

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees Newsletter October 2022

The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on October 28, 2022. Thirty-three people were in attendance. They were: **Laurie Bogle and her daughter Krishell Boerngen, Larry Caldwell, Steve Chessmore, Les and Barbara Conner, Fred Fortney, Dennis and Brenda Fowler, Wayne Fjeseth, Randy and Bonnie Freeland, Harry Fritzler, Sandra and Terry Hough, Terrell Howard, David Hungerford, Bill Johnson, Nick Lambeth, George Moreland and guest Betty Gilbert, Kevin and Cheri Norton, John Pewthers and guest Eyvonne Hart, Ben Pollard, Brent Reavis, Dan Runnels, J. Kirk Schreiner, Jim and Terry Smith, Ed Stinchcomb, and Darol Wilson.**

President **Steve Chessmore** called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone, especially several that had never attended before. **Fred Fortney** provided a blessing and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.



President Steve Chessmore addressing the group.

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and their spouse or guest and provide a brief summary of their career or other information they would like to share. We were very happy to have several attending for the first time. They included: **Terrell Howard** who retired in 2019 from Arnett; **Brent Reavis** who retired from Holdenville in 2016; **Dennis Fowler** who retired from Chandler in 2021 and **Kirk Schreiner** who retired from Lawton in 2017.

Ed Stinchcomb was cleaning out closets and moving to a new home and found 5 “brand new” SCS hats. He conducted a drawing and 5 lucky winners went away with an SCS “never before worn” cap. **Darol Wilson, Terrell Howard, Brent Reavis, George Moreland, and Larry Caldwell** were the lucky winners.

Sandra Hough read the minutes of the April 2022 meeting and provided the treasurer’s report. There were 82 notices mailed and only one returned for incorrect address. Retirees should email **Randy Freeland** randy.freeland@suddenlink.net to request an email meeting notice in lieu of a mailed meeting notice and to report a change in mailing address or email address. Randy currently has 161 members on his SCS/NRCS Retiree’s email group.

After our April Meeting and the Newsletter was sent out, we got a few responses from those not able to join us. Here are a few: Hi Randy: I just read the minutes of the last meeting in April. Sounds like a good one. Wish I'd been there!! I am currently the secretary for the Friends of the Yale Public Library Association (FYPLA) and stay active with fundraisers and other activities we do for the library. I'm also active with my church. We have one grandson, Sammy, who's 9. Also, 2 grand dogs, Beasley and Frasier, who are much more spoiled than Sammy! I'm in my 8th year of remission from Stage IV Breast Cancer, so am very thankful for this blessing from God! I'm hoping to make it to one of the meetings in the near future. Take care, **Becka Redding**

And this one from **Carolyn Webb**: It is wonderful to hear from all these friends through the newsletter. Did another 5K in May. Of course, Bob & I both got medals and ribbons in our age division. Who else 82 and 83 are going to complete! Not completely over the Covid I got in Jan. Although we had all our shots. But I'm better.

Also got a response from **David Buland** about **Ted and Linda Kuntz**. I feel sure Ted would be comfortable with me sharing information about his and Linda's health and their contact information. Here is what **David** had to say: Hello Randy, thanks for the Oklahoma section article in the last ARCSE newsletter. Attached is Ted Kuntz's updated contact information. He called me last night, after being out of touch for months. In mid-March, Ted had a blood disorder that put him in a nine-day coma and a long hospital stay. It also caused some memory issues, both short-term and long-term. While Ted was in the hospital, they sold the house and cars. Ted is slowly recovering, and is trying to get back in touch with friends. Please pass this information along to his friends.

Ted and Linda are currently in
Apt 202, Golden Oaks Apartments
5505 West 19th Av.
Stillwater, OK 74074

ted@thekuntzs.com

Ted's phone number : (919) 323-6274
Linda's phone number: (919) 323-6273

Sincerely,
David Buland

Forms were passed around for retirees to provide their retirement activities (i.e., volunteer work, travel, part-time work, activities, etc.) This information is used for the National and Oklahoma Retired SCS/NRCS Employees Association newsletters. Here are a few received at this meeting:



Group attending meeting in Oklahoma City

Les and Barbara Conner have been assisting the Oklahoma Baptist Convention with disaster relief over the past couple of years. They have assisted with flooding, hurricanes, and tornado damage in multiple states including Louisiana, Missouri, Florida as well as Oklahoma. They do both preparing meals as well as clean up. **Les** also assists at the OSU Botanic Garden. **Fred Fortney** serves as Associate District Director of the Payne County Conservation District. His latest challenge is helping **Gayle** with her struggles with breast cancer and the side effects of that treatment. **Lauri Bogle** is traveling and trying to see as many of the National Parks as possible. **J. Kirk Schreiner** owns and operates a large ranch and serves as the Chairman of Tillman County Conservation District. He and his wife, **Carisas**, have one son that is a Senior at Frederick High School. He retired in June 2017 after working 36 years. He was the District Conservationist at Dewey, Sayre, and Lawton Field Offices. **Brent Reavis** worked 35 years spending most of his time at the Holdenville Field Office. He retired as the Zone Resource Specialist at the McAlester Technical Service Office. After retiring he started teaching agriculture at Holdenville High School for 5 years retiring again in May 2021. He now substitute teaches in area schools. He and his wife "**Betty**" love to travel with their travel trailer. They have been to Disney World, Alaska, and numerous other destinations. He has also taken up fly fishing and plans to travel the U.S. doing that. They have 5 grandkids and 2 more on the way. **Bill Johnson** shared that he enjoyed the Friday luncheon meeting. There were only 8 people there that he knew from his SCS service, retiring in 1989 and being retired more years than he worked. **Bill** also meant to tell the group how pleased he is that his Grandson, Bryce, with a degree in Range Management, has been hired by NRCS at the GS-7 level and reports to Hollis on Nov. 20th.

A few comments were received in response to the email announcing the October 28, 2022, meeting. **Phil Perryman** was taking his daughter to Oklahoma City for foot surgery. **Carolyn Webb** said they had kids visiting from California but to be sure and tell everyone "Hello". **Fredia and Stan Rice** were sad to miss the meeting but would drown their sorrows with a trip to Utah to see some of the National Parks. **Winnie Jacques** was unable to join us but just recently celebrated her 95th birthday!!! Due to the loss of a sister, **Don Bartolina** had to miss our meeting this time.



Please feel free to send something similar to those above that can be used in the April 2023 Newsletter. Do it now before you forget! Send it to: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net

Many retirees have expressed their appreciation for the information presented on the website www.joepad.com. When they are not able to attend the meetings, the website provides pictures, list of attendees, etc. **Joe Freeland**, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Hough read the list of those retiring since April 2022: **Rick Lane**, Planning Engineer, State Office, Stillwater, 6/3/2022 42 years service; **Gary O'Neill**, State Conservationist, State Office, Stillwater, 9/1/2022, 39+ years service, 9+ years in Oklahoma; **Robert Toole**, Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program Director, former OCC & NRCS, 8/31/2022, 47 years service; **Carl Woods**, Soil Scientist, McAlester & Pauls Valley, 9/30/2022; **Steve Barner**, WRP Specialist, Stillwater SO, headquartered in McAlester, 9/23/2022; **Betty Bone**, Love County Conservation District, formerly SCS/District Secretary, 6/2022; **Don Sternitzke**, Water Management Specialist, 5/25/2022.

She also read the list of known retirees who have passed since April 2022: **Pat Hodges**, CET, Chickasha WS, 5/17/2022, 90 years old, retired mid 1980's; **Bill Harney**, SC, Perry, 6/21/2022, 83 years old, worked in Atoka, Cherokee, Enid, Alva, Perry, Medford, Newkirk & Tahlequah, retired in 2004 with 42 years service; **Bob Sorrels**, Design Engineer, Stillwater SO, died in July 2022, retired May 2001; **Alvie Trissell**, DC, Cherokee, 8/25/2022, 87 years old, 36 years service; **Gayland Sandy**, Watersheds, Perry, 8/25/2022, 85 years old, 30 years service; **Bettie Todd**, State Administrative Officer, Stillwater SO, 9/10/2022, 81 years old, retired in 1994 with 33 years service, worked for 6 federal agencies; **Roy Cook**, SCT, Buffalo, 9/20/22, 73 years old, retired 11/30/2019 with 12 years service.

Ben Pollard recently made a presentation to new NRCS employees. There were 70+ employees with 3 years or less service of the 240 employees in Oklahoma. He provided a 2-hour orientation on the history. **Larry Caldwell** provided information on the watershed program in the state.

Ben Pollard serves on the nine-person board of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS). There are three retired NRCS employees who are members of the nine-person board: **Joe Freeland**, **Stan Rice**, and **Larry Caldwell**. The oral histories which were gathered can be

accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/digital/>. Several conservationists who have provided oral histories are now deceased emphasizing the need to obtain as many as possible before it is too late. In partnership with the Oklahoma Historical Society, a conservation history photo collection has been established on the Gateway to Oklahoma History website that is managed by the Oklahoma Historical Society. The collection is made up of black and white conservation photos primarily from the 1930s through the 1960s. Photos are being provided by Conservation Districts and NRCS. The photos are digitized and labeled and posted to the website. The original photos are permanently archived at the Oklahoma History Center. To date over 1,200 photos have been digitized. The photos may be accessed at: <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>. There are another 10,000 photos being processed with the goal of having 20,000 photos in the collection by 2023. In an effort to better promote Oklahoma's conservation history and serve the Society's membership, a website was established. The website can be accessed at: <https://www.oklahomaconservationhistory.org>.

Ben Pollard made available 2023 Membership forms for those interested in becoming members or renewing their memberships. Memberships for 2023 with the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society are being accepted in the following categories: General (\$25), Family (\$40), Organization (\$50), Sustaining (\$100), Corporate: Bronze \$500 Silver \$750 Gold \$1000. Checks should be made payable to: OCHS, 3312 Cypress Mill Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074. The SCS/NRCS Retiree group became members in October 2018 and renewed their membership at the April 2022 meeting.



Secretary Sandra Hough and rest of group

An election of officers for the Oklahoma SCS-NRCS Retired Employees will be held in April 2023. Officers serve a period of two years and will assume their duties in October 2023. **Kirk Schreiner** has agreed to serve as President and **Ed Stinchcomb** has agreed to serve as Vice-President. **Sandra Hough** will continue to serve as Secretary-Treasurer unless someone would like to assume those duties. She has served in that capacity since 2008.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 28, 2023, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30 AM so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30 AM.