

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees Newsletter

October 2016

The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on October 28, 2016. Forty nine people were in attendance. They were: **Ed Abernathy, David Ankle, Mary and Mike Barrick and guest Don Vannoy, Don Bartolina, Lester Brockmann, Larry Caldwell, Steve Chessmore, Helen and Everett Cole, Debbie and Mark Conkling, Duane Crider, Wayne Fjeseth, Fred Fortney, Randy Freeland, Roberta and Jim Frie, Harry Fritzler, Chuck Grimes, Sandy Hafner, Dianne and Odos Henson, Sandra and Terry Hough, Bill Johnson, Virginia and Ott Johnson, Otho Lamar, Jim McCampbell, Minnie Carol and Gordon Moebius, Eunice and Glen Mullen and daughter Marilyn Shipman, Joy and John Pewthers, Gayland Sandy, Rod Shaw, Chris Shepherd, Terry and Jim Smith, Jane and Norm Smola, Gene Spurlock, Carolyn and Bob Webb, and Jamey Wood.**

President **Gordon Moebius** called the meeting to order. **Rebecca Blan** continues to need prayers and is recovering from a stroke. **Bettie Todd** recently underwent knee replacement surgery. She is doing well but is not yet cleared to travel. **Fred Fortney** provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, President **Gordon Moebius** again called the meeting to order. First time attendees introduced themselves: **Mark Conkling** retired as Resource Specialist from the Clinton Technical Office approximately a year ago. His wife **Debbie** accompanied him to the meeting. He purchased his family farm (Hill Top Farm) at Thomas and is currently growing sesame. He is putting the conservation practices on the land and focusing on soil health improvement which he worked with during his tenure with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He and **Debbie** reside in Clinton. **Ott and Virginia Johnson** currently reside in Stillwater. He started his career in Hughes and Pittsburg counties but worked in various states during his career as a geologist. He was in the first class to graduate from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater (formerly Oklahoma A&M). He still writes a weekly Opinion Column for the Stillwater NewsPress. He has been doing that for nearly 6 years. Others in attendance introduced themselves and their spouse or guest if in attendance.



Mark and Debbie Conkling

Sandra Hough said 311 notices were mailed, 9 returned and 3 re-mailed. Correct addresses are needed for **Otis Bennett, Carl (Earl) Webb, Dennis Stipe, Greg Kindell, Kay Gafford, and Robert Graves.**

The retirees website has been helpful in our effort to keep retirees informed. **Randy** announced that our group now has a new website www.joepad.com. His brother, **Joe Freeland**, has graciously agreed to keep it updated for us. It will continue to have pictures, minutes, and attendees from each of our meetings.

Brent Reavis is the only retiree since our last meeting. He was the Resource Specialist at the McAlester Technical Service Office. He previously was the DC at Holdenville. **Brent** is currently teaching AG and science in Holdenville.

Fred Fortney read a list of retiree deaths since April 2016: They were: former Chief **Pearlie S. Reed**, 4/12/16, Arkansas; **Fred A. Perryman**, 89, DC Clinton FO, retired in 1991, 7/10/16; **Ruel Bain**, 85, DC and Soil Scientist, Antlers, retired in 1994 as Area Soil Scientist at McAlester, 8/10/16; **Stacy Henslee Mathis**, 54, DC, Atoka, 10/10/16; **Jackie Henslee**, Konawa 3/2014 (just learned of this death, father of **Stacy**); **Jerry Walker**, 68, retired DC, Miami, 26 yrs service, 10/16/16; and **Nelson Mueller**, 70, retired DC, Sulphur, 10/22/16, received notice of his death during the meeting. A moment of silence was observed and **Fred Fortney** offered a prayer.

Attendees were asked fill out a slip of paper telling about their retirement years. Following are those submitted.



Everett and Helen Cole

Jim Frie and **Roberta** have been volunteering at the Stillwater Medical Center for the past eight years. They also stay busy with six great grandchildren. They have a fifth-wheel travel trailer that they keep at Lake Carl Blackwell and have belonged to a recreational club for the past 25 years. They attend most Oklahoma State University athletic events.



Roberta and Jim Frie

Bill Johnson is very active with a children's home called Hope Harbor. He serves as president of the foundation board and also works in the home's thrift store as a volunteer. **Gene Spurlock** is the Chairman of the Deacons at his church in Chelsea, Oklahoma. He manages 200 acres with a cow herd of about 40 head. He also does land surveying. **Carolyn Webb** and her husband **Bob** run 5 K races in Bristow and Phoenix. They volunteer with the American Red Cross and Bristow Hospital. **Carolyn** also is a tutor for 3 2nd grade students and **Bob** is on the local Conservation District Board.



Bill Johnson and Gene Spurlock

Duane Crider said he and **Jan** have become "Cruisers". Over the past two years they have been to Alaska, the Northeast out of New York to Maine and Canada. This year they went to the Caribbean and loved them all. **Larry and Carolyn Caldwell** enjoyed a three week trip to Ireland and England. They traced their genealogy, did sightseeing, and eating a lot of good food! They survived driving on the left side of the road and going the wrong way on the goofy roundabouts. **Larry** still works part time for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on watershed issues including implementation of Dam Watch, a web based application to monitor 12,000 watershed dams in 47 states.

Don Bartolina retired from NRCS in 2001, served as Executive Director for OACD for three years, and works part time for the Oklahoma County Conservation District since 2004. He still coordinates the National Land & Range Judging Contest. He and **Darlene** enjoy traveling, grand children and great grand children. **Lester Brockmann** says "every day is Saturday" for him. But "sometimes he works, and sometimes he travels".



Lester Brockman

Chuck Grimes only worked for SCS for a few years but has maintained a relationship with county office staffs for years. He builds Grasslander Seeders and harvests several varieties of seed. He cross breeds Longhorn cows to Red Angus Composite bulls. He has traveled with family to Cozumel and to Colorado fly fishing with son and 4 grandsons. Attending OSU sporting events and volunteering for the Payne County Flood Plain Management Board keep **Norm Smola** busy.



Chuck Grimes and David Ankle



Norm Smola and Odos Henson

Mike Barrick has worked as a volunteer with the Red Cross for 20 years and as a volunteer with the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Team for 23 years. (Editor's Note: The man knows how to run a chain saw!) **Jim Smith** volunteers with Sportsman's Hunt Club as the Hunt Club Chairman and Board Member. He and his wife attend OSU Football and Basketball Games. They travel some but mostly he stays around the house to do honey do's.



Jamey Wood and Chris Shepherd

For our program, **Gordon Moebius** presented a slide program on his activities since his retirement. He has established a company GEM Services LLC. His company does soil sampling and investigations for landowners interested in soil farming. He outlined the various steps which must be taken before any material can be put on land which is then incorporated into the land.

The Oklahoma Conservation Museum group held an organizational meeting on October 6, 2016, in Oklahoma City. No officers were elected. In addition to **Tom Lucas**, there were eight individuals in attendance. Another meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 5, 2016, at the Oklahoma Conservation Commission Board Room at the State Department of Agriculture in Oklahoma City. Everyone is asked to talk to others about artifacts that might be available for loan or donation once the museum is established. If anyone is interested in serving on the board of directors for this effort, please contact **Tom Lucas**, 580.727.4397 or tom.lucas717@gmail.com .

The next retirees meeting is scheduled for **Friday, April 28, 2017**, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. The group was reminded that Golden Corral now opens at 10:00AM so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30AM. Put it on your calendar now! Everyone is welcome and no reservations are required.