Tennessee

Help us identify retirees who should be designated Senior Conservationists. Provide their contact information to your ARCSE Representative or Regional Vice-President.

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas Eugene (Tom) Dennis (77) of Little Rock, AR passed away on Dec. 27, 2010. He was a graduate of Louisiana Tech University, where he earned a degree in agricultural engineering. He was employed for 36 years by the USDA SCS, with assignments in the Hamburg, Lake Village, and Little Rock offices. He was Assistant State Conservationist for Watershed Resources when he retired in 1990. Survivors are his wife of 52 years, **Bobbye H. Dennis**; two sons, **Robert E. Dennis** of Little Rock and **James T. Dennis** of Memphis, TN.; and four grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, Little Rock, or to the charity of your choice.

Paul Merle Brant, Jr. (68) of Scottsville, VA passed away suddenly on Oct. 13, 2010. He received a Bachelor's degree in forestry from West Virginia University, a Master's degree in science from Marshall University, and was Fellow of the Agricultural Policy Institute at North Carolina State University. **Paul**, former Mountain RC&D Coordinator in WV, retired from the USDA SCS with over 30 years of service. He is survived by his son, **Geoffrey Earle Brant**; daughter, **Amy Brant Lambert** of Scottsville, VA; and two granddaughters. He was preceded in death by his wife, **Leslie Ann Dornblazer Brant**. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in his honor to the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association at www.aardra.com or to the National Arbor Day Foundation at www.arborday.org.

Sull Arthur McCartney (92) of Glenville, WV passed away on Sept. 26, 2010, at his home. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II and the Korean War. He graduated from West Virginia University in 1953 and worked for many years for the USDA SCS in Petersburg. Surviving are two sons, **Sull Arthur McCartney, Jr.**, of Oakland, MD, and **Kevin Lee McCartney** of Glenville; two daughters, **Mikal Ruth McCartney** of Annapolis, MD, and **Martha Gail McCartney** of Petersburg; and four grandchildren.

V. Sue Jones (64) of Mount Zion, WV passed away on Oct. 4, 2010, after a sudden illness. She was preceded in death in 2009 by her husband of 41 years, **Randall C. Jones**, who retired in 2003 as District Conservationist for the NRCS working in Calhoun and Gilmer Counties. They are survived by one daughter, **Shannon Sue (Jeremy) Johnson** of Elkins. **Sue** obtained a Vocational Home Economics degree from Glenville State College and a Master's Degree from West Virginia University. She retired in December 2002, as Associate Director/Extension Agent from WVU Extension Service. She directed the Calhoun County 4-H program and 4-H camp for 31 years. Donations in the memory of **Randall & Sue Jones** may be made to the WVU Foundation to support the 4-H Camping Program Fund. (2V529-Calhoun County). Send donations to P.O. Box 6031, 806 Knapp Hall, Morgantown, WV 26506.

IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

George Albert Logan Jr. (96) of Waco, TX passed away Dec. 26, 2010. He graduated from Texas A & M University with a degree in agriculture. **George** served in the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II and continued to serve in the Reserves, retiring at the rank of Colonel. He was an assistant County Agent in McLennan County and an agronomist in the SCS, the agricultural manager in the Waco Chamber of Commerce and the West Texas Chamber of Commerce. He was preceded by his wife, **Alexandria Ruth Lehmborg Logan**. He is survived by his daughter, **Anna Louise Logan**; son, **Fred (Nancy) Logan**; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations may be made to Central United Methodist Church, 5740 Bagby Ave., Waco, 76712, Waco Kiwanis Club, c/o Jack Munson, 8217 Forest Ridge Drive, Waco 76712, or the charity of your choice.

Elizabeth Ann Stevens Grice (79) passed away on Dec. 25, 2010. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, **Darrell Gene Grice**, a retired soil scientist with the SCS in TX and MA; daughters **Martha (Bryan) Steger** of Taos, NM and **Carol (Jeff) Castro** of Houston; son **James (Joanna) Grice** of Summerville, SC; son-in-law, **Travis Hardaway** of Katy; and eight grandchildren. **Liz** was preceded in death by daughters, **Mary Elizabeth Grice** and **Lea Ann Grice Hardaway**. Should you desire, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, P. O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718 (1-800-227-2345).

Robert N. (Bob) Ramsey (79) passed away on Dec. 26, 2010 in Seguin, TX. **Bob** retired from the SCS as Area Soil Scientist in Temple. He was a 1959 graduate of Texas A & M and served as a soil scientist in Seguin, Del Rio, and Temple.

E. John Patten, Jr. (73) of Fitzgerald, GA passed away on Jan. 11, 2011. **John** is survived by his devoted wife of 51 ½ years, **Vivian Gentry Patten** of Fitzgerald. **John** graduated from Georgia Institute of Technology with a degree in Civil Engineering. While a student at GT he worked with The Georgia Railroad and helped to design and lay out the railroad around Stone Mountain. Upon graduation in 1962, he began a career with USDA SCS (now known as NRCS) from which he retired in 1994 as State Design Engineer after 30 years of service. He then became a dams specialist with Schnabel Engineering Associates serving as a consultant. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Beech Haven Baptist Church who will be establishing a Georgia Tech scholarship fund in memory of **E. John Patten Jr.**

Marlene Ann Diehl Fronk (74) of Weatherford, TX passed away on Dec. 16, 2010, after a lengthy fight with cancer. She is survived by her husband of 52 years, **Robert Fronk**. **Robert** was the Head of Engineering at the South National Technical Center at the time of his retirement from the SCS. Also surviving are six children and 14 grandchildren. Her memory may be honored with a gift to Catholics Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth, 800 W. Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, TX 76108.

Honorary Senior Conservationist John D. Griffin (92) formerly of Gainesville, FL, passed away on Oct. 8, 2010, at Appalachian Christian Village in Johnson City, TN. **John** served in the U.S. Army during WWII in the China Burma India Theater, receiving three combat campaign badges. He received a Combat Infantry badge as a Field Artillery Officer with the Mars Task Force, which was the replacement for Merrill's Marauders. He graduated from Auburn University in 1941 and was a federal employee for more than thirty-five years, serving 25 years with the SCS in Ocala, Palatka, and Lake City, FL. He retired in 1978 as SCS State Agronomist in Gainesville. For ten years, **Mr. Griffin** also volunteered as a Master Gardener for the Alachua Extension Service. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, **Lena Hagerty Griffin**; sons, **John P. Griffin**, of Dayton, TX, **Richard D. Griffin**, of Alexandria, VA; daughters, **Janet L. Griffin**, of Asheville, NC, **Sue G. Lockett**, of Johnson City, TN; 5 grandchildren; and 6 great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Johnson City/Washington County Veterans' Memorial, P.O. Box 3594, Johnson City, TN 37602.

Nelson D. Torbeck (75) of Vandalia, IL passed away on Jan. 3, 2011. He served in the Army for six years. He retired as a technician for the NRCS after 35 years of service and worked for the Fayette County Soil & Water Conservation District for 2½ years after his retirement. **Nelson** was also a retired farmer and served as chairman of his church board for 26 years. He is survived by his wife of 49 years **Janice Sigrist Nelson**; sons, **Scott (Karen) Torbeck** of St. Peter and **John (Jo) Torbeck** of Salem; and four grandsons.

Jeff L. Kenyon (62) of St. Paul, MN, passed away on Jan. 2, 2011 of sudden cardiac arrest. **Jeff** was the Northeast NTC Cultural Resources Specialist on the Economics & Social Sciences staff. At the time of his retirement from the NRCS in 2004, he was a sociologist on Social Sciences Institute staff. A celebration of his life was held at the Mill City Museum in Minneapolis where he served as an interpreter following his retirement. A memorial service is planned for this summer in Michigan. He is survived by his wife, **Suzanne**, who was the NNTC Resource Inventory Specialist on the ES&S staff. If you desire to communicate with Suzanne, her e-mail is kenyon003@comcast.net.

Senior Conservationist Arthur H. Curtis (94) of Sparks, GA passed away on March 16, 2010. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, **Alma**, and four sons & one daughter. He served in the Signal Corps in WW II. At the time of his retirement from the SCS in 1977, he was a technician working for the State Geologist in Syracuse, NY.

IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

Robert L. (Bob) Palmer (90) of Beattyville, KY passed away on Jan. 13, 2011. **Bob** was a soil conservation technician with the SCS in Lee, Breathitt, and Owsley Counties when he retired.

Senior Conservationist Lois Jones Palma (89) of Champaign, IL passed away on Jan. 20, 2011. **Lois** retired from the SCS in IL as a Personnel Assistant in 1981. Upon completion of secretarial school in Chicago, she served as secretary to the General in charge of the B-17 Training School at Chanute Air Force Base during WWII. Many visitors to her home enjoyed her wonderful home cooking. She enjoyed bridge, oil painting, sewing, crossword puzzles, and University of Illinois basketball. She is preceded in death by her husband, **Frank**, and is survived by sons, **Kent** of San Antonio, TX, and **Jim** of Dallas, TX, four grandchildren, one great grandchild. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the USO in memory of **Lt. Col. Frank C. & Lois Palma** or in honor of their grandson, **Sgt. Gavin Palma**, who is currently serving in Afghanistan. The USO Donation Link is: WWW.USO.org/Donate

Senior Conservationist Edwin V. Brown (89) of Bluffton and formerly of Montpelier, IN passed away Feb. 14, 2011. He is survived by his wife of 67 years **Emojean (Inskeep) Brown**; and two sons; four daughters; 27 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren. **Ed** earned a B.S. Degree in Agriculture from Purdue University in 1943. He was a World War II U.S. Army Veteran serving his country for 3 ½ years in the South Pacific. A life-long farmer, **Ed** taught Ag Science in Jr. and Sr. high school for ten years in Wells County. **Ed** served as District Conservationist of SCS in 1959 being the first person to have served in that position in Jay County. He worked in SCS for over 20 years. **Ed** also served as Surveyor in Blackford County. Preferred memorials are to the Bethel Church.

Senior Conservationist Frank Harris Lowery, Sr. (93) of Athens, GA passed away on Jan. 2, 2011. After graduating from high school, he spent two years on Cape Hatteras, NC with the CCC Camp, and enrolled in the University of Georgia in 1937. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Agricultural Economics from the University of Georgia. During World War II, he served in the Army Medical Corps in the European Theater. After teaching agriculture for a few years, he spent 30 years with the USDA SCS. He then worked an additional 32 years with the State of Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission finally retiring at the age of 77. In 1988 **Frank** was honored as the national "Man of the Year" in Soil and Water Conservation in Recognition of his Leadership and support to Soil and Water Conservation in Georgia. **Frank** is survived by his wife **Claire C. Lowery** of Athens: three daughters and one son: seven grandchildren and one great-grandson. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations be made to St. James UMC Senior Adult Program, 111 West Lake Dr., Athens, GA 30606 or the UGA Foundation, benefitting the College of Agriculture, 394 Milledge Ave, Athens, GA 30602.

Carol Baxter Mitchell, of Gainesville, FL, passed away on Jan. 26, 2011. She is survived by her husband **James W. Mitchell** of Gainesville, retired State Conservationist in FL; daughters, **Pamela Smith** of California, and **Dr. Nancy M. Worthington** of Gainesville; and a son, **Stephen Mitchell** of Gainesville; seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Sebastian Ferrero Foundation, 12921 SW 1st Road, Ste. 107-424, Jonesville, FL 32669, www.sebastianferrero.org.

James "Wes" "Sonny" Thomas (71) of Okemah, OK passed away on Jan. 22, 2011. **Wes** graduated from Eastern Oklahoma State College and then graduated from Oklahoma State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture. He served in the Oklahoma National Guard. **Wes** worked for the SCS as an Area Conservationist, retiring in 1994. He was a real estate broker and raised cattle, enjoyed woodworking, an avid history reader particularly on the Civil War. He is survived by his wife, **Shirley Thomas** of the home and son, **Terry Laznik** of Stillwater, OK.

Donna Mae McKay Tidd (69) of Belfast, ME, passed away on Jan. 29, 2011, after a long battle with cancer. She was a cherished wife, a devoted mother and grandmother, and a caring friend who served many in her community through her church and the Philanthropic Educational Organization. Survivors include her husband, **Peter Mark Tidd**, who retired from the SCS in 1996 having served among other positions as the Director, Land Treatment Division in Washington, DC; one daughter, **Deborah Marie (Peter) Marshall** of Purcellville, VA; one son, **Donald Mark (Jodi) Tidd** of Farmington, MN.; and two grandsons. In lieu of flowers, family suggests donations to Waldo County General Hospital, 118 Northport Ave., Belfast, ME 04915.

Darla Nan Muncy Burns (72) of Kitty Hawk, NC passed away on Jan. 17, 2011. She was an elementary school teacher and a long time office manager for the American Cancer Society in Vienna, VA. **Darla** is survived by her husband, **Dennie George Burns**, who retired in 1994 as an Assistant Chief for the SCS; a daughter, **Deanna Marie (Steven) Wentz** of Houston, TX; a son, **David George (Sarah) Burns** of Manassas, VA; and two grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, remembrance donations may be made to the American Cancer Society or Interfaith Community Outreach (ICO), PO BOX 838, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949.

Betty Jean Wentz (83) of Salina, KS passed away Jan. 28, 2011. She was preceded in death in 2004 by her husband, **Joel A. Wentz**, former Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources in KS. **Betty** was a longtime Salina resident, active in the community and her church, and a friend to many. Memorial contributions may be made to the church or Hospice of Salina.

IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

Honorary Senior Conservationist Olin Thomas "Pop" Seely (95) of Columbus, OH passed away on Dec. 18, 2010. He was preceded in death by his wife of 41 years, **Linnie Hight Seely**. He is survived by his daughter, **Elaine Seely (Steve) McClung** of Powell, OH; his son, **William Hight Seely** of Minneapolis, MN; three grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. **Olin** earned a B.A. in Government and Law from Texas Christian University and a LLB degree from the North Texas State School of Law. In 1936, he was hired by the USDA's SCS as a Junior Clerk Typist in Fort Worth, TX. He moved up the career ladder in the SCS, and in 1954, he was transferred to the SCS Louisiana State Office in Alexandria, LA where he served as State Administrative Officer. **Olin** was honored with the USDA's Superior Service Award in 1970. He was with the SCS 37 years. After retirement in 1974, **Olin** returned to university life and earned a Master of Business Administration Degree from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. He then served as an Adjunct Professor in Business at Louisiana State University Alexandria and Northwestern State University (Natchitoches, LA). A long time resident of Alexandria, LA, **Olin** moved to Columbus, OH to be near **Elaine** in 1999. The family requests that memorial gifts be made to Willow Brook and HomeReach Hospice.

Lawrence Dorman Hughes, Sr. (81) of Mclean, VA passed away on Jan. 31, 2011. **Larry** worked as an attorney for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a member of the Office of General Council (OGC) staff for 45 years, supporting the Forest Service and SCS/NRCS. Having worked at USDA, Washington, D.C. since 1977, he retired in 2004 at age 75 but continued to work as a consultant to the USDA. He graduated from Marquette University Law School. During the Korean War, **Larry** was assigned to the Judge Advocate's Court at Fort Benning, GA. He is survived by **Alice Fain Hughes**, his loving wife of 56 years; four children: **Lawrence Hughes, Jr.; Charlotte Hughes; Paul Hughes;** and **Kathy (Kevin) Romance**; five grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in his memory to the Lutheran Counseling & Family Services of Wisconsin at 3800 N. Mayfair Road, Wauwatosa, WI 53222; Web address www.lcfswi.org.

Norma Jean (Sparks) Gibson (64) of Rotan, TX passed away on Jan. 18, 2011. Her husband **Lynn Gibson** previously worked as a Range Conservationist in Texas and later as State Range Conservationist at Salina, KS. After his retirement from NRCS in 1999, they returned to the home ranch at Rotan. **Lynn's** address is 111 East McArthur, Rotan, TX 79546.

Jo Ann Smith passed away on Jan. 26, 2011 at Scott & White Hospital in Temple, TX. Her husband, **Hugh Smith**, was the area engineer for the SCS in the Temple area for a long time, retiring in 1994.

Senior Conservationist Wilbur Crain (91) passed away on Jan. 6, 2011. **Wilbur** retired in 1979 as a design engineer on the SCS Indiana State Office Engineering Design Staff. He attended Purdue University, earning a B.S. degree in Agricultural Engineering. He worked on the Paoli, Indiana Area Staff before transferring to the State Office. **Wilbur's** work is etched on the engineering plans for many, many projects in Indiana. Condolences may be directed to his wife **Dorothy** at 309 S. Green St., Brownsburg, IN 46112-1608.

Dyanne Mathews Mize (62) of Winterville, GA passed away on Feb. 18, 2011. She was a graduate of the University of Georgia and taught school in Elbert and Clarke Counties for many years. She is survived by her husband of 39 years, **Ronald E. Mize** who worked for SCS in the finance section in the GA State Office for over 30 years, many of them as the Budget Officer, retiring in 1996. Other survivors include three children, five grandchildren, a great grandchild. Memorial donations may be made to Winterville First Baptist Church.

James D. Woller (85) of Stevens Point, WI passed away on Jan. 29, 2011. He graduated with a B.S. from Wisconsin State College in 1955 and in 1973, graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, with an M.S. in natural resource management. His service in the U.S. Army during WWII led him to the German front line seeing active combat along the French and German borders, in addition to the Battle of the Bulge. During his time of service, he received several service medals including a belated Bronze Star. **James** worked for the U.S. SCS in Appleton, Stratford, and Stevens Point as a soil conservationist and as the district conservationist of Portage County for more than 25 years, retiring in 1975. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, **Betty Lou Woller** of Stevens Point. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Heart Association or Ministry Marshfield Clinic for Heart Research.

Senior Conservationist Ashley A. Thornburg (88), of Loveland, CO passed away at his home on July 23, 2010. He attended two years of college at Jamestown, ND. He then joined the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was a prisoner of war in Germany. After being discharged from the Army, he graduated from the University of Colorado with a Bachelor of Science degree. He worked for the USDA SCS for 31-1/2 years as a plant materials specialist and regional director. He is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, **Nelda**; daughters **Caryl (Charles) Powers** of Great Falls, MT and **Erica (Mark) Hammer** of Loveland; three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, or Pathways Hospice in care of Viegut Funeral Home.

Mary Elizabeth Williams Yoho (89) passed away Jan. 21, 2011, at the Imogene Dolen Jones Hospice House of Huntington, WV. She was preceded in death by her husband, **Denver Clayton Yoho** who retired in 1975 as a soil conservation technician with the SCS. **Mary** is survived by two daughters, **Sara (Richard) Northup** and **Mary Jo (Charles) Jones**, both of Rio Grande; five grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

**ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED
CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

IN MEMORIAM (CONTINUED)

Harold F. Davis (90) of Virginia, IL passed away on Nov. 7, 2010 at his home. During World War II, he served in the 80th Infantry Division, saw combat in the European Theater of Operation, and was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge. After the war, he and his wife engaged in grain and livestock farming on their farm in the Bluff Springs Township. In addition to farming, he also worked for the USDA SCS as a soil conservation technician in Cass, Morgan, Mason, Schuyler, Christian, and Pike Counties. His wife of 65 years, **Lela Mae Marr Davis**, preceded him in death on July 11, 2006. Surviving are his three daughters, **Marilyn Kay (Ronnie) Small** of Houston, TX, **Judith Ann (Bob) Wallace** of Sarasota, FL, and **Linda (Ron) Yockey** of Nauvoo; two sons, **Harold Allen (Patty) Davis** of Virginia and **Marvin Danny (Teresa) Davis**; nine grandchildren; and 14 great grandchildren. Memorial gifts are suggested to the Virginia School Foundation.

Willie Ray Partin (86) of Columbia, KY passed away Feb. 27, 2011. He was a World War II veteran, a retired USDA SCS District Conservationist and a farmer. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, **Flora Mills Partin** of Columbia, KY; two sons, **Dr. Gary L. (Elizabeth) Partin** and **Terry (Rita) Partin** of Columbia, KY; one daughter, **Sharon Lynn Palumbo** of Columbia, KY; five grandchildren; three great grandchildren. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of Gideon Bibles or a donation to Jones Chapel United Methodist Church building fund and may be made at Stotts-Phelps-McQueary Funeral Home.

Mary Ann Koerner (78) of Lincoln, NE passed away on Jan. 15, 2011 at her home after a courageous battle with cancer. She practiced nursing for many years and devoted retirement to her family. **Mary Ann** is survived by her husband of 55 years, **Robert Koerner**, who retired in 1988 from the SCS as a biologist; seven children; and 21 grandchildren. In lieu of flowers the family requests memorials to the Pink Sister's of Lincoln, NE.

Paul E. Reynolds (82) of Lincoln, formerly of Tamora, NE, passed away on Feb. 2, 2011. Paul served in U.S. Air Force from 1947 to 1951. He retired from the USDA SCS as a Soil Mechanics Center technician. **Paul** is survived by sons, **Gary Reynolds** of York, **Michael (Gail) Reynolds** of Elmwood, **Chris (Bev) Reynolds** of Lincoln; daughters, **Karen (Aaron) Nansel** of Bennett, CO, **Susan Myers** of York, **Connie (Richard) Jindra** of Utica; 17 grandchildren; and 32 great-grandchildren. Memorials: Donor's choice in care of the family.

Beverly J. Petri (79) of Lincoln, NE passed away on Jan. 17, 2011. She retired as a secretary for the USDA SCS. She is survived by four sons, **George Topp III**, Mamou, LA; **John Topp**, Lincoln; **Harold Topp**, Lincoln; and **Greg Topp**; two granddaughters; and three great grandchildren.

Gladys Ullsperger (84) of Lincoln, NE passed away on Jan. 31, 2010. She is survived by her husband, **Harold Ullsperger** who retired from the SCS in 1984 as an engineering technician. Other survivors include two daughters, **Yvonne Jurgens** of Lincoln, and **Jinnohn (Rick) Bjorn** of Denton, NE; five grandchildren; and seven great grandchildren. Memorials: Mass Offerings, St. Elizabeth Hospice or Estes Park, Colorado Hospice.