



Nebraska Society News

MAY 2016 NEWSLETTER

OFFICERS 2015-2016

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- Sam Zach, a sophomore at UNL majoring in Agronomy, received the David Langemeier Scholarship. Sam is from the Humphrey, NE area, and plans to be a farm manager/advisor.
- Teyvn Baldwin, a junior at the University of Wyoming majoring in Agribusiness/Farm-Ranch Management, received the Tina Lorentzen Carlson Scholarship. Teyvn is from Mitchell, NE, and hopes to help farmers and ranchers by pursuing a career in banking/financial management.
- Zach Gray, a junior at UNL majoring in Agronomy/Agribusiness, received the third scholarship from the NSWC Foundation. Zach is originally from Holdrege, NE, and plans to go to law school with emphasis on agriculture and natural resources law.
- Samantha Teten, a freshman at UNL majoring in Agronomy, was awarded a scholarship from the Nebraska Chapter-UNL Foundation. Samantha is from Johnson, NE, and plans to become a crop consultant/advisor.
- Ethan Freese, a freshman at UNL majoring in Fisheries/Wildlife/Rangeland Management, was awarded a scholarship from the Nebraska Chapter-UNL Foundation. Ethan is from Lincoln, NE, and plans to pursue a career in rangeland ecology/management.

2015-16 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS **Craig Romary**

The Nebraska Chapter-UNL Foundation and Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation Scholarship Committee once again had the difficult choice of choosing recipients for this year’s scholarships. A total of 24 applications were received from students attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Chadron State College, the University of Wyoming and Northeast Community College.

Recipients of the five scholarships from both foundations were:

Scholarship Committee members and other Chapter members were able to meet all of the recipients and personally give them their monetary award – see the students’ pictures on pages 2 and 4.

Many thanks go to the Scholarship Committee volunteers, consisting of Ed Harms, Kris Reed, Corey Brubaker, Dick Ehrman, Tim Weltmer, Sarah Gray, Doug Garrison and Robin Foulk. It was great to involve people outside of the Lincoln area. If you have an interest in helping with this annual process, please contact Craig Romary or any of the above for more information.



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SWCS members and scholarship winners. L to R: Craig Romary, Corey Brubaker, Zach Gray, Sam Zach and Kris Reed.



Dallas Johannsen (L) and Ed Harms (R) presented Teyvn Baldwin the Tina Lorentzen Carlson Scholarship.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

WHAT: SWCS 20TH Annual – Dave Langemeier Open – Golf Tourney

WHEN: Friday, August 26th – Morning Shotgun Start @ 9:30

WHERE: Highlands Golf Course, Lincoln, NE

More information will be provided closer to the event. Any questions please contact Cameron Loerch @ cloerch@mindspring.com.

HUGH HAMMOND BENNETT: FIRST CHIEF OF U.S. SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE AND THE "FATHER OF SOIL CONSERVATION" Craig Derickson



Hugh Hammond Bennett (April 15, 1881- July 7, 1960) was born near Wadesboro, North Carolina. After graduating from college in 1903, he took a job at the Bureau of Soils within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) when county-based soil surveys were first being conducted. Bennett assisted with the soil survey of Davidson County, Tennessee, in 1903, and later recounted that experience "fixed my life's work in soils."

The 1905 survey of Louisa County, Virginia, in

<http://www.nebraskaswcs.org/>



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particular, profoundly affected Bennett. He was sent there to investigate the reason for declining crop yields. As he compared native un-tilled soils to eroded fields, he became convinced that soil erosion was a problem not just for the individual farmer but also for rural economies and society as a whole. Bennett wrote steadily and increasingly about the national problem of soil erosion in the 1920's in an array of journals, and coauthored "Soil Erosion: A National Menace" in 1928.

Under President Roosevelt and the New Deal public works program, Bennett successfully argued that single practices such as the terracing of land would not succeed and that a comprehensive conservation program on farmlands was needed and promoted a systems approach with contour farming, cover crops, and crop rotations to achieve conservation treatment.

As a result of his work and his recognition as the national expert on soil erosion, he became the first director of the Soil Erosion Service in the Department of the Interior in September 1933. The agency worked with farmers to demonstrate soil conservation methods in watershed-based demonstrations.

Bennett was instrumental in the successful passage of the Soil Conservation Act on April 27, 1935, which created a Soil Conservation Service at the USDA. Hugh Bennett was named as first chief of SCS until his retirement in 1951. The agency's work and staff spread nationwide in cooperating with nearly 3,000 locally organized conservation districts.

As Bennett guided the young SCS agency, his concepts proved wise. Bennett's development of "conservation principles" for his agency staff carrying out conservation work are as relevant today as they were nearly 80 years ago. According to Bennett, an effective conservation planner must adhere to the following principles:

- Consider the needs and capabilities of each acre within the plan
- Consider the client's facilities, machinery and economic situation
- Incorporate the client's willingness to try new practices
- Consider the land's relationship to the entire farm, ranch or watershed
- Ensure the conservationist's presence out on the land.

Bennett possessed the energy and single-mindedness of an evangelist in his promotion of soil conservation. He steadily wrote articles about soil conservation and was a welcome and inspiring speaker not only at farm-field demonstrations, but also at scholarly gatherings. While addressing congressional committees, Bennett employed tactics such as pouring water on a table to show the effect of rain on unprotected, bare soil. When a dust storm moving eastward in the spring of 1935 arrived over Washington, D.C., as he was testifying before a congressional committee on the bill that would create the Soil Conservation Service, he used the dust storm to dramatic effect to demonstrate the need for soil conservation. His crusading zeal brought many converts to soil conservation and made him the embodiment of the movement, the father of soil conservation.

See more on HH Bennett on the NRCS website at: bit.ly/HHBhistory.

NRCS in Nebraska is working with the National Office to create a permanent memorial collection of the first Chief of SCS and the father of conservation – Hugh Hammond Bennett. Work is underway to gather memoirs, photos, journals and journal articles by Mr. Bennett and his career of nearly 50 years in conservation work.

Bennett is credited with using science and technology to field test various conservation practices, erosion control and flood planning on a watershed scale, creating the Land Capability Classification system and establishing conservation planning principles that are still used today in NRCS.

Hugh Bennett was also instrumental in the formation of the Soil Conservation Society of America (now the Soil and Water Conservation Society). He organized the first Board of Directors of the Society in 1945-1946 and often met with them in Ankeny, Iowa to consult on national conservation issues. The Hugh Hammond Bennett Award is the highest honor bestowed on an individual by the Soil and Water Conservation Society. It is given for exceptional service and in recognition of national and international accomplishments in the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.



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2016 CHAPTER LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST Darwin Hinrichs

The 33rd Annual SWCS Legislative Breakfast was held February 16, 2016 with senators, students and members in attendance. Jeff Fassett, Director of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, was the guest speaker for the event and presented "The Status of Nebraska's Water." Mr. Fassett described the current situation for two Nebraska rivers, the Niobrara and the Republican. He explained the partnership of five natural resource districts, the Nebraska Game and Parks and the Nebraska Public Power District concerning the water rights related to the Spencer Dam on the Niobrara River. There have been several meetings bringing all parties together on this issue.

The status of the problem with Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska on the amount of water each entity should receive from the Republican River each year was his next topic. It now appears that Kansas is a better friend for Nebraska than Colorado but all three are working together better than in previous years in trying to solve this issue. Another problem stemming from the water situation on this river are the lawsuits (currently three) in Nebraska on how Nebraska met its water requirements by using surface water without compensation to the producers who were planning to use the surface water.

Mr. Fassett's last topic covered the Water Sustainability Fund which was set up in 2014 with a startup fund of 30 million dollars. Each year 11 million is added to this fund and it is divided with large projects getting 60% and smaller projects getting 40%. The presentation was well received by the group and stimulated good conversation.



Jeff Fassett (1), NDNR Director, was the guest speaker at the 33rd Annual SWCS Legislative Breakfast.



2016 Nebraska Chapter SWCS UNL Foundation Scholarship Awardee Samantha Teten and Kris Reed at the Legislative Breakfast.



2016 Nebraska Chapter SWCS UNL Foundation Scholarship Awardee Ethan Freese and Kris Reed at the Legislative Breakfast.

PASSING OF CHARLES FENSTER

Ed Harms

Charles Robert Fenster, 96, of Gering, Nebraska passed away February 10, 2016. Charles began his career with the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture in 1956 in Alliance, Nebraska for the purpose of working on a special project to control wind erosion and dryland crop systems in western Nebraska at the Box Butte Experiment Station. He eventually became responsible for the High Plains and Box Butte University Laboratories and established the High Plains Agricultural Laboratory, located at the Sioux Army Depot near Sidney, Nebraska. Besides the research he conducted there, he loved to talk to the local farmers about wheat and their use of stubble mulch and all matters concerning farming. As one of the world experts in dry land farming, he traveled to Australia, Morocco and Turkey in order to help show how local methods could be improved. As a research professor at the University of Nebraska, he also was associated with many students who were studying dryland farming practices. Charles was a past member of SWCS. More information on Charles can be found in the [May 2015 SWCS Newsletter](#)^[CLR1]. (bit.ly/NESWCsmay2015)



Charles Fenster, a pioneering researcher in dryland cropping systems in the Panhandle and High Plains region, inspects winter wheat stubble in a chemical fallow field in 1974.

HOW TO FREECYCLE

Ed Harms

Freecycling is when a person passes on, for free, an unwanted item to another person who needs that item. From silverware to mobile homes, people worldwide are choosing to freecycle rather than discard. The practice frees up space in landfills and cuts down on the need to manufacture new goods. Thousands of groups dedicated to connecting people who want to give away something to people with a need are forming worldwide. Find out more about Freecycle at <https://freecycle.org/about/pressroom>.

SWCS ANNUAL MEETING SILENT AUCTION

Darwin Hinrichs

It is time once again to ask for your help in soliciting items for the annual silent auction to be held during the state SWCS meeting. Previous items that have been donated for this event have been crafts, wine baskets, books, pictures, gift certificates and plants. The money raised with this silent auction is used to help fund our annual scholarships.

Your help with the silent auction would be greatly appreciated. Please let Darwin Hinrichs know what you plan to bring or if you need help getting your item to the meeting. Please contact Darwin at 308-340-5226 or hinrichsdm@hotmail.com with any questions.

WEBSITE UPDATE

2015 Annual Business Meeting minutes have been posted to the web site (<http://nebraskaswcs.org/>). Look under “past events” to see a summary of what took place in the past year or so. Minutes from the upcoming 2016 meetings will be posted later this year.

BRUBAKER AND VALASEK RECEIVE AWARDS AT THE 70TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SWCS CONFERENCE

Nebraska Chapter members S. Corey Brubaker and Walter Valasek were recognized for their contribution to the chapter and the SWCS mission at the 2015 SWCS International Conference. S. Corey Brubaker received the Outstanding Service Award, which is given to Society members in recognition of distinguished service in helping the society to develop and carry out its program over a long and sustained period of time. Wally Valasek received the Commendation Award, which gives international recognition to society members for service to their chapter or council of chapters.

S. COREY BRUBAKER



S. Corey Brubaker has been a member of SWCS since 1983. He joined the Society while working on his doctorate in soil science at Texas A&M University. He served three years as an officer in the Post Oak Chapter of the SWCS including one year as president. After completing his graduate work at Texas A&M, Brubaker moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, as a post-doctoral research associate with the USDA ARS. He transferred his SWCS membership to the Nebraska Chapter where he became an active participant in the Lincoln Section and participated in several annual meetings of the Nebraska Chapter.

In 1999, he was elected to the Board of Directors of the Nebraska Chapter and served as president of the chapter from 1999 to 2000. He is currently serving a sixth term on the Board of Directors of the Nebraska Chapter and is also serving on the Board of Directors for the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation where he has served as secretary for the past two years.

Brubaker was instrumental in planning the annual meeting in of the Nebraska Chapter in 2001, 2007, and 2013 and also helped plan the 2002 North Central Regional Workshop entitled “Excellence in Conservation Planning.” Brubaker is recognized for his knowledge of conservation practices to protect and improve soil health. He has attended and presented at numerous meetings and conferences both as a member of the SWCS and in his professional role as the State Conservation Agronomist for Nebraska NRCS. Brubaker is a dedicated SWCS member and is highly deserving of the 2015 SWCS Outstanding Service Award.

WALTER VALASEK



Walter Valasek served as the Nebraska Chapter president in 2002 and has been the Director for the Blue-Nemaha Section for the past 16 years. He has been chairman of the Nebraska SWCS nominating committee for the last 15 years. He has served on or been chairman for six annual conferences focused on the science of soil and water conservation activities, to promote the professional development and education of the participants.

When he was president of the chapter, it hosted the Northern Plains Professional Development Conference “Excellence in Conservation Planning.” Prior to the merging of all the Nebraska chapters into one chapter, Walter served the very active Blue Nemaha Chapter many times as president, secretary and treasurer. For his past and continued active support of the Nebraska Chapter, Wally is highly deserving of the SWCS Commendation Award.

Congratulations, Corey and Wally! Take a look at these and other awards presented to our colleagues nationwide last summer at the [70th Annual SWCS Conference Awards Program](http://www.nebraskaswcs.org/70thAnnualSWCSConferenceAwardsProgram) (bit.ly/70thSWCSawards).



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SWCS DIRECTOR NEEDED

Wally Valasek

The Nebraska SWCS is in need of the following officers for 2016/2017, and directors for the period from 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2019. The officer positions that are up for election are President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. These are one year terms and the vice-president is expected to move on to the presidency the following year.

We have two director positions that will expire this year. These are three year terms. The two vacancies are in the Northeast and Sandhills sections. Directors for the two section positions need to reside in the respective section.

If anyone is interested in these positions or would like to nominate someone, please contact Wally Valasek by email wbvalasek@gmail.com or at 402-223-2874 by June 15, 2016. Thank you for your consideration and nominations.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Nebraska SWCS chapter has a collection of historical documents to be scanned. Anyone willing to volunteer to coordinate the effort of scanning please contact Sarah Gray for more information.

NEBRASKA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Kris Reed

All Nebraska SWCS Chapter members are members of the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation, and the Foundation Board of Directors would like to hear from you regarding ideas for educational or demonstration type projects. Look around your office or those you associate with to see if you know someone who would benefit from a grant or scholarship.

If you have not done so, please help promote these scholarship opportunities to students and colleges in your area. The Scholarship Committee will be reviewing student applications in December. See how our donations are working in the scholarship article in this issue, and

consider a donation to help the next round of scholarship recipients.

As always, Foundation "tribute cards" can be used to make a donation to the Foundation by recognizing someone with a memorial or to recognize a memorable milestone in their career or family life. Please see the Foundation brochure at nebraskaswcs.org for more information. The Nebraska SWCS Honor Roll of Memorials and Honor Roll of Recognition can also be viewed on our website, along with the Foundation Treasurer's report for 2014-15. These will be updated after this year's annual meeting.

2015-16 NSWC Foundation board members are:

President- Kris Reed
Vice President - Ed Harms
Secretary – Corey Brubaker
Treasurer and Registered Agent – Craig Romary
Director – Dick Ehrman
Chapter President, Scott Bohaty, non-voting member

NEBRASKA CHAPTER SWCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Northeast – Patrick Cowsert
Sandhills – Vacant
Lincoln – Corey Brubaker
Blue Nemaha - Wally Valasek
Panhandle – Ed Harms
South Central – Darwin Hinrichs
Student – Vacant
At Large - Claudia Stevenson

NEBRASKA CHAPTER SWCS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Awards - Anita Nein
Scholarship – Kris Reed / Craig Romary
Membership - Robin Foulk
Elections - Paul Zillig
Nominations - Wally Valasek
History – Vacant
Environmental Ed. (Student Chapter) – Tom Franti
Student Chapter Liaison – Craig Romary
Bylaws – Vacant
Newsletter – Sarah Gray
Website – Doug Garrison



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2016 SWCS Annual State Meeting, Tours and Presentations will include:

Prairie Fringed Orchid Field Tour – Pierce County, NE

Organic Farm Tour – Dennis Wacker Farm – Plainview, NE

DriftWatch Presentation

Local Vineyard Tour

A block of rooms has been reserved under SWCS until June 10, 2016 at:

Rodeway Inn

2206 market Ln

Norfolk, NE 68701

(402) 371-9779

\$60.00 + tax per night

A block of rooms has been reserved under SWCS until May 27, 2016 at:

Holiday Inn Express

920 S 20th St

Norfolk, NE 68701

(402) 379-1524

\$119.95 per night

2016 ANNUAL SWCS MEETING **JUNE 23-25, 2016 NORFOLK, NE**

Thursday June 23, 2016

6:00 PM – Meet at Ta Ha Zouka Park – Woodland Cabin for horse shoes, walking trails and other activities. Bring your own food. Several options on US HWY 81 US HWY 275.

Friday June 24, 2016

8:00 – 8:30 Registration and Check-in – Lower Elkhorn NRD Board Room - 601 E Benjamin Ave, Suite 101 – Norfolk, NE

*Carpool to the tours from the NRD. Need vans or larger vehicles for carpooling.

8:30 – 12:00 Presentations / Tours / Break

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch (covered in registration cost) – Plainview City Park

*Subway – box lunches – orders will be taken during registration

1:00 – 3:30 Presentations / Tours / Break

3:30 DriftWatch Presentation – Craig Romary

5:30 Banquet Social Time – Valentino’s – Norfolk, NE

6:00 SWCS Chapter Banquet with Silent Auction – Valentino’s – Norfolk, NE

Saturday June 25, 2016

8:00 – 10:00 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation Meeting and Breakfast – Location TBD

10:00 – 12:00 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Society Chapter Meeting – Location TBD

2016 NEBRASKA CHAPTER SWCS ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION – DUE JUNE 13, 2016

PRE-REGISTRATION PREFERRED TO ALLOW FOR MEAL PLANNING

Meeting Registration (includes presentations, breaks and Friday lunch)...\$20.00 X ____ = \$ ____

Chapter Banquet.....\$14.00 X ____ = \$ ____

Foundation and Chapter Business Meeting and Breakfast..... \$6.00 X ____ = \$ ____

TOTAL = \$ ____

Please make checks payable to Nebraska Chapter SWCS.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

Send Registration to:

Cameron Loerch
2101 Pinto Road
Ashland, NE 68003
308-990-2095

cloerch@mindspring.com

NOTE: If your registration will be submitted later than 6/13/16 or you plan to pay at the door please let Cameron Loerch know so proper meal planning can be completed.



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Nebraska SWCS Chapter
830 N 5th Street
Seward, NE 68434

2016 ANNUAL SWCS MEETING MAPS

