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# NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter For Retired SCS And NRCS Employees

Vol. 38, No. 6

November/December 2011

## NOTES FROM THE POTOMAC

*Lennie Losh*

**Deficit Reduction Legislation** - The Joint Select Committee (the Super-committee) of the Congress has until November 23<sup>rd</sup> to reduce the deficit by \$1.5 Trillion over 10 years. If legislation, action/nonaction resulting from the supercommittee, does not become law by January 15, 2012, automatic across-the-board cuts (sequestration) would start in Fiscal Year 2013. Agreeing to spending cuts and revenue increases (taxes) will require major compromises by members of the committee.

**Budget Resolution Expires** - November 18, 2011 is the current deadline for Congressional resolution of 2012 Appropriations. While some rumblings of a shut-down are being heard, Congressional leaders are confident of being able to resolve their differences. Also under discussion, is to enact a series of mini-bills as well as the proverbial "Omnibus" bill when Congress can't agree on the various agency appropriation bills.

**Older American Act Expires** - This \$2.00 billion program, currently funded by a series of stop-gap funding, provides nutritional (Meals-on-Wheels), home-based care, and social services to adults 60 and older. Most of us are familiar with this worthwhile program that provides vital assistance to low-income seniors needing assistance. Continual funding will require lawmakers to find comparable cuts in the federal domestic budget.

**Federal Health Insurance** - Open season begins November 14, 2011 and ends December 12, 2011. All open season changes for retiree and survivor annuitants are effective January 1, 2012, and premium changes are reflected in February 1, 2011 annuity payments. Your plan provider will not automatically send you a copy of its 2012 brochure. You must request one (if you want one), or download on the OPM web site, [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) or phone (1-888-767-6738). Check your plan carefully for any changes that have been made or that your plan still meets FEHBP requirements. The average FEHBP premium will rise in 2012 an average of 3.8 percent.

**NRCS 2012 Budget Proposal** - The President's budget, submitted to the Congress, continues to reflect the understanding and acceptance for soil and water conservation of the nation's working agricultural lands with a budget request in excess of \$4.00 billion. Congress and USDA have continued to give conservation high priority. NRCS Chief **David White**, staff, and field office personnel deserve our thanks for their accomplishments and hard work.

**2012 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)** - Federal retirees and Social Security recipients will receive, in January, an increase of 3.6%, the first inflation adjustment since 2009.

**HAPPY HOLIDAY AND A 2012 YEAR THAT IS JOYFUL AND HEALTHFUL TO ALL**

**ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Mark Berkland*

Since July of 2010, the organization's net assets have decreased \$2,427.32. While this is not a new problem, (our assets have decreased in seven of the past eight years) it is time we faced the problem head on and do something to fix it. We can fix the problem by: 1) cutting costs, 2) increasing income and/or 3) a combination of both cutting costs and increasing income.

While all ARCSE costs have risen, one of the drains on our finances is Lifetime Memberships that were purchased prior to November 2009. Let me try to explain. In 2009, we had 302 Members that had paid the Lifetime Membership \$125 fee. These fees when amortized on an annual basis for an average life expectancy cover \$8.00 per year of the annual membership cost. The \$8.00 return per year is less than half what it costs for the organization to support a membership. Compare the \$18 annual membership fee with the \$8 Lifetime Membership return.

The problem was fixed going forward. When annual dues were increased to \$18 per year at the 2009 annual meeting, the board also changed the membership fees for Lifetime Members. Members regardless of age up until that meeting were purchasing a Lifetime Membership for \$125. Members purchasing a Lifetime Membership now pay \$250 if they are 64 years old or younger, \$200 if they are 65-74 and \$125 if they are 75 or older. It did not address the problem of lifetime memberships issued prior to November 2009, but these individuals and others can help address this by stepping forward with voluntary contributions. ARCSE is fortunate to have a membership that continues to make generous contributions to support our operations. During our last fiscal year that ended June 30, individual contributions totaled \$1,229, the largest annual total over the last 10 years. Sixteen members contributed \$100 or more and 128 contributing \$25 or more. The Board offers a big thank you to each of the 98 members who made a contribution.

Even with these increases and extra contributions, our net assets are still decreasing and unless we do something the organization's life expectancy could be affected. Over 60% of the ARCSE budget is used in printing and mailing the Newsletter. According to the membership list, over 70% of our membership have emails and I suspect there are 10-20% who have emails and have chosen to not have them listed. So, I am asking that you do two things:

- 1) In order to substantially reduce the printing and mailing costs, please send me an email as soon as you read this article (mberkland@homesc.com) letting me know if you are willing to cut costs by receiving the newsletter;
  - a. Electronically (We will still print and mail the newsletter to those who do not have emails), or
  - b. Have the newsletter posted on the ARCSE home page which will decrease both printing and mailing costs. (We will still print and mail the newsletter to those who do not have computer access)

2) Please consider joining the group that makes extra donations. These can be made at anytime. Make the checks payable to ARCSE and mail them to: Association of Retired Conservation Service Employees, P.O. Box 7454, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454.

We need your help. While this is not a crisis at this point, we need to address the problem and with your help we can make sure ARCSE continues to serve our membership in the future.

## FROM THE EDITOR

*Mike Nethery*

In the July/August issue of the Newsletter, I asked for responses to the question of having the Newsletter delivered electronically and received a number of responses. President **Mark Berkland** is asking for further expressions of interest. If you have already responded to me, I will forward your responses to him.

## PRESIDENT'S OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATION



**Byron Thompson** is shown receiving his award from **Mark Berkland**, ARCSE President at the SC Fall ARCSE Meeting in Greer, SC on Oct. 4th. **Byron's** wife, **Mary**, was present for the ceremony. See the September/October Newsletter for details of **Byron's** community service.

**DEADLINE FOR  
JAN/FEB 2012  
NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 26**

## 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

## HONORARY MEMBERS

The following members of ARCSE have celebrated or will be celebrating their 91<sup>st</sup> birthdays during 2011. With this milestone, each of these members becomes an Honorary Member. As an Honorary Member, no dues are required in 2012 and thereafter.

**Robert D. Wells**, Columbia, SC  
**Roy R. Beck**, Greenville, NC  
**Harold F. Creech**, Linton, IN  
**F. Eugene Liggett**, Vancouver, WA  
**Leslie W. Kick**, Westmoreland, NY  
**Richard A. Hogue**, Lincoln, NE  
**Joseph E. Schrader**, Oskaloosa, KS  
**Everett L. Abbott**, Caldwell, TX  
**Ralph C. Johnson**, Warsaw, KY  
**Hurshal Boyd**, Mechanicsburg, PA  
**William L. Vaught**, Rio Rancho, NM

## ARCSE REPRESENTATIVES

*Ron Marlow*

I want to welcome a new state representative on board. **Laura Vescio** has retired as the Representative for Colorado and I am pleased to report that **Ivan Wilkinson** has agreed to assume those duties. **Ivan**, who began his career as an engineer, retired in 1995 as a water resources specialist. The Board extends its thanks to **Laura** for her service to the ARCSE and the retirees of Colorado.

## PLEASE KEEP YOUR ADDRESS UPDATED

Keeping your address updated is important for two very good reasons:

1. Since the newsletter is distributed by bulk mail, the post office is not required to forward it. This means you may not receive your copy of the newsletter in a timely manner if at all.
2. The ARCSE postage for mailing each newsletter is approximately \$0.50. However when a newsletter is returned due to an incorrect address, ARCSE is charged an additional fee by the U.S. Postal Service, sometimes as much as \$1.68 per returned newsletter.

Your address may be updated by sending changes to [arcse@cox.net](mailto:arcse@cox.net) or to ARCSE, P.O. Box 7454, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454.

## ARKANSAS

**M. J. "Whitey" Spears**, ARCSE Representative  
Email: [mjspears@swbell.net](mailto:mjspears@swbell.net)

A good time was enjoyed by all at our 26th annual meeting, held at the Arkansas 4-H Center near Little Rock and Ferndale. Visitation was the order until near lunchtime when the group assembled for a short program. The program consisted of the Pledge of Allegiance, a memorial program by **Paul Whittington**, for those who passed during the year, and a presentation of an award. Those who left us during the year were **Tom Dennis**, **Max Mull**, **Bill Crook**, and **James**

**E. Brooks**. **Mike Sullivan**, State Conservationist NRCS, did a fine job briefing the group on current activities in the State and fielding questions from the group.

A real highlight was the presentation of the ARCSE PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE to **Paul Whittington**. This award is given annually to recognize ARCSE members who have distinguished themselves in local, state, and regional community service. Selection is not made based upon achievements while employed by SCS/NRCS. It was especially noteworthy that wife **Faye** and two of their three daughters - **Margaret Merideth** and **Jennifer Sisk** - were able to attend the presentation. **M. J. Spears**, ARCSE Representative made the presentation in behalf of the ARCSE President.

**Jeff Ellis** still carves and paints ducks. Recently he entered one in a New Orleans show and won first place. He is now painting a mallard drake. He does other things too, such as serving on one water commission and levee board. He and **Frances** live in Newport which sponsors an annual art show that attracts people from throughout the State. His booth this year was next to one manned by a gentleman and his nine year old daughter. **Jeff** carves small pins and had them on display and for sale at his booth. After setting up his booth, **Jeff** left to do some other things, but told the young lady next door that if she sold any of his pins he would pay her \$5 each. He left his booth more than once. She sold seven pins and was one happy little girl. (Do not know if **Jeff** sold any.)

News Briefs: **Rue & Frankie Boswell** attended the annual meeting for the first time in years. **Rue** has had all kinds of physical problems and **Frankie** has had her share of them. He is now able to walk with the aid of a cane. His hearing is good, but has problems with his speech. His attitude is great. Several people called or wrote their regrets on not attending the annual meeting. **Maurice Sharp** has had some physical problems, but is much improved. However, he is not taking long road trips. **Helen Garr** says her vision has improved a lot and hopes to attend next year. **Marion Mathis** sent his regrets, family obligation, but hopes to attend next year. **Herman Wilson** had a doctor's appointment but thinks he is doing OK. **Jodie Jones** is doing fine, but says he does not drive long distances.

We were pleased to welcome **John Chenoweth** to our meeting. He and wife **Carolyn** recently moved from IA to Van Buren, AR to be closer to family. The Ft. Smith group, at our annual meeting, invited **John** to join them at their monthly coffee gathering. Van Buren is next door to Ft. Smith. **John** worked for SCS in IN and IA as a hydrologist.

## FLORIDA

*Vacant - ARCSE Representative*

A luncheon will be held for SCS/NRCS retirees living in FL, including snowbirds, spouses and friends, on Jan. 18, 2012 at 11:30 am. The Olive Garden Restaurant is located at 8984 International Drive just off of I-4, exit 74A, in Southwest Orlando. Reservations can be made by contacting Jerry Hytry at 13133 Cog Hill Way, Orlando, FL 32828 or E-mail [jmhytry@yahoo.com](mailto:jmhytry@yahoo.com) or phone 321-235-5517. Reservations should be made by Jan. 10, 2012.

## IDAHO

**Stan Hobson, ARCSE Representative**

*Email: stanhob@cablone.net*

Eighteen or so retirees joined us for lunch on the 23rd of Sept. as the result of **Sharon Norris'** mailed reminder card of meetings for Sep. to May, 2012. That's really a workable way to keep folks apprised, thanks **Sharon**.

Many of our retirees have been as busy as they wanted to be all summer, my assessment considering my own activity level as well as many of our friends' activities is that we all are less busy than we were several years ago but our enjoyment level has more than offset that reduced activity level. Wonder why that might be?? Surely we're not slowing down or getting older. It is also readily apparent that the enthusiasm of each of our retiree family is higher than ever before even with an occasional, short term lapse of enthusiasm, while reading or hearing about the gridlock on the Potomac.

**Sharon** reports that she has journeyed to CA this summer. While enjoyable she would much rather stay home. **Paul & Kip Malone** made several trips around the West, CO, CA, and UT; with short hospital stays in between, but the health side of things are improving. **Joe Icenhower** and **Laurie** continue to Morgan Horse around with sulky driving at the fair to visiting the Morgan Horse Museum in Vermont. **Kent & Sue Foster** have had occasion to assist **Kent's** mother transition into alternative living and most of us know how hard that can be. **George James** is adjusting to his wife **Alyce's** passing recently, and we all wish him condolences for his loss. **Gene & Bev Chrisman** have had the usual summer; a wee bit less hectic, they want to break into this new life style a bit more gradually, but while busy doing--the doing is genealogy and golf and not so much driving and going.

The Stalwart **Stewart's** have continued to trailer camp, neither as often nor as far as in the past but keeping their hand in. **Paul (Bunyan) Calverly** has spent much of the summer out on a limb; "the axeman commeth". He's been thinning his wood lots.

**Amos & Ruth Garrison** are doing well, always a reliable source of good books to read. **Amos** has been gone to Wisconsin (air show and family) and a driving trip to PA, for early career memories, and on to DC before returning home. **Jerry & Carol Larson**, as well as **Kathy** and I have recently learned first hand about the medical problem of TIA. Both of those afflicted are as ornery as before in spite of, in **Jerry's** case a planned trip to ND, if I could spell it I would tell what they plan to eat; and in our case a month in the hot, hot desert southwest in June.

I hope there are few exaggerations in this bit of news from ID--rest assured we are all doing well, and we are doing it with a smile upon our faces. Remember, if you smile you increase your face value.

We had the twenty attendee's we normally have at our Oct. luncheon. As I've said before it's not always the same twenty but it is always an interested and interesting group. The

singles that were in attendance included new retiree **Jeff Bohr** (welcome to our group), **Lee Holstine**, **George James**, **Sharon Norris**, the **Pauls' Malone** and **Calverly**, the duo's **Garrison, Ruth & Amos**; **Gallup's, Gladene & Darrell**; **Stewart's, Maxine & Don**; **Faude's, Gerry & Wayne**; **Chrisman's, Bev & Gene**; **Merrill's, June & Evan**; and the **Hobson's, Kathy & Stan**. Now who could ask for a more distinguished group that represents some 350 years of conservation experience and an equal number of years of making it all possible? Since it's coming up to election season we had the sage advice to vote for the prettiest candidate that is running for any particular seat. That may well be the best advice we could get.

We did report the passing of **Dorothy Curtis**, wife of **Tom Curtis** in Portland; **Tom & Dorothy** had many friends from their time here in ID; and **Stan Cook** who also had ties in the state.

The most entertaining story of the luncheon was provided by **Wayne & Gerry Faude** about an unfulfilled bear hunt. There were a couple of sightings and an intent to catch one unawares in the wee hours of the morning, which they did with the aid of walkie-talkies and a sleep deprived **Wayne** trying to stay warm in the pickup. Apparently the excitement of torn tents and trouble finding the door handles and exiting the vehicle for a shot resulted in some really good vision of the culprit but little else. Pictures of the tent and its rearranged contents were the only evidence of an exciting time. The telling had all of us in the stitches that are now needed to repair the tent.

Remember to vote, and keep smiling no matter who wins.

## ILLINOIS

**Dale Benz, ARCSE Representative**

*Email: daleab@sbcglobal.net*

SCS/NRCS retirees gathered for lunch and visiting in Champaign on Oct. 6. Attending were **Dick Dickerson**, **Judy & Salvador Velazquez**, **Glenn & Lucy Paulsgrove**, **Lee & Nancy Bridgman**, **Jim & Bonnie McQuilkin**, **Dick & Elsie Campbell**, **Gene Evans**, **Mack Hodges**, **Lester Bushue**, **Dennis & Susan Beyer**, **Homer Kuder**, **Bob McLeese**, **Bill Gradle**, and **Dale & Nancy Benz**.

We were happy to have **Bill Gradle**, State Conservationist, update us on the status of NRCS activities in IL. With some changes from when most of us were actively employed, NRCS is still putting conservation on the land. Although IL is covered with RC&Ds, the funding for RC&Ds was eliminated last spring so there is no staff in the RC&D offices. **Bill**, it was good to have you with us.

**Glenn Paulsgrove** did the WWII Honor Flight to Washington, DC this summer. **Glenn** was in the hospital for a few days in Sept. for some surgery so seeing his doctor is a regular occurrence for him. He said he and **Lucy** were staying in IL this winter rather than going to AZ. **Glenn**, the white snow is pretty and all you have to do is stay inside and turn the heat up!

**Dick & Elsie Campbell** see their doctors about every week. We gotta get our money's worth from Medicare and FEHBA! They traveled to Kentucky this year for **Dick's** Navy Ship Reunion.

**Lee & Nancy Bridgman** were busy this summer with grandkids graduating with their PhD and DVM degrees and

getting married. **Lee & Nancy** again plan to spend some of the winter in AZ.

**Dick & Jan Dickerson** celebrated 50 years of marriage in Oct. They celebrated in July by taking the whole family on a trip to Jamaica. Congratulations, **Dick & Jan**. **Dick** was helping people from his church in reroofing five houses and found out that two rungs from the bottom of a ladder is still too far for an old man to fall. He has been having back pain ever since. He also tried to shorten two of his fingers on his wood working jointer. **Dick**, please be more careful!

**Mack Hodges** retired in 2006 but won't stop working. He worked for Walmart, Personal Care HMO, and the 2010 Census. **Mack** has three kids and six grandkids.

**Jim Evans** tells us he is planting hops next spring. Now we all know what hops are used for but he insists he is planting them for the beauty of the plants. Are you planning to plant barley in your garden, **Jim**?

**Dennis Beyer** is still helping senior citizens with their income tax preparation through AARP.

**Judy Velazquez** tells us that there was no regional spelling bee for seniors this year so she could only participate in the local spelling bee at Rock Falls and could not enter the national spelling bee. She did get fourth place in the local competition. Their son from Miami was visiting them in August.

We were glad to welcome **Bob McLeese**, a new retiree, to the group. His wife, **Rosie**, retired from teaching in June so they now have the time to travel the world. They started the traveling with a trip to AK this summer. **Bob**, while you were in AK did you ever think what it would be like to soil map there and only get to come out of the bush every three months? **Bob** is in the process of writing three books. He said they are for his family history but it seems every candidate for president has written a book before they ran!

**Homer Kuder** moved from the country to town last year to an assisted living retirement home. Said he likes it very much. **Bob & Betty Craft** also moved there this summer and **Homer and Bob** are trying to stay out of trouble! **Betty** is currently in a nursing home recuperating from some broken bones but hopes to be with **Bob** soon.

**Jim & Bonnie McQuilken** also took a trip to AK this summer and attended their daughters wedding there. They took a helicopter trip to a glacier which sounded like fun. They also visited a summer sled dog training camp. The camp liked having visitors for an audience so they could cheer the dogs getting them used to the noise when they are running dog sled races in the winter. Their youngest daughter is attending a seminary in IA.

**Les Bushue** has a son in Kansas City and another on the east coast with six grandkids and seven great grandkids. **Les** is still doing some soil analysis work but less that he used to do. **Earl Voss** made the WWII Honor Flight to Washington, DC in Oct.

The next Champaign gathering will be on April 5, 2012.

We are sorry to report that we have lost another retiree. **Walt Parks**, retired Soil Scientist, passed away on Oct. 6 in Anna, IL. We extend our sorrow to his wife, **Mary**, and four children.

## KANSAS

**Deanne Lull, ARCSE Representative**  
Email: [rlull2@cox.net](mailto:rlull2@cox.net)

Our retirement ranks continue to grow as four more retired over the last couple of months. They are: District Conservationists, **Layton C. Billips** at Hoxie; **Matthew W. Markley** at Johnson; and **James R. Marietta** at Oskaloosa; and **Carl D. Cheney**, RC&D Coordinator, at Oakley.

**Duane Evans**, retired agricultural economist at Salina, KS, and his wife, **Karen** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at a luau with their children and grandchildren at Old Folks Flat in UT. They were married Sept. 15, 1961, in the Salt Lake City Temple. They have 9 children and 31 grandchildren. Since retirement **Duane** keeps busy delivering newspapers for exercise, golfing, and visiting his family. One of **Karen's** pastimes is putting together jigsaw puzzles many of which she has given to others to enjoy.

Several of our senior conservationists remain active. **Kenneth C. Van Cleave**, former district conservationist at Eureka, has turned 85 and continues to live with his wife **Verna** on the family farm at Galesburg. They don't take many long trips but enjoy mystery trips, dinner theater trips, and trips to Branson. **Kenneth** is still very active in the Lions Club in Parsons. He has 54 years of perfect attendance in this organization.

**Elbert L. Bell**, former soil scientist at Fort Scott, turned 90 in Oct. He and his wife **Eleanor** now just take local trips and have settled in Sedan to be near their son.

**William T. Foerschler**, former soil conservation technician at Abilene, and wife, **Helen**, reside in Enterprise. They have 7 children, 21 grandchildren, and 23 great grandchildren. As he said, "I didn't spend all my time working for the SCS." They are in good health and go to the Junction City YMCA three times a week for aquasize. They have been doing this for approximately 25 years.

Our newest senior conservationist, **Jim Gaskell**, former RC&D Coordinator at Chanute, and his wife, **Lorraine**, have lived in the same house in Chanute for the past 31 years. They are both involved in church and NARFE activities and **Jim** keeps busy with two part-time jobs. He also continues his interest in photography.

## MINNESOTA

**Marlene Mechelke, ARCSE Representative**  
Email: [mechgram@aol.com](mailto:mechgram@aol.com)

A good group of Minnesota metro retirees gathered for lunch on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> at Pippins in Roseville: **Dave & Kay Breitbach**, **Bill & Ruth Brune**, **Ordean & Dorothy Finkelson**, **Justin Jeffrey**, **Gloria McCalip**, **Cathy & Don McCormack**, **Vic Ruhland**, **Al Giencke**, **Margy & Micki Gangl**, **Ron & Sylvia Olson**, **Robin Martinek**, **Bud Finney**, **John Handler**, and **Marlene Mechelke**.

**Breitbach's** report: "It has been a busy year for us. We started in late winter getting 'stuff' organized for **Dave's** dad's estate sale. The sale was the last day of April and the farm machinery sold good while we gave the household items away. Then it was organize a Limited Liability Company

(LLC) for those in the family that wanted to keep the farm, close the estate in July, upgrade the farm house from the mid 1970s or earlier décor, in August demolish an outside building (had been a discussion item for years), and finally gather and dispose of accumulated scrap iron over Labor Day weekend. It is really a good feeling to have all of those things behind us. Now we can go to the farm for some relaxing weekends, but winter is almost upon us.

“**Kay** and I just finished our second craft show for the season. Crowds have been down a little but sales are up. Hope it continues for the next two shows. Will be done by Thanksgiving and we have decided this is our last year in the craft business. Not going to be chasing around, setting up, and taking down when we are 70.

“This year’s gardening was a mixed bag, with cool temperatures early and a hot/dry July and Aug. Probably our most productive crops were green bell peppers and acorn squash. Other stuff (green beans, lettuce, radishes, sweet corn, and tomatoes) were enough to keep us fed. As in many things in life, looking forward to a better season next year.”

**Barbara Nesbitt** says that she was a Plant Patrol volunteer this year and she will be back at it again in the spring of 2012 when the invasives start to raise their ugly heads! She met up with NRCS’er **Ginger Kopp** on an Invasive Species Tour this summer. They were shown known areas of several different invasive plants. **Barb** says that she was more familiar with the Giant Knotweed, Purple Loosestrife, and Buckthorn that she finds in her patrol area, but one never knows when or where an invasive will pop up. That is why she will continue as a Plant Patrol volunteer so they can be ‘nipped in the bud’, as the saying goes.

Musician **Vic Ruhland** reports that the Oktoberfest season has really been an amazingly busy one for The Bavarian Musikmeisters. Since mid Sept. through mid Oct. they have played at 9 different events - 6 festivals, 2 rehearsals, and one private party. Lots of playing/singing, gemutlichkeit (fun relaxing time), and of course beer. We are a group of 30 plus musicians in the Twin Cities, now in our 27<sup>th</sup> year of existence, playing Germanic festive musik in our area including the neighboring states. Strange for me was that my lips actually got stronger, not weaker as I had feared.

**Al & Ro Giencke** will not be using the rocking chairs this fall and winter. They plan to visit their daughter in Syracuse, NY and their son in Mt. View, CA. After that they plan on being first time snow birds in southern FL for the months of Jan. and Feb. The memory of a tough Midwest winter last year has provided all the incentive needed to be gone in early 2012, although **Al** might find it hard to get in any serious ice fishing down there!

**Ruth & Bill Brune** continue to spend their summers in MN and the winter in FL. “It is hard to believe we have owned our condo in Naples, FL for 23 years and our town home in Victoria, MN 19 years. We have had a busy 2011 – going on a Caribbean cruise with our FL friends in Jan.”

They attended their granddaughter **Emily’s** graduation from John Paul II High School in Dallas, TX in May and then as a graduation gift took their daughter and granddaughter on a 7-day cruise in June on the cruise ship “Oasis of the Seas” with 6,170 passengers. It was like a floating city. After 3 weeks of traveling it was nice to be back home in Victoria.

**Justin Jeffrey** who resides in Benson says the golfing has been great once it warmed up and quit raining. Have 110 18-hole rounds in thus far which equates to about 550 miles on the golf cart. It’s been a great trip even though it’s a little short of last years’ 855 miles!

**Paul Bridgland**, retired Area 5 (Marshall) Engineer, had the distinct privilege last fall of being a volunteer “Guardian” for an Honor Flight of 106 WWII vets, including his father, from southwestern MN. He spent two days in Washington, D.C. visiting the World War II National Memorial and other National Memorials and Monuments. He has been doing a lot of volunteering with the Lutheran Social Services Senior Dining Program in Marshall and surrounding communities.

**George Poch** in Rochester sees it as a big challenge in keeping the RC&D program alive since the NRCS was removed from it. That challenge has required a considerable amount of time and all of that has been voluntary. “I see it as an important organization that is well represented by locally elected people and most federal programs seem to have overlooked this item almost entirely I hope we start realizing this situation.”

Something from **Bud Finney**: “Admitting crop failure is difficult for an alleged “master gardener”, but overall I had the poorest garden ever. The growing season was very unusual with extremes in precipitation and temperature. For example, 4.1 inches of rain fell from an intense thunderstorm on July 15<sup>th</sup>, and Sept.’s 0.36 inches of rain was the driest ever recorded for that month. June’s 95 deg. F. on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 103 on the 7<sup>th</sup> were record highs for those dates. A record dew point of 82 deg. F. was set July 19<sup>th</sup>. A record low for the date of 36 was set for this past September 15<sup>th</sup>. Some plants thrived but many others did not. For example, I had some bean plants that did not produce a single bean. Also, I did not pick a tomato until August 21<sup>st</sup> – the latest ever at this location.

“I had enjoyable visits from my two kids and their families last summer. As we have for years, we spent most of their visit at a resort on Dead Lake in Otter Tail County. We all enjoy fishing, and 15 year old granddaughter, **Sarah**, was the champion fisher person. My friend, **Jan**, and I especially enjoy outdoor concerts at Como Lake Park in the summer. I continue to volunteer for the University of Minnesota’s master gardening program.”

**Margy & Micki Gangl** recently returned from a two week trip to Holland, Belgium (Bruges and Brussels), and Paris. It was a great tour, spent with 19 people from all over the US. “We had a wonderful time, in spite of having rain almost every day during the first week. So much to see and the raindrops did not hold us back. Bruges was such a charming, medieval town, and Belgium is known for chocolate, lace, and beer – who wouldn’t love those attributes!! We came home to a lot of yardwork. Everyone is so busy now, getting ready for the winter. After such a hot summer this year, the cooler weather feels good.”

**Robin Martinek** sailed into retirement from the State Office in Sept. with a Farewell Cruise on the beautiful St. Croix River. Then left almost immediately on a great trip to Ireland; came home on a Tuesday and came to her first Metro Retirement Luncheon on Wednesday. **Robin** says “how great can life get?” **Robin** was the agronomist in the State Office and was a DC before coming to St. Paul.

**Mike Appel** in Marshall reports spending two days volunteering this past month at the annual Environmental Fair that was held at the Lyon County Fairgrounds. "The Soil and Water Districts sponsor the two-day event and bring in hundreds of 5<sup>th</sup> graders from schools in SW MN. I taught Soils to the students. There were several learning stations throughout the fairgrounds. It was fun to get back into the environmental teaching mode again.

"On another note, **Hilding Hokanson** has gone to an assisted living facility. **Hilding** was the Area Soil Scientist and retired in 1986. I stop in the area office occasionally to keep up on things. Looks like budgets and programs still have their issues and I'm glad I don't have to deal with that anymore."

Yours truly, **Marlene**, missed the July luncheon because I was on a wonderful trip to Burgenland, Austria with my daughter, **Cathy**, to visit my cousins. My mother came from Tadten and my father from Wallern, small towns a couple of miles apart, about 40 miles south of Vienna. These towns are very close to the Hungarian border and my paternal grandfather came to Wallern from Hovej in Hungary, so of course we frequented many small towns and cemeteries in Hungary. In Hovej we visit "the lace ladies" who make a very unique and beautiful embroidery, made on delicate fabrics. Most Hungarian embroideries are very colorful, but these are only "white on white".

Of course we visited Vienna with a top notch tour guide, my cousin who is an architect and works for the City of Vienna, overseeing all the architectural buildings in Vienna. One must always visit St. Stephens' Cathedral, Stephansdom, which is always in the renovating and repairing stage, but beautiful all the same. One never tires of the beauty of Vienna, Kartner Strasse, Schonbrunn Castle, and of course eating Sacher Torte and Kaffee mit Schlags (whipped cream).

The borders are open now so we traveled freely between Austria and Hungary and Bratislava, Slovakia. Visited the beautiful capital of Burgenland, Eisenstadt, to visit relatives on my father's side. Every town has a beautiful church and the Basilica in Frauenkirchen (larger town about 10 minutes from the little towns) is a gorgeous church. Simple on the outside but gorgeous and very ornate on the inside. As we're walking through the church a small group gathered in front and began singing "Marian lieder" (Mary songs). It was beautiful and brought back memories of my mother and her friends singing German hymns years ago at Saturday devotions.

A trip to Austria is not complete without music and we had the opportunity to see the operetta Die Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron) at a unique location – a theatre built on the shore of the Neusiedlersee, ending with fireworks over the water at the end. Also saw the opera Don Giovanni at a theatre in an old rock quarry in St. Margarethen. Was quite a unique place for my daughter to experience her first opera! Also on a musical note, visited Raiding, the birthplace of Franz Liszt.

Of course I ate my way in and out of Austria!! Kraut Knockerln (Cabbage Noodles); Gsottener Strudel (Topfen, like cottage cheese), boiled and served with bean sauce or tomato sauce; Kraut Strudel; Hungarian Goulash with Salzstanger (salt rolls); many salads with ingredients fresh from the garden; good cheeses; Desserts, to list a few: Dunstgugelhupf (dense cake in a Bundt pan, covered with a chocolate pudding-like sauce), Schneenockerl (vanilla pudding with meringue globs

on top), Topfen Strudel with Vanilla Sauce, Cake with Red Currants and Meringue, Balasn (strudel dough rounds filled with apples, fried and dusted with powdered sugar), Raspberry Torte (ladyfingers, raspberries, pudding sauce), Kipferln (nut filled cookies), Sacher Torte, Cherry Poppyseed Strudel.

I was going to miss this Oct. luncheon also, due to having carpal tunnel surgery on this day at 12:00 noon. Luckily, the hospital called in the morning and said the doctor was running ahead so I could get in at 10:30. So I was done at 12:45; felt so good that my grandson and I decided to have lunch with the retirees. As **Robin** says "How great can life get?!!"

## MONTANA

**Dick Gooby**, ARCSE Representative  
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**Gordon Decker** Report: The Sept. 7th retiree's breakfast included: **Ray & Shirley Smith, Ron & Elsie Batchelor, Hal & Judy Hunter, Bob & Nancy Ross with grandson, Dennis Phillippi, Bob Lund, Merlin Nelson, Ralph Bergantine, Dave Jones, Jan Remer, Frank Schledorn, and Gordon Decker.**

The Oct. 5th breakfast included: **Bob & Nancy Ross, Hal & Judy Hunter, Ran & Elsie Batchelor, Bob & Jan Remer, Bob & Liz Lohmiller, Ray & Shirley Smith, Jim & Joan Johnson, Ron & Glenda Nadwornick, Bob O'Driscoll, Gordon Watson, and Gordon Decker.** It was announced that Van Haderlie has been in & out of hospitals, and is currently in Billings.

**Dennis Smetana**, Retired Soil Scientist, Roundup, MT passed away on Aug 24. **Dennis** mapped soils in Montana and retired as an Area Soil Specialist on the State Soil Staff. **Larry Mills** passed away on Sept. 17. **Larry** served in MT, CA, and Washington DC.

**Kathy's** and my exciting events include: A fire at the ranch, burned about 1/3 of our pasture land and trees, but we spared the ranch buildings, thanks to the County Crew and neighbors that built fire line that stopped the fire from getting to the headquarters, but got within about 1/4 mile. It did, however, burn one our favorite homesteads which my father helped build in 1934. The log cabin is now a pile of tin.

We've been busy watching grandkids play football and soccer. Our Senior and Sophomore at Stevensville High School are being looked at/recruited for football by MSU (Montana State University), they have been given Bobcat Home Game football tickets, so we get to see them at some of the games.

**Kathy** & I are headed to the ranch this week end (Oct 12 - 16) to evaluate about 10 miles of fence that need various kinds of repair, and cut our first load of fire wood.

There were about 300 head of cattle in one of the pastures that totally burned (no grass left). They all escaped after opening all the gates while the fire was approaching. They have only found one cow that is having a hard time breathing. That's amazing knowing how fast the fire was moving. The excellent rains and spring grass production resulted in dry fuel to carry the fire. Everything burned, not just fingers here and there.

We're calling in our newest Range Improvement Program. Burned lots of sagebrush and thinned about 1000 acres of trees, got rid of all the dog hair new tree growth. Pasture grazing will be great in a couple years.

**James Johnson Report:** **Joan** and I attended the retiree's breakfast on October 5th--there were 19 in attendance.

I attended the board meeting of the Bozeman Chapter of NARFE this week. More than 20 SCS/NRCS retirees are members of the Bozeman Chapter. The board is working to encourage more active member participation in chapter meetings and activities, and needs more members to serve as officers and committee leaders. They would like to see more of our retirees willing to serve. NARFE is dedicated to protecting the earned benefits of federal retirees and employees--highly important in today's legislative climate.

**Scott Hoag Report:** **Scott & Nancy** got back on the road the day after Labor Day. On their way to Artesia, NM they spent a night in Sheridan, WY with some Habitat for Humanity (HfH) friends and a couple from Bozeman who summer there. Then it was on to Artesia for three weeks building with HfH. "We were camped in Raton Pass and a bear visited our RV - curious about the bumper I put on the corner of the slide out. We 'waltzed across TX' and spent a couple of days with friends in a RV park in NC, then four days in a COE RV park - did the leaf peeper thing on the Blue Ridge Parkway - and are now in Lenoir, NC for a HfH build. Then on to Thibodaux and Mandeville, LA in Nov and Dec."

**Gooby Ranch Report:** **Mary Ann** has been busy picking up the hay bales from the field and stacking them. She has to use the pickup to haul the bales to the stack. Up until this week **Mary Ann** used a wheel barrow with a flat platform that she could stack six bales on and wheel to the stack. But it broke in half and there is no way to fix it so she has to use the pickup. **Mary Ann** loads as many bales as she can that are relatively close to the pickup then gets in and drives ahead a ways, stops and loads the bales in the vicinity.

A couple years ago I did a study of the costs of baling the hay and it showed that the heavier the bales, the less twine it took per ton of bales. So we cranked the baler up to 150 pounds per bale. To start with **Mary Ann** could only lift them shoulder high but by me showing her how to spring up with her legs as she lifts the bale she can now easily lift the bale two feet over her head.

The other day I headed out to drive the pickup so **Mary Ann** wouldn't have to pack the bales so far and keep getting into and out of the pickup. As I was walking down the road I saw the little ants were busy. We have a small ant that lives in our area and after a rain they dig holes in the road for their living quarters like a ground squirrel does except it's just big enough for the ant to crawl down into the ground. You only see a few ants per hole and they stack the gravel around the hole that they dig to keep the rain out. Judging from the pile of gravel their tunnel must be three or four feet deep.

I stopped and took a close look at what an ant was doing and it was lifting a piece of gravel that was two times as big as the ant. I watched for a while then got to thinking that if I observed the ant maybe I could see some of the things the ant was doing that made it possible to lift such a big piece of gravel. I went back to the house and after a short break I got a tablet, pencil, stop watch and headed back out to see

what ideas I could get from the ants. I observed the ants all day. I felt bad that **Mary Ann** was so busy stacking hay she couldn't stop long enough to observe the ants. She would have been impressed at how much an ant can lift. But it was clouding up so she had to stick with stacking hay while I conducted the ant study.

After studying the ants all day I got some good ideas how I can help **Mary Ann** increase her efficiency. But it won't make any difference since she finished stacking all the hay and by next year **Mary Ann** will have the wheel barrow fixed.

(Editor's Note: **Mary Ann** says the story is true. She is real proud she is able to do ranch work and take good care of **Dick** so he can do his job without worrying. She did have a dream recently about **Dick** doing all the work and she feels really bad about having such a dream.)

## OREGON

**Don Stettler, ARCSE Representative**  
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The fall quarter retiree lunch was held at the Clackamas The Old Spaghetti Factory on Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>. Those attending included **Clifton & Marva Deal, Kay Denfeld, Gary Formanek, Bobbie Hart, Dave Johnson, Lowell & Marian Kenedy, Roy & Linda Mann, Daniel Moore, Lamont Robbins, Leland Saele, Joe & Becky Sahlfeld, Pat Straka, Dick & Kathy Sylvester, Eldena Vanderzanden, Ralph Wadleigh, Beth Zetter**, and yours truly, **Don Stettler**.

Several sent me regrets. Both **Don Wallin** and **Jack Kanalz** were going to be away hunting the mighty elk. **Jack's** hunt was in the south western mountains of MT with some of his fraternity brothers for their 52nd consecutive elk camp. But rather than hunt, **Jack** said he would be fishing. **Don's** hunt was closer to home. **DD Kido** told me they would be entertaining out-of-town visitors on the day of the lunch. And then the next day, she and **Howard** were leaving to go on another cruise. This time they'd be cruising in Aegean Sea visiting Turkey, the Greek Isles, and Venice. **Marcine Richmond** told me she would be in Depoe Bay on the day of our lunch. Sure hope she will have lunch at Gracie's Sea Hag.

**Dick Verboort** reported that he could not attend the lunch. He went on to tell me that he and **Theresa** celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary while on a trip to Ireland and Scotland. **Dick** went on to tell me he had been recently accepted as a participant in the "Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative" study. He will be one of 500 participants worldwide. This is an observational research study financed by the Michael J. Fox Foundation to identify biomarkers of PD progression. **Jack Inhoff** and **Wendell Styner** both scheduled doctor's appointment on the day of the lunch. **Jack** said he had recovered from his recent heart surgery and was again playing a fairly good game of golf. **Wendell** was having his new knee checked out.

The group welcomed **Joe Sahlfeld's** wife **Becky**. **Joe & Becky** were married last July and are now living in Beaverton. **Lee Saele** told us that he had recently made a trip to ND to go fishing with his brother. **Lee** is also volunteering one day a week for Habitat for Humanity. **Lowell Kenedy** did some plowing in Eastern Washington using the tractor his father had bought new, a 1939 John Deere A. **Daniel Moore** told the group that he is playing tennis regularly. **Dave & Joan Johnson** hosted



two Japanese exchange students during the summer which was an interesting experience for them. **Kay Denfeld** said she is now totally retired after a stint as an NRCS contractor. **Roy Mann** said he was also not by default, retired.

The next lunch will be on January 25, 2012 at the Tanasbourne The Old Spaghetti Factory.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Bill Bowers, ARCSE Representative**

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Forty SCS/NRCS retirees braved possible flood damage detours to gather at the State College Days Inn for their annual meeting. Friendships were renewed and memories shared over coffee. President **Bill Bowers** opened the meeting by asking each retiree to introduce their spouse, tell of their favorite job, and end with what was happening in their life. **Hurshal Boyd**, 90, received an ovation as he shared the loss of his wife, **Rosann**, 86, a few months ago after a marriage of over 60 years. Several other couples noted marriages of 50 – 60+ years.

NRCS State Conservationist **Denise Coleman** and **Gary Smith**, Asst STC, were unable to make the meeting due to demands to implement the Emergency Watershed Program to help recovery of the Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee flood devastation in eastern and central PA. In the business meeting, \$500 was given to the Keystone Chapter, SWCS, for their scholarship program.

**Patrick Williams**, Director of Development, The Arboretum At Penn State, shared how that vision became a reality four years ago. In the afternoon, Arboretum Director, **Dr. Kim Steiner**, led a tour of the 29.5 acres of gardens, still in development. Over 17,000 plants have been added to the area. Total acreage of the arboretum is 370 acres. The meeting ended with a trip to the Penn State Creamery for the world famous ice cream. Favorite flavor – Peachy Paterno.

Attending were **Bob & Carole Heidecker**, **John & Ellen Mank**, **Francis & Joyce Lisko**, **Nevin & Judy Ulery**, **Byron & Joyce Roth**, **John & Ann Akers**, **Bill & Mary Ann Bowers**, **Rosie & Dale Updegraff**, **Sam & Mary Ellen Young**, **Don & Susan Bowers**, **Hurshal Boyd**, **Don & Shirley Lindsey**, **John & Donna Mickley**, **Fred & Carol Bubb**, **Donald & Shirley McCandless**, **Ted Ifft**, **Harvey Pinkerton**, **Harold & Marie Wingard**, **Norm & Rose Wolfrom**, **Tim Murphy**, **Allan Bennett**, **Munk & Mo Munkittrick**, and **William Parrish**.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Mark Berkland, ARCSE Representative**

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South Carolina had its Fall ARCSE meeting at the BMW plant in Greer, SC. The Luncheon, held on Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011, had 31 in attendance. Those in attendance included: **Billy Abercrombie**, **Grady Adkins**, **Dennis & Amanda Bauknight**, **Mark & Brenda Berkland**, **Jake Black**, **Hugh Caldwell**, **Dick Christopher**, **Dennis & Judy DeFrancesco**, **Bethel & Catherine (Bethel's daughter) DuRant**, **Dan Guy**, **Jim Krider**, **Henry & Bennt Lynn Nicholson**, **Mr. & Mrs. Ned McGill**, **Al McNeill**, **Dory & Gary Reeves**, **Jimmy Sanders**, **Mr. & Mrs. Ray Stoddard**, **Byron & Mary Thompson**, **Wally & Susan Turner**, Senior Conservationist **Bob Wells**, and **Burt Wells**.

**Dennis DeFrancesco** was in charge of putting the program together and he did an outstanding job. Thanks, **Dennis!!** We started by touring at our leisure, the BMW Zentrum Museum. We saw BMW's numerous milestones in both racing and touring vehicles. We also saw rare and important vehicles from BMW's past, such as the famous Isetta "Bubble car," and BMW Motorcycles. We then went on a one hour guided tour of the assembly plant where we saw the totally robotic assembly of the car take place from small parts to the finished product on one continuous assembly line. It was a totally amazing tour.

Following the tour we had lunch in the BMW cafeteria and then a short business meeting in BMW's Auditorium where **Byron Thompson** received the ARCSE President's Award for Outstanding Community Service. **Byron** was recognized for making his community and state a better place to live through outstanding leadership and dedicated service to his church, school district, local conservation programs, and work on a variety of legislative issues and a county wide land use and zoning plan.

**Bill Melvin** writes that he really enjoys reading the Newsletter. After working in four states, IL, WV, TN, and finally in SC, **Bill** has met and worked with many SCS and NRCS employees as well as the other agency staffs. **Bill** says that he used to mark and count the names with every Newsletter and says he enjoys just keeping up with those friends.

## TEXAS (NORTH AREA)

**Arnold King, ARCSE Representative**

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The following items were extracted from the North Texas SCS/NRCS Alumni News courtesy of **Jim Rickman** and **Arnold King**.

Sixteen members were present for the Aug. 19, 2011 meeting: **Earl Blakely**, **Elaine Davis**, **Dorothy Green**, **Richard Heizer**, **Dave & Barb Stockbridge**, **Dave Drennan**, **Anita Plummer**, **Bernie Owen**, **Don Kapalka**, **Arnold King**, **Wes Fuchs**, **Dennis Erinakes**, **Jim & Jere Rickman**, and **Joe Nichols**.

President **Dave Drennan** presided over the business meeting. Club business included a treasurer's report from **Elaine Davis**. Dave asked for volunteers for the nominating committee. He will appoint the committee at the next meeting so they can make their nominations in Oct.

Future programs were discussed, and **Don Kapalka** will make a presentation on nuclear power plants, **Dennis Erinakes** on computers, and **Arnold Norman** will be contacted regarding a presentation on Afghanistan. The dates are not determined yet, but in Jan. **Bernie Owen** will make a presentation on taxes. Another topic of interest is our health insurance, and we could get presentations on BCBS and GEHA benefits, prior to the next open season. **Richard Heizer** and **Dennis Gaster** will select and schedule programs.

As reported last month, the October Meeting and Picnic date had a conflict this year. Several alternatives were discussed and it was decided to move the regular meeting date to the second Friday in October. We will be sending out the Oct. newsletter a week earlier to remind you again with details.

Starting with this newsletter all those receiving the newsletter by email will get a text only copy as the email and a pdf file as an attachment. This should eliminate the issues some are having opening attachments. If you can read pdf files, open the attachment, otherwise, just read the email.

**Bernie Owen** reported that **Maxine** had hysterectomy surgery on August 8, and is slowly recovering. He will be attending an all school reunion at Kinsley, KS on Sept. 3, 2011. This is the first all school reunion in their history. He will also attend the NARFE seminar in Baton Rouge, LA on Sept 20 -21<sup>st</sup> for the 5 state region. **Bernie** reported that **Joe Barton** was the guest speaker at a NARFE meeting, where he was asked questions regarding our retirement benefits, and he stated that neither party was trying to cut benefits.

**Richard Heizer & Sara** are looking forward to an Eastern Caribbean Cruise on one of Royal Caribbean's largest ships, Allure of the Seas, in Sept. They are also looking forward to the birth of a grandson early next year to their military son **Aaron** and his wife **Brittany**. He is stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. **Richard & Sara** plan to visit them after the first of the year.

**Barb Stockbridge** returned from NM with **Dave** after visiting with friends.

**Arnold & Willeene King** attended the national ARCSE meeting in Washington, DC. This was in conjunction with the SWCS annual meeting. **Mark Berkland** was installed as ARCSE president and **Arnold King** was installed as Vice President for the southern states. **Arnold** will be looking for a candidate to replace him as state representative for TX.

**Dennis Erinakes** has been reappointed to the Board of Directors of the Prairie Lands Groundwater Conservation District for 4 years. His grandson, **Ethan**, has entered ROTC at OU in electrical engineering. Hunting season is almost here and his dogs, Ranger & Shobie are ready.

**David Stockbridge** reported on some sites he and **Barb** visited in NM. The "sunspot" is the largest mechanical telescope in the US, and was built to observe sun spots. The official observatory is being relocated to Hawaii sometime in the future. They walked barefooted on the sand at the White Sands National Monument. In addition they visited the National Space Museum, which they found very interesting.

**Dorothy Green** continues to collect material for our servicemen, and she just finished sending 6 bags.

**Elaine Davis** is planning a family reunion next month, and is working at the fair as a judge in the plant identification contests.

**Jim & Jere Rickman** took their 3 grandsons on a week vacation to Galveston. They also went to Alaska on the inside passage cruise with their daughter and her family.

**Dave Drennan** is looking forward to Sept. 15 for his annual sports event with his son. This year's event consists of a Boston Red Sox baseball game, New England Patriots football game, and he is also working in games played by U of Conn, and Boston College. **Dave** has been reading the history of WWII, which is very exciting to him because it parallels a veteran's interview he is familiar with.

Sadly it seems every newsletter reports some SCS/NRCS employees that have left us. This newsletter is no different.

**Arche Elton Lieb** passed away on Aug. 13, 2011. **Billy Joe Hinton** passed away on Aug. 20, 2011. **Jerry Lee Wenmohs** passed away Aug. 13, 2011. (See IN MEMORIAM.) Our thanks to **Larry Butler, Monty Dollar, James Abbott, Michael Bogard, Dan Caudle, Bailey Mayo**, and others who keep us informed about the SCS/NRCS family.

Twenty one members were present for the Sept. 16, 2011 meeting: **Earl Blakely, Elaine Davis, Dorothy Green, Barbara Gillum, Joyce Petty, Dennis & Kathy Gaster, Dave & Barb Stockbridge, Bernie Owen, Dennis Erinakes, Jim & Jere Rickman, Mary Mattinson, Bernelle Baxley, Don & Helen Shanklin, Harland Dietz, Don Newman, Wes Fuchs, and Bonnie McKee.**

Vice president **Dennis Gaster** presided over the business meeting. Club business included a treasures report from **Elaine Davis**. **Madeline Rex-Lehr** had agreed to make a presentation explaining the outcome of a study in which club members participated. The transmission went out on her car, so she was not able to make it. She will do the program at some future date, as yet undecided. There was already a program planned for November, where both GEHA and BCBS representatives will make presentations on benefits. A future program by **Arnold Norman** on his work in Afghanistan is still unscheduled, as the dates **Arnold** has open and when the club meets have thus far not been compatible.

**Bernie & Maxine** departed August 31st for KS. **Bernie** attended an all school reunion in Kinsley, KS on Sept. 3rd and **Maxine** attended a class reunion that included five different classes on Sept. 10th and a Reh family reunion on Sept. 18th.

**Dennis Erinakes** reported that his son, **Michael** purchased, sight unseen, a 22 acre island. The drought has taken its toll on a farm **Dennis** owns, and all the surface water dried up. **Dennis** elected to purchase a water meter and buy water to keep his wild animals alive. **Jere Rickman** just got back from an all school reunion in Quanah, TX. She and **Jim** are in the process of building a pole barn.

**Helen Shanklin** is spending a lot of time attending grandkids sports events. **Don Shanklin** is an ACE (acquired cheap engineer) working in OK on rehab of dams with stimulus dollars. **Don Newman** is scheduled for cataract surgery next week, and **Bernice** just had cataract surgery. **Dorothy Green** will continue to collect material for our servicemen until they all come home. **Mary Mattinson** has been taking care of grandkids. **Bernelle Baxley** spent a week in CO and is leaving for Lake Placid, NY. **Barbara Gillum** has 3 children she is looking out for from the court appointed special advocate program, and two are just about to be adopted. She received pictures and notes concerning 2 children which were adopted last year, which was very gratifying.

**David Stockbridge** said his wife **Barb** were drawn for a duck blind on Lake Granbury. He has already gone teal hunting in the blind, and saw a lot of wildlife, but never fired a shot at a duck. He is going to do the 5K run sponsored by a brewery. **Harland Dietz** had an extended family reunion in Aug. His wife, **Anita**, fell and is going to have an MRI to determine the problem.

**Dennis Gaster** reported that long ago and far away he built a tree house for his young child, using telephone poles, since the area was treeless. When they moved he agreed to remove the telephone poles, which was a huge job, requiring a jack and chain. **Jere's** mention of a pole barn evoked these memories. He has been watching their 8 year old grandson play football on a Frisco team, and he scored 2 touchdowns (the grandson, not **Dennis**).

**Mike Woodson** announced **Trudy** retired on June 30th after 22 ½ years. **Mike's** granddaughter **Ashtyn** is now enrolled at TCU and was selected Cheerleader this fall. Their granddaughter **Amelia** recently married **Blue Patrick Fitch** who is a member of the Marine Corps. **Mike's** daughter **Melanie** also visited this summer from her home in LA while the extended family was gathered. **Mike & Trudy** planned to travel to Estes Park, CO for **Ivan & Ginger Wilkinson's** 50th wedding anniversary celebration on September 4th.

**Freddie & DeWayne Williams** wrote their son **Jeff** is not able to do the stem cell treatment yet. They will do a stronger chemo for 2 or 3 rounds (one week each with 3 week rest). If it shrinks the tumors they will do a lot of tests on him after the PET scan to see if his body will take the stem cell treatment. He needs to gain weight... they will feed him in the vein thru an IV... they will keep the feeding tube going also. If he gains weight...has not bad side effects from the new stronger chemo and his body passes all the tests...AND IF THE TUMORS HAVE SHRUNK...Then they will try the stem cell. Not sure when they will start the new chemo, but I think they want to do it soon. It will be done in Denton.

## UTAH

**Phillip "Skip" Nelson, ARCSE Representative**  
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**Mike & Nadine Nethery** attended the memorial service for **Karen Bridge** on Aug. 15th in Salt Lake City in support of **Galen**. In Sept. they spent two weeks touring Ireland with two of their daughters and one son-in-law. They rented a seven passenger van and traveled from Dublin to Kilkenny, Waterford, Limerick, Galway, Inishmore, Westport, Omagh, Portrush, Belfast, and back to Dublin with many stops on the way. They reported having a great time viewing many historical sites, doing a little genealogical research, and enjoying the unique geology and topography of Ireland. Food was fabulous and accommodations were marvelous.

## WASHINGTON

**Jerry Richard, ARCSE Representative**  
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Attending recent retiree lunches at the Spokane Wolf Lodge Steakhouse were **Joe Carmack, Jack Rasmussen, Larry Edmonds, Harry Riehle, Jud Melton, Hans Krauss, Gary Johnson, Lennie Husa, Ralph Schmidt, Carl Vennes, Bob Olson,** and **Jerry Richard**. **Lennie Husa** enjoyed his trip to Washington DC in Sept. as a guest of the Honor Flight Network. **Jack Rasmussen** had made the same trip in the spring. They had hoped to go together to visit and reflect at War Memorials in DC. The Network is a nonprofit organization to honor America's veterans for their sacrifices. **Jack** was at

**Iwo Jima** and **Lennie** at the Battle of the Bulge in Europe. We salute both of you for your service during WW II.

**Carl Vennes** had a back operation and procedure in late summer and is well pleased with the results. He is back walking and exercising without the numbness and pain. **Sylvia Russell** has moved to the North Pointe Retirement facility. **Robbie Roberts** has moved to Rockwood Retirement facility. **Lewis Kehne** is back home with two walkers (one for inside and one for outside).

**John Krauss**, son of **Hans & Katie**, was recently the subject of a feature article in Spokane Review. The story is about a combination adventure of kayaking and paragliding at Lake Chelan in WA. This long and narrow lake starts at the small town of Chelan and continues northwest for about 55 miles to Stehekin, the rear entrance to North Cascades National Park. **John** paddled his sea kayak to Lucerne, just shy of Stehekin, where he journeyed on to Holden Village, an old mining town. He had a tailwind on the return trip and could ride the waves with his kayak. The second part of the adventure was riding the thermals, near Chelan, which facilitate gliders to fly high and far. **John** is well acquainted with Lake Chelan, with his first trips occurring many years ago as family trips with his parents, **Hans & Katie**. Since then he has returned several times to install and maintain a mini solar energy system he donated to Holden Village.

## WASHINGTON DC NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

**John Peterson, ARCSE Representative**  
Email: [jwpeterson@cox.net](mailto:jwpeterson@cox.net)

**Jim Spitz** says, "Hi **John!** **Hilde** and I just returned from a cruise out of Bayonne, NJ. We spent some time with **Hilde's** family, including the Baptism of **Hilde's** niece's new baby before the cruise. We boarded ship and left on Sept. 8th to Canada and New England and returned to port on the 25th. We stopped in Boston, Portland, Bar Harbor, Halifax, Quebec City, Charlottetown, and Sidney. We had been to Boston, Portland, Kennebunk/Kennebunkport, and Bar Harbor before but enjoyed the excursions that were offered. Bar Harbor is a neat place...they have iron benches lining both sides of the main street and they were full of men. The ladies were shopping of course. Quebec City is amazing. They have restored all the old 17th and 18th century buildings from the original settlement in 1659...all are now shops, hotels, homes, banks, etc. All very, very clean and washed down. We wanted to include Montreal, but our ship was too big to get under the bridge. I am busy again with the Rescue Squad and the Auction Gallery. Health is good. **Hilde** has a choral music background and has put together a Women's Choir at our church. Our membership is now about 900 parishioners. Most of the choir ladies cannot read music so **Hilde** has spent a lot of time getting the choir up and running. At least we are both still busy and not sitting around thinking about our "last days"!

**Warren & Barb Lee** attended the "celebrate life" service for **Karen Bridge** on Sept. 9th in Tucson. **Tommy & Jean George, Ron & Barb Moreland, Ken & Connie Cookson, Gene & Mary Andreucetti, Gordon & Betsy Klostad, Judy & Neil Johnson,** and **Jerry Seinwill** were there as well in support of **Galen**. There were probably others there that we missed.

The annual National Capital Area Retiree Fall Luncheon was held at the Phillips Flagship Restaurant on the Maine Avenue

waterfront on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>. **Wayne Maresch** once again served as our MC and led us in the invocation. We also had a moment of silence for those retirees who have recently passed on. Then he announced that he was stepping down as our long-time luncheon arranger and MC. **Wayne** has played this role since 1992, and he is likely to need some knee or hip surgery, so he felt it was time to step down. I retired in March, 1994, and attended my first spring luncheon as a retiree in May. I had attended before that as an Associate Member. **Wayne** was the MC, and at that time **Neil Bogner** was serving at the ARSCSE Secretary. The reporter for the National Capital Area, **Jerry Calhoun**, had just passed away, and either **Wayne** or **Neil** "appointed" me (or should I say railroaded me) as the new reporter. Guess when I decide to step down I will have to follow **Wayne's** lead and just quit. Volunteers are hard to come by any more.

After another seafood feast at Phillips, **Wayne** introduced **Tom Christensen**, NRCS Regional Conservationist for the Midwest. **Tom** was pinch-hitting for NRCS Associate Chief **Homer Wilkes**, who could not be with us. He talked about a number of things happening within NRCS; more reorganization or realignment, maybe some more administrative consolidation, trying to streamline conservation delivery and get 75% of our employees back in the field, moving the watershed program management over to the engineering division, 14 Landscape Conservation Initiatives such as one for the Mississippi River Basin. He talked of the Farm Bill work underway, and how the Congressional Budget Super Committee might affect that work. NRCS has two people working on the Hill helping with the Farm Bill, **Kevin Norton** (LA STC) in the Senate with **Sen. Debbie Stabenow** and **Patty Lawrence** with **Sen. Pat Roberts**. **Bob Stevenson** (FSA) is helping in the House. He also touched on some other important activities, some management of ag drainage work, and the Conservation Effects Assessment Program (CEAP). **Tom** is always a pleasure to have with us, and he gives us a lot of information. Thanks, **Tom**.

**John Stierna**, who is now with the American Farmland Trust, talked about the Farm Bill, the Commodities Title I, and conservation compliance. Our Potomac Reporter **Lennie Losh** talked of changes in our health insurance, mentioned there was not much happening on the legislative front prior to the next major election, the social security trust fund, neglect of our nation's public schools, and mentioned that our government retirement might even be under the gun in the current economic climate.

There was much concern expressed for **Tom Duesterhaus** who is still missing. Before adjourning, **Barbara Osgood & Diana Morse** volunteered to take over **Wayne's** luncheon duties. I believe **Barbara** will be the arrangements person, and **Diana** will handle the money. Thanks to those two for stepping up. And many, many thanks to **Wayne** for yeoman duty over the past 20-years. We really appreciate his service, bad jokes and all, and hope he will still be a regular at our luncheons. We can all remember when our luncheons would attract 100 + people and we would fill the ballroom at the Ft. McNair Officers Club. Now we are down to 30+ people in a much smaller room at Phillips Flagship. The retirees attending the luncheon were **Neil & Eleanor Bogner**, **Barbara Osgood**, **Roger Cronshey**, **Karl Otte**, **Joe & Lavona Haas**, **John Stierna**, **Bill Boyer** (SWCS President), **Jim Gulliford** (SWCS Executive Director whose plane was delayed in Kansas City), **Valorie Butler**, **Lee Shields**, **Peter Smith**, **Bob Kohnke**, **Ted Ifft**, **Al Geiger**, **Jim Hannawald**, **Diana Morse**, **Wally**

**Ochs**, **Lennie Losh**, **Wes & Dottie (Davis) Hofstad**, **John & Blanche Peterson**, **Art Flickinger**, **Ron Marlow**, **Wayne Maresch**, **Tom & Joyce Iivary**, **Cathy Leisher**, and **Tom Christensen**. Our spring luncheon will be May 3, 2012. Any of our retired colleagues are invited to join us. While **Barbara & Diana** will be making those arrangements, and there will be notices sent out in advance, I suspect we will be back at Phillips Flagship on Maine Ave.

**John Stierna** was just elected as the Chair of the Finlandia University Board of Trustees. Finlandia University is a university in Hancock, MI, and the only private university in the Upper Peninsula. Founded in 1896 as Suomi College, it is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Congratulations, **John**.

**Blanche Peterson** will be having spinal surgery on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>. She has three disks they need to get back in the right place.

Got this from **Wes & Dottie Hofstad**. Late March, **Wes Hofstad** and his son drove to visit his daughter **Lee Ann**, who had breast cancer 2 years ago, and cured by chemotherapy, but it returned into her liver. After starting chemo again, she was hospitalized with an infection, and given an anti-biotic medication, which put her in a coma and died several days later. They returned in April to attend her memorial service. In June they attended **Dottie's** grandson's wedding on the Potomac River in Alexandria, VA along with **Dottie's** family from Hong Kong, Shanghai, New York, and Savannah. Mid July, they drove to **Wesley's** summer cottage on Lake Nebagamon, WI. While there, they visited friends and relatives in the Duluth-Superior area. July 30<sup>th</sup>, they celebrated their 7<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary by driving along the north shore to Canada. When the Canadian customs asked for their passports, **Wes** said he didn't have one, and that he had always used his driver's license. So they asked where he wanted to go. "Only to Thunder Bay and return in a few hours". "OK, you can go." When they returned to go thru the US customs, they asked the same questions. So **Wes** told them the Canadian Customs said it was OK. After a few more questions about what they were doing up there, they said, "OK, you can go." Later in August, they attended **Lee Ann's** internment in the local cemetery, next to her mother's grave. Mid Sept they returned home, in time to attend the Fall ARCSE luncheon. For Thanksgiving, they will be driving to **Wes's** daughter's home in CT. But they will be home the rest of the year.

**Rich Duesterhaus** sends this message. Please watch the "Find Tom" video and forward it to others. I know we are all keeping **Rich** and his family in our prayers. **Dear Friends**, "As some of you know, my son **Tom** has been missing since June 17<sup>th</sup>. I ask you not only to watch the video below, but please forward it to any and all who you know. We think that the farther this video goes, the more the chance someone might spot **Tom**. Our goal is only to know that he is OK. If and when he wants to return is totally up to him although we would love to have him home this minute." Thanks, **Rich Duesterhaus**

Find Tom Video:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX44BHtvOb4>

Find Tom Website  
<http://tom.duesterhaus.net/>

## WEST VIRGINIA

*Peg Reese, ARCSE Representative*  
Email: [pegreesevw@gmail.com](mailto:pegreesevw@gmail.com)

**Annual meeting:** West Virginia Chapter members attended a meeting at the Waterfront Hotel in Morgantown at 11:00 a.m. on Sept. 30th. After we enjoyed a delicious meal, **Joe Paull**, an OSHER instructor, gave a short presentation on the origins and history of Bluegrass Music. Several members asked that we have him return. **Jim Clevenger, Jim Cooper, Dee Weston, and Peg Reese** donated door prizes. **Carrie Wetsch** won the 50/50 drawing and donated her winnings back to the chapter. During a short business meeting, **Peg Reese** was re-elected to serve as the chapter representative. Members also selected Morgantown as our next meeting location. Our thanks to **Dee Weston** and **Jim Clevenger** for organizing the meeting. Attending were: **David & Patty Burns, Steve Carpenter, Debbie Chase, Jim Cooper, Sam & Donna DePue, Charles Delp, Rose Fraley, Herold Berthy, Dick Gray, Bill & Janice Hatfield, Eileen & Russell Hayhurst, Jim Hill, Dick & Annette Judy, Joe Paull, Peg Reese, Lewis Rowan, Dee Weston, and Don & Carrie Wetsch.**

**Retirements:** **Patricia LaRocco**, Clerk for the Mountain RC&D Office in Oak Hill, and **Cathy Jefferson**, Clerk for the Northern Panhandle RC&D Office in McMechen retired on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. We wish them a happy retirement.

**Member Updates:** **Alan Boone** reported that he has "been working thru ACES for over two years now. I am working on a stream restoration project on Pigeon Creek in Mingo County. We are about half done, with three to four more weeks to complete the project. I am having a great time.

**Linda Liston** said that she and **Jake**, "Won't be attending the Retirees get together. That is a bad day for us. Nothing new to report. We are in good health, expecting our first great grandchild. Have 3 grand children. Oldest one is a Dentist in Oakland, MD. Has her own practice. The middle one is living in Roanoke, VA. She is in Nuclear Medicine. Youngest one is a sophomore at Preston High. Still riding our Harley-Davidson, and **Jake** has his own airplane, don't plan on getting old just yet. Tell everyone Hello, and have a good time at the luncheon."

### NEW SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST

We welcome one new Senior Conservationist since the last Newsletter. He has reached the minimum age of 83 years and has completed the senior Conservationist Questionnaire. Congratulations!

His name and home state is:  
**Fred T. Mott, DE**

The Senior Conservationists who left us since the last Newsletter were:  
**Edwin O. "Ed" Nurmi, AZ**  
**Orvil W. Godman, CA**

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

## SENIOR CONSERVATIONIST CHRONICLE

*Marc Safley, Chronicler*

**Senior Conservationist Gene Highfill** was born July 26, 1928 in Cherokee, OK. At the age of 2 his family moved to Friona, TX where he began elementary school. In 1936 his family moved to AR where he graduated from Siloam Springs High School in 1946. After high school **Gene** served in the Air Force as a radio operator. He was based in Japan and had duties throughout the western Pacific region. He started college in 1949 under the GI Bill. He met **Ann Mason** during his freshman year. They were married June 1, 1950. **Gene** graduated in 1953 from the University of Arkansas with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering. He began working for SCS as an Area Engineer in Erie and Iola, KS, in 1953. In 1960 he became watershed planning engineer at Salina, KS, and in 1961 he accepted the job of Project Engineer for Watersheds in Atchison and Sedan, KS. In 1966 he went to Washington, DC, as a recreation specialist for the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. From that job he accepted the position of Assistant State Engineer with SCS at Champaign, IL; from 1970 through 1972 he was ASTC for Watersheds at Champaign. In 1972 he took the job of watershed planning engineer at SCS Headquarters. From 1974 until he retired in 1983, **Gene** served as National Agricultural Engineer. He retired from SCS on July 30, 1983. Following retirement from Federal service, **Gene** continued to devote his talents to soil and water conservation issues around the country and the world. He worked on conservation projects and plans for Lesotho and Zambia in Africa and Saint Kitts in the Leeward Islands. He worked as Business Manager/Treasurer for Baptist Missions in Macau. And, for 26 years he prepared income tax returns --- first for H and R Block then for AARP as a volunteer. **Gene** also served in the US Air Force Reserve as a civil engineer; he retired July 31, 1977, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

**Gene & Ann** have four children (one son and three daughters), 12 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. They have enjoyed their travels and worldwide experiences and are currently enjoying retirement in Fort Myers, FL.

## WISCONSIN

Jim Enlow, ARCSE Representative  
Email: ljenlow@att.net

Dave Omernik's mother passed away on Sept. 24, 2011.  
Dave was a former NRCS Area Soil Scientist.

It's that time of year to schedule 2012 retiree luncheons. The dates will be **February 9, April 12, June 14, August 9, and October 11**. Wisconsin retirees: If you would be willing to be a host this year, it would most appreciated. Send me an email. As far as I know, all the dates are open at this time.

Thanks to those who hosted luncheons in 2011. We had some great luncheons and the fellowship was outstanding. Let's do it again in 2012. We welcome all retirees who may be passing through our great State.

## DIRECTORY CHANGE

New email address:  
Dick Kover - dkrhs53@comcast.net

## ANNUAL REPORT ON FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

### MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARCSE

ARCSE is fortunate to have a membership that continues to make generous contributions to support our operations. During our last fiscal year that ended June 30, individual contributions totaled \$1,229, the largest annual total over the last 10 years. The Board offers a big thank you to each of the 98 members who made a contribution.

A review of the ARCSE records from FY 2002 through FY 2011 shows \$10,407 in contributions having been made by 402 different members. We can all be thankful for so many generous members that willingly contribute additional financial resources to support ARCSE. Cumulative individual contributions during that time have ranged from \$1.00 to a high of \$461, with 16 members contributing \$100 or more and 128 contributing \$25 or more.

The Internal Revenue Service has determined that ARCSE is a 503(c)(4) organization. Unfortunately, contributions to 503(c)(4) organizations are not tax deductible by donors.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT Fiscal Year 2011

No. of members – 1131  
Of these 329 are lifetime members

50 new members in FY11  
Of these 28 were complimentary

25 complimentary members in FY10 joined in FY11.

54 members dropped at the cut-off on May 1, 2011  
Includes 8 FY10 complimentary

453 senior conservationists

## BUDGET REPORT - FISCAL YEAR 2011 (July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011)

Income	FY11 Actual
Annual Mtg-MO	400
Dues	15,624*
Interest Income	1,258
Contributions	1,229
Reserve Funds	2,180
Total	20,691

Expenses	
Administration	2,992
Annual Mtg-MO	4,327
Newsletter	12,432
WebPage	600
Awards	106
Membership	95**
Bank Charges	44
Investment Charge	95
Total	20,691

\* Includes \$3300 in Lifetime Dues for 23 lifetime memberships; 710 members currently pay dues on an annual basis accounting for approximately \$12,700.

\*\* Memberships in CCC Legacy and National Watershed Coalition

## ARCSE ASSETS

As of 07/03/2011  
(Includes unrealized gains)

### Liquid Assets

Total Bank Accounts (Savings and Checking) \$15,932.63

### Investment Accounts

Three Certificates of Deposit Totaling 24,938.55

OVERALL TOTAL Assets **\$40,871.18\*\***

OVERALL TOTAL—(07/08/2010) 43,298.50

NET CHANGE - 2,427.32\*\*

\* This level of total assets is needed to meet future amortized lifetime membership expenses.

\*\* Total assets have decreased seven of the last eight years.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Life member David Perry Doss** (71) of Conroe, TX passed away on June 18, 2011. He graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Agricultural Engineering. He was employed by the USDA NRCS where he served 43 years of employment in various locations including: AL, GA, DC, and MD. Most recently, **David** was the state conservationist in MD. He is survived by his loving wife of 50 years, **Sue Doss** of Conroe, TX; son, **Gregory Doss** of San Diego, CA; daughter, **Starla (Steve) Shinn**; and one grandson. The family request donations be made in memory of David to Conroe Church of Christ, "Share the Vision Fund" or to the Youth Program at Conroe Church of Christ, 1860 Longmire Road, Conroe, TX.

**Life member Ernest Lee Moody** (73) of Temple Hills, MD, passed away on April 3, 2011. He was a graduate of Virginia State University (Class of '59). **Ernest** was employed by the USDA as a district soil conservationist.

**Arche Elton Lieb** (86), after a courageous and determined battle to overcome injuries suffered in a fall, passed away on Aug. 13, 2011. **Arche** is survived by his wife of 63 years, **Virginia**, and son **John (Manda) Charles Lieb**. He was a graduate of Texas A&M University and was an employee of USDA SCS in Aspermont and Knox City, TX, retiring in 1980. He served his country in the U.S. Army Air Corps as a pilot from 1943 to 1946 and the U.S. Army Air Corps Reserve for 20 years, retiring as a Captain.

**Billy Joe Hinton** (80) passed away on Aug. 20, 2011. **Billy** served a tour of duty in Alaska as a 1st Lt. in the US Air Force. He worked for the SCS in TX for 31 years, stationed at Alvin, Levelland, Post, Stephenville, and Austin.

**Jerry Lee Wenmohs** (68) of Round Mountain, TX, passed away Aug. 13, 2011. **Jerry** attended Texas A&M University and graduated with an Agriculture Degree from Tarleton State University in 1968. Following graduation from college, **Jerry** went to work for the USDA SCS (now the NRCS) in Victoria, TX. He later worked for the same agency in San Antonio, El Paso, Sanderson, Muleshoe, and Lampasas. After 37 years of service, **Jerry** retired in 2005 and moved to the family ranch.

**Larry Mills** (67) passed away on Sept. 17, 2011 after a long battle with cancer. **Larry** grew up in Bozeman, MT and graduated from Montana State University with an accounting degree. **Larry** worked for the USDA NRCS in MT, CA, and DC. He is survived by his wife, **Jo**, daughter, **Terri**, of West Sacramento, and son **Scott** of Denver.

**Donald Morris "Donnie" Smith, Sr.** (76) passed away on Sept. 3, 2011. **Donnie** was born in Wayne County, NC where he lived his entire life. He began working at the age of 18 with the SCS as Soil Conservation Technician in Goldsboro and later transferred to Kinston. After retirement from NRCS he was employed by the Greene Soil and Water Conservation District. His service as a conservation technician totaled over 58 years. **Donnie** is survived by his wife of 58 years, **Mabel "Bootsie" B. Smith**; his son, **Morris (Lynn) Smith** of Florence, SC; his daughters, **Teresa S. (Mike) Peele** of Goldsboro, NC, **Donna S. (Stan) Smith** of Goldsboro, NC, and **Sonja S. (Steve) Ginn** of Snow Hill, NC; and nine grandchildren.

**Walter Donald Parks**, (92) of Anna, IL passed away on Oct. 6, 2011. He graduated from the University of Illinois and was one of five founders of Nabor House Fraternity. In World War II he served three years with the U.S. Army in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, where he received the Bronze Star and the Oak Leaf Medal from the British Army. Both medals were for activity with Engineer Intelligence in support of combat operations. **Donald** was a soil scientist with the USDA SCS for 25 years and was author of Soil Survey Reports covering the five southernmost IL counties. He also worked with Southern Seven Health Department for 17 years. He is survived by his wife, and by four children, five grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

**Bert E. Booth** (85) of Temple, TX passed away on Sept. 15, 2011. He was a veteran of the U. S. Army Air Force during WWII. While serving in Italy he attended the University of Florence. He graduated from Texas A&M in 1950 with a degree in agricultural engineering. He was a registered professional engineer. He was an SCS project construction engineer and retired as head of the watershed office in Temple. Survivors include his wife of 58 years, **Lois M. Booth**; one son, **John (Cindy) Booth** of Giddings; two daughters, **Suzanne (Jay) Copeland** of Temple and **Lynelle (Brian) Evans** of Austin; and eight grandchildren. Memorial donations may be made to Churches Touching Lives for Christ, P. O. Box 4482, Temple, TX 76505.

**James Edward "Jim" Brooks** (80) of Russellville, AR passed away on Aug. 6, 2011. **Jim** served admirably in the United States Air Force, was involved in the Korean conflict and was honorably discharged in 1952. After graduation from the University of Alabama in 1957, **Jim** went to work for the USDA SCS. He retired from the Fort Worth office as the Administrative Officer and moved to Russellville in 1986. He was a true bible scholar, enjoying reading and talking about biblical truths. He was preceded in death by his first wife, **Janice Gleason Brooks**. Survivors include his adoring wife, **Martha Wilson Brooks** of Russellville; three daughters, **Jeannie (Wayne) Marsh** of Little Rock, **Judy Neagles** and **Joan Hashbarger**, both of Russellville; three step-sons, **Steve and Rhett Wilson**, both of Little Rock and **Richard Wilson** of Russellville; 12 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Arkansas Hospice, 2405 East Parkway, Suite 3, Russellville, AR 72802.

**ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED  
CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
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Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7454**

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**IN MEMORIAM** (CONTINUED)

**Arnold Edgar Watson** (74), widower of **Patricia Kelley Watson**, of Lexington, KY passed away Aug. 30, 2011. He was a 1959 graduate of the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture. He was an Army Veteran and retired from the SCS. He is survived by daughter, **Kelley Watson (David) Zatorski** of St. Louis, MO; and two grandchildren. Memorials may be made to The American Parkinson Association: 135 Parkinson Ave. Staten Island, NY 10305 or St. John's Mercy Foundation: Hospice Memorial Fund 615 S. New Ballas Road St. Louis, MO 63141.

**Honorary Senior Conservationist Edwin O. "Ed" Nurmi** (98) passed away Oct. 7, 2011, in Mesa, AZ. Both of **Ed's** parents immigrated from Finland early in the 1900s and **Ed's** first language was Finnish, in which he was fluent until death. **Ed** held a degree in agronomy from the University of Idaho, where he graduated in 1936. After graduation, he began his career with the SCS in Coeur d'Alene, ID, before moving to Sandpoint, ID, to become the first district conservationist in Bonner County. Before retiring in 1968, he was the manager of the Plant Materials Center in Pullman, WA. He is survived by his stepson, **James (Janice) Abbott** of Alamogordo, NM. He has two grandsons and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife, **Grace**, who died in 1950; and his second wife, **Ruth**, who died in 1990. Memorial donations in **Ed's** name may be made to Shriners International, 855 Main St., Lewiston, ID 83501 and University of Idaho Foundation, Moscow, Idaho 83844.

**Honorary Senior Conservationist Orvil W. Godman** (94) of San Diego, CA passed away on Dec. 12, 2010. He graduated in 1940 with a BS in Agriculture. **Orvil** served in the United States Army Air Forces during WWII, and then worked for the USDA SCS in Leeds and Dickinson, ND until 1967. He retired in 1973 as the Assistant State Conservationist. He next entered foreign service as an agriculture consultant in Tunisia and Morocco with the Agency for International Development and the State Department. He and his wife **Doris** retired in 1987 to San Diego.

**Lawrence E. Robins** (83) passed away on Sept. 13, 2011. He retired from the USDA SCS in 1983 as civil engineer at the Topeka Area Office.

**Minnie M. Brune** of Bucklin, KS passed away on Sept. 24, 2011. She was predeceased by her husband, **Evain E. Brune**, a retired SCS district conservationist in KS.

**Dennis R. Smetana** (68) of Roundup, MT passed away on Aug. 24, 2011 of an apparent heart attack. **Dennis** retired in 1996 from the USDA NRCS as an Area Soil Specialist on the State Soil Staff in MT. He is survived by his wife **Jean** of Roundup, MT; sons, **Rob Wolff (Deanna)** of Roundup, MT, and **Lane Wolff (Monica)** of Billings; and three grandchildren.

**Dorothy Frances Moulton Curtis** (86) passed away on Oct. 18, 2011. She is survived by her husband of 61 years, **Tom**, who retired from the SCS in 1986 as an engineer at the West National Technical Center. Also surviving are children, **Stan**, **Louise (Michael) Magarrell** and **Ann (P.J.) Hunt**; and daughter-in-law, **Irene**. Preceding her in death were son **Guy Curtis** of Potlatch, ID, and daughter-in-law **Cody Curtis** of Portland.