

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees Newsletter

April 2024

The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on April 26, 2024. Twenty-three people were in attendance. They were: **Laurie Bogle, Larry Caldwell, Larry Coppock, Fred Fortney, Brenda and Dennis Fowler, Bonnie and Randy Freeland, Shelley and David Hungerford, Steve Kelley, Nick Lambeth, George Moreland and guest Betty Gilbert, Cheri and Kevin Norton, Phil Perryman, Brent Reavis, Stan Rice, Greg Ritzman, Dan Runnels, J. Kirk Schreiner, and Ed Stinchcomb.**

President **Kirk Schreiner** called the meeting to order. President Schreiner welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Fred Fortney** provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Following the meal, President Schreiner again called the meeting to order. Our only first time attendee was **Steve Kelley**. Steve retired in 2018 after 42 years of service. Started as a student trainee in 1976 and after graduation spent time as a soil con in Clinton, Mountain View, and Claremore. First DC job was Blackwell for a short time and back to Mountain View in 1980 as the DC and was there for 10 years and then to Clinton in 1990 until retirement. Currently working ACES in Clinton a few days a week. They live on their farm 20 miles NW of Clinton and have a small cow calf operation. They have 5 grandkids that they love to spend time with from ages 10 to 22. As far as activities, Steve is a diehard quail and pheasant hunter and loves to train and work dogs. He enjoys working with cattle and fixing stuff on the farm. In his spare time, he does quite a bit of fishing, especially when the kids are out. Steve and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last month and he stated “we have a good life”. His contact information is: 22128 East 900 Road, Arapaho, Ok 73620, email: P.S.Kelle@gmail.com and Phone: 580-819-0812.



Dan Runnels and Steve Kelley

In the absence of long time Secretary/Treasurer **Sandra Hough** (absent due to family needs), **Kirk** read the list of those retiring since October 2023: **Charlie Colvin**, Resource Engineer, Clinton TSO, 11/30/2023; **D'Ann Peterson**, Resource Conservationist, Guthrie, 12/30/2023; **Clay Horton**, Ada, 4/19/2024.

Kirk also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2023: **Clifford Williams**, 90, Agronomist, never worked in Oklahoma but was born in Berlin, OK, Roger Mills County, graduated from Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) worked in several states & retired to Sayre, OK. Attended some retiree meetings, passed 8/10/2023; **Joann Leaverton**, 91, widow of Erwin Leaverton, Watershed Planning Staff, Chickasha, 12/12/2023; **Janice Haggard**, 76, wife of retiree David Haggard, passed on 12/13/2023; **J. C. Spitzer**, 91, worked in Guymon, Chandler, Holdenville, Ada, Tahlequah, & Talihina, left Oklahoma in 1976 to serve as the State Agronomist in Pennsylvania, retired to Sayre, OK, passed 1/18/24; **Bob Reed**, 94, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Alva, 32 years service, passed 2/20/24; **John Pewthers**, 87, retired DC, Waurika, 34 years service, passed 3/1/24; **Tony Boeckman**, 78, retired DC, Medford, 34 years service, passed 1/27/24; **Brad Elder**, 74, former DC, Hinton, retired as Soil Conservationist in Anadarko, 40+ years service, retired in 2011, passed 2/5/24; **Winston Hook**, 65, retired Soil Conservation Technician, Madill, medically retired in 2014 after 17 years with NRCS, passed 3/9/24.

David Hungerford led a prayer in memory of our departed former employees and comrades.

Several other retirees were mentioned that were dealing with health issues and not able to attend our meeting. Those were: **Helen Cole** (wife of Everett Cole), **Earl Weisner**, **Ed Kephart**, **Duane Crider**, **Jimmy and JoAnn Hill**, and **Robert Maples**.

Oklahoma Retirees have a website with a lot of information about this meeting and those from the past. Just log in to www.joepad.com to see minutes, newsletters, attendees, and pictures from the meetings. **Joey Freeland**, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

We use dues (\$10 per year) to cover expenses of the meetings including cost of printing meeting notices, postage and name tags. The group decided to suspend dues in 2024 having a sufficient balance to cover expenses we have.



Shelley Hungerford, Stan Rice, Brent Reavis, and David Hungerford

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. He currently has 168 on his email group which cuts our postage expenses by quite a bit. Let him know if you want to be on that list for email only.

Stan Rice and **Larry Caldwell** provided handouts and shared quite a bit of information about the activities of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS) in its seventh year of operation. Fifty conservation oral histories have been completed and are available on the OSU Library's website. They noted that several who participated in an oral history interview have since passed, pressing the point of how important this activity is. Work is nearing completion with the Oklahoma Historical Society on a conservation photo collection available to the public on the OHS Gateway to Oklahoma History website. There will be 12 to 15 thousand photos in the collection when completed. Oral histories which were gathered can be accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/our-collections/digital/>. The photos may be accessed at: <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>. And the website can be accessed at: <https://www.oklahomaconservationhistory.org>. A comment made by one member attending was, "Be sure you have plenty of time before you click on one of the links for the oral history interviews or to look at pictures, because you can spend hours on these websites".

President Schreiner challenged each retiree to contact one or more retirees before the next meeting and encourage them to attend our semi-annual meeting in October. There may be retirees who would like to attend but are not able to bring themselves. Offering to provide them transportation, might further encourage their attendance.

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:

Greg Ritzman does ACES and other volunteer work for the NRCS Office in Vinita. He said he "learned fishing" for the 1st time this month. And has started working part time for Beacon Environmental Consulting on OERB Projects and really likes what he is doing. Also providing NRCS assistance through the ACES Program is **Larry Coppock**. He said he has traveled to see the eclipse(s) – 2 in the past year and he is learning the sport of soccer since his grandson is now playing. He and wife (**Kathy**) take short trips in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. **George Moreland** is mostly farming and ranching but according to his friend, **Betty Gilbert**, he is also quite a dancer.



Greg Ritzman and Larry Coppock

Laurie Bogle has a goal of visiting as many National Parks as possible. She recently saw several in Texas and Savannah Georgia. She has also quickly become one of our most “regular meeting” attendees. Keep it up Laurie. **Dan Runnels** and wife (**Sharon**) are still living at Taste of Heaven Farm raising chickens and mowing pastures. They very much enjoy their country home and traveling some around the country. **David** and **Shelley Hungerford** enjoying their retirement and staying busy with various activities. David plays pickleball, golf, and enjoys swimming. Shelley volunteers at Stillwater Medical Center and enjoys restoring furniture. They also spend time with kids and grandkids in the Oklahoma City Area and “somehow” find time to attend OSU sporting events.



George Moreland, Betty Gilbert, and Laurie Bogle

Phil Perryman makes several grandkid's ball games and stays in touch with friend, retirees, and family and helps with their needs. (Editor's Note: This guy has a real heart for following up with those suffering with health needs or the loss of a loved one). Other than being our current SCS/NRCS Retirees President, **J. Kirk Schreiner** ranches with his wife, **Carisa**, and works as a real estate agent working for Arrowhead Land Company.

And **Larry Caldwell** stays busy with lots of NRCS watershed activities (Editor's Note: He doesn't know the meaning of the word "retired"). Larry did give a good report on a Watershed Dedication.

On April 23rd, the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society and Washita County Conservation District celebrated the 75th Anniversary of Cloud Creek Dam Number 1, **the first watershed dam in the nation**. **Congressman Frank Lucas** provided excellent comments on the value of the Watershed Program and how it changed Oklahoma and the Nation. The original dedication was held July 8, 1948. **Hugh Hammond Bennett** gave the keynote address on that date. The 50th Anniversary Celebration was the beginning of Watershed Rehabilitation movement with a Field Hearing by Congressman Lucas and the Ag Committee.

A few emails were received from those who couldn't attend our meeting but wanted you to know how they were doing. They were:

From **Terri Tully**: I wanted to let everyone know I have moved. It was time to be closer to kids, and two of my four, live in Conway, Arkansas, so that's where I went! It just so happens to be where the grands are too! I've put up my (OSU) 'pistols firing', and am learning to 'call in the (University of Arkansas) Hogs'!! Ha! Not really, I'll ALWAYS bleed Orange!

I found a wonderful lakefront home on Beaverfork Lake! An open invitation to anyone who wants to come and enjoy lake stuff...you know, swim, boat, fish, ski, sun, and it's always 5:00 somewhere! Ha! My Steve would have loved this place! I've purchased my Lifetime Arkansas Fishing License and plan to put it to use this summer! I love the lake and watching the birds and

wildlife. It brings me great peace. Best regards to all my fellow retirees! Below is my new address. Phone and email remain the same! I will be back and forth often, as I have family and many friends there!

Terri Tully
8 Eagle Shore Drive
Conway, AR 72032
405-880-6327
territully56@gmail.com



Kevin Norton, Larry Caldwell, and Fred Fortney

From **Ron Hilliard**: This year began with **Edith** and I traveling on News Years Day to cruise Southeast Asia. We began our trip in Singapore then cruised to Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and back to Singapore where we stayed 3 additional days, returning home on 22 January. A beautiful, friendly part of the world to visit and we missed all of the bitter cold at home during our trip.

Two weeks after our cruise, we loaded our RV and headed to Houston, Texas. We volunteered on the Ranching Wildlife Committee, during February and March, at the Houston Livestock show and Rodeo. This was our 11th year to work as volunteers. During the week of February 9-11, the Ranch and Wildlife committee hosted the 2024 Young Guns Shooting Sports Competition for Texas 4-H and FFA and was a huge success. We hosted over 500 competitors that shot at 115,000 clays, we served over 3,000 meals, and we sent our competitors home with over \$130,000 in cash and prizes, all while dodging the bad stormy weather in the area. During the week of February 27-29th we hosted Ranching & Wildlife Expos and Educational Seminars at the NRG Center. They included Beef Cattle Production, Tools for Land Management and Current Topics in Wildlife.

At the conclusion, we hosted the Ranching and Wildlife auction which included hunting and fishing trips, beach house trips, shotguns, rifles and many other items for grand total of \$550,670 raised for Houston Livestock and Rodeo scholarships. The Rodeo committed \$27,317,634 to the youth of Texas in 2024

My summer 2024 , will be spent in a recovery mode as I did last year with my left hip replacement and now this year I'm having the right hip replacement. Glad they still have spare

parts for us older models. Best of health to all and be safe. Our doors are always open to visitors, you just have to catch us when we are home and not traveling.

From **Dick Bogard**: Enjoying retirement with **Avon**, wife of 60 years. Deacon at FBC Durant for Barnabas ministry to widows & widowers & Chaplain for Bryan County Gideon Camp. Avon is having immunotherapy infusions every 3 weeks to keep cancer from returning. Doing well & widely known for her gourmet baking. Prayers answered as all Pet-scans & CTs negative. Son **Vince**, OSU grad, after working for 1000 room Sky Tower in Durant, recently hired by Omni Louisville Hotel, in Ky, as National Sales Manager. He will work from home in McKinney, TX. Son **Alan**, Executive Recruiter for Apple, works from his home in Portland, OR. He & family will visit Durant this summer. And I was recently added to ARCSE list of Senior Conservationists.

From **Charlie Colvin**: I won't be able to make this meeting due to other plans but I'll put these on my radar. I actually didn't know these meetings existed. My personal email is old79scouter@gmail.com.



From **Jamey Wood**: I won't be able to make it Friday- **Sabrina** scheduled a 35th anniversary/retirement trip and said I was going. We'll be traveling home from Maui on Friday. Jamey also recently joined the Association for Retired Conservation Service Employees (ARCSE) which is kind of like our "National" SCS and NRCS retirees' organization. **Chad Kacir** was helping his son move into another home and **Mark Maples** was helping his mother with a doctor's appointment.

Please feel free to send something similar to those above that can be used in the October 2024 Newsletter. Do it now before you forget! Send it to: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Friday, **October 25, 2024**, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. Be sure and put that date on your calendar. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30 AM so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30 AM.

There was no other business to bring before the group and the meeting was adjourned.