



Nebraska Society News

MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER

OFFICERS 2020-2021

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Vice President	Claudia Stevenson	bcjbs@msn.com
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Treasurer	Corey Brubaker	corey.brubaker@usda.gov

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[CHECK IT OUT
NEBRASKA SWCS IS NOW ON FACEBOOK](#)

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 24-26, 2021 – OGALLALA, NE

NEBRASKA SWCS ANNUAL MEETING

**Full Meeting Agenda and Registration
Information Included in this Newsletter**

ANNUAL MEETING SILENT AUCTION

Darwin Hinrichs

Please remember we will have a silent auction at Nebraska SWCS Annual Meeting as a fund raiser for the scholarships given out each year. Items donated in the past have included books, plants, wine baskets, crafts, pictures and miscellaneous collectables. Please consider donating items for the silent auction as a way to contribute to the annual scholarship fund.

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Craig Romary

The Nebraska Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS), Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation (NSWCF), and SWCS-UNL Foundation are pleased to announce 8 scholarship recipients for the spring 2021 semester.

A total of 14 applications were received from students attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), the University of Nebraska-Omaha, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) and Concordia University. Each recipient was awarded \$1,000. Our scholarship recipients, major course of study, college and hometown in no particular order, are:

- Elizabeth Yrkoski, a junior Ag Economics/Agronomy major at UNL and from Fullerton, received the Dave Langemeier Memorial Scholarship.
- Lily Woitaszewski, from Wood River, and a senior Agronomy/Ag Economics major at UNL, received a Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship.
- Melissa Pieper, a junior Environmental Restoration/Soils major at UNL from Lincoln, received the Cam Loerch Memorial Scholarship.



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- Nathan Donoghue, from Columbus, is a junior Agronomy major at UNL, and received a scholarship from the SWCS-UNL Foundation.
- Olivia Leising, from Arapaho, is a sophomore majoring in Agriculture/Environmental Science at Concordia University, and received a scholarship from the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation.
- Ryan Beck, a junior Agronomy major at UNL from Broken Bow, received a scholarship from the SWCS-UNL Foundation.
- Taylor Brumley of Bellevue, is a junior majoring in Geology at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and received a Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship.
- Taylor Sayer, from Cambridge, is a sophomore majoring in Agronomy at Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, and received a Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship.

The Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation and the SWCS-UNL Foundation are supported by Nebraska SWCS Chapter members and friends through an annual golf tournament, silent auction and direct memorial donations. SWCS is a nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization for anyone interested in natural resource management and conservation. Its mission is to advocate the protection, enhancement, and wise use of soil, water and related natural resources. More information about the Nebraska SWCS Chapter can be found at nebraskaswcs.org.

A big THANK YOU and recognition goes out to the members of the scholarship review committee: Robin Foulk, Sarah Gray, Kris Reed, Jim Culver, Corey Brubaker, Mike Kucera, Dick Ehrman and Doug Garrison. It is always fun to hand out money but it does take a bit of time and often picking one applicant over another is not the easiest thing to do.



SWCS member Doug Garrison with Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation Scholarship winner Olivia Leising.



Colt Livingston, Middle Republican NRD staff member with Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship winner Taylor Sayer.



SWCS member Craig Romary with Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship winner Lily Woitaszewski.



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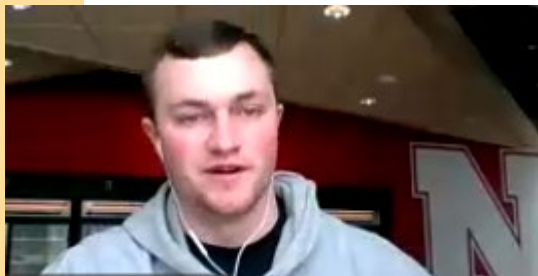
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SWCS member Ryan Chapman with Tina Lorentzen Carlson Memorial Scholarship winner Taylor Brumley.



Dave Langemeier Memorial Scholarship winner Elizabeth Yrkoski.



SWCS-UNL Foundation Scholarship winner Nathan Donoghue.

38TH ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE MEETING Darwin Hinrichs

The Nebraska Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society held its 38th Annual Legislative/Informational Meeting “Soil Health for Nebraska Wealth – The Healthy Soils Task Force Report” virtually February 8, 2021.

Thirty-three participants took part in the meeting including four senators and two 2020-2021 student scholarship winners.

Nebraska SWCS Chapter President Dave Bedlan welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and introduced speaker Keith Berns. Keith is a Nebraska SWCS chapter member, international SWCS board director and co-owner and operator of Green Cover Seed. Keith was honored by the White House as a 2016 Champion of Change for Sustainable and Climate-Smart Agriculture. Keith was appointed to the Nebraska Healthy Soils Task Force and serves as chairman.

Keith explained that in 2019, LB243 created the Healthy Soils Task Force. The Task Force was responsible for developing a comprehensive healthy soils initiative and action plan. That plan was completed in December 2020 and is found here: nda.nebraska.gov/healthysouls.

Keith presented the definition of Soil Health. Soil Health is the capacity of the soil to function as a dynamic living system that nourishes plants, sustains animals and people and improves the environment. A soil is healthier when organic matter levels are increasing (carbon sequestration), water infiltration rates are improving (reducing erosion, runoff and flooding) and the soil’s biological life is diverse and abundant. Keith showed slides of his operation near Bladen, Nebraska showing his diversity relating to tillage, planting and insects. He tries to have something growing at all times in his soil. Composting is done with many products being brought in since he doesn’t have a livestock operation which is important for a healthy soil.

Keith recognized the four Nebraska state senators that were present: Tim Gragert – District 40, Steve Halloran – District 33, Rita Sanders – District 45 and Dave Murman District - 38. Keith also recognized the two SWCS student scholarship winners Elizabeth Yrkoski and Nathan Donoghue who participated in the meeting. He asked for their comments about their interests and how they relate to soil health. Ali Loker a UNL graduate student and SWCS chapter member was also in attendance.



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Also serving as a meeting speaker was Senator Tim Gragert who introduced and prioritized LB 243. During the meeting Senator Gragert presented the mission statement for the task force: To develop a positive proactive plan for soil health, to ensure an enriched resilient soil base and be sustainable for the future in Nebraska. Senator Gragert thanked everyone as he said it was a win-win for producers, people and the environment.

Jeff Steffen, task force member and Cedar County producer, provided discussion on some of his data over the years with the economics of his operation. He has cut the amount of nitrogen he needs by almost half and still gets good yields.

There were nine initiatives looked at by the task force for soil health in Nebraska:

1. Better methods are needed to measure soil health.
2. Improve coordination, collaboration and communication between existing programs.
3. Be more tactical in program offerings.
4. Increase soil health awareness and knowledge for producers, landlords and the public.
5. Demonstrate best soil health practices on a regional basis.
6. Focus on the benefits of economics for soil health.
7. Enhance learning through peer to peer, mentoring and training.
8. Need to increase the research for it.
9. Actively pursue multiple sources of funding.

The task force decided on five goals to work on first:

1. Establish the Nebraska State Soil Health Hub with Regional Proving grounds.
2. Form a statewide Nebraska producer learning community.
3. Develop the next generation of Soil Health Practitioners.
4. Recruit \$50,000,000 in additional funding for soil health and incentives over the next ten years. Cargill and General Mills are interested in soil health.

5. Establish Nebraska Soil Health Measurements and Benchmarks (one of the first to be considered).

It was agreed for all goals to be voluntary, no mandates and regulations. It is important to have key players involved, especially farmers to farmers. There were 31 different groups across Nebraska who had input into this report.

The full report, as well as letters of support, the meeting presentations and a recording of the meeting, are available on the [NE SWCS website](#). Thank you to those who coordinated the legislative meeting including Craig Romary and Doug Garrison.

PRESERVING NEBRASKA SWCS ARCHIVES Doug Garrison

We need your help! Several members have taken on the task of scanning documents and pictures from our archives. But it became apparent that there are likely stores of historical documents in the far reaches of the state - from the individual chapters that made up the current Nebraska Chapter (the Blue-Nemaha, Lincoln, Mid-America, Northeast, Panhandle, Sandhills, Southwest and South Central Chapters).

Do you or someone you know have a box of stuff hidden away? If so, please contact Robin Foulk (robin.foulk@usda.gov) or Craig Romary (clrpkm@windstream.net) to work out an arrangement to get them digitized!

PHOTO ARCHIVE - MYSTERY PHOTO COMPETITION

The first person to contact to Robin Foulk (robin.foulk@usda.gov OR rjfoulk57@gmail.com) with the correct answer wins a prize. Identify all people in group picture. The two other photos will be used as tie breakers so be sure to identify those people as well if you know them! Previous winners are not eligible to win. More prizes available at our annual meeting June 24-26, 2021 in Ogallala!



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Name all the 2009 Technical Conference Attendees from Nebraska to be in the running for a prize.



Tie breaker photos. Send in the names of those in the photo above and below if you know.



SAVE THE DATE



One World, Connected through
CONSERVATION

July 26-28 | Virtual Event **2021**
www.swcs.org/21AC

#SWCS21

The 76th SWCS International Annual Conference will be virtual again in 2021! The conference theme is “One World, Connected through Conservation.” Be sure to save the date for July 26-28, 2021!

Additional details will be released in the coming weeks at www.swcs.org/21AC.

REMEMBERING ROBERT (BOB) FOSTER

Ed Harms



[Robert "Bob" Duane Foster](#) was born Oct 5, 1929, near Berwyn, Neb. to Doane and Lavina (Nelsen) Foster. He died at age 91 on April 11, 2021 of pancreatic cancer.

Bob graduated from Burwell High School in 1947 and the University of Nebraska in 1951 with a B. S. in Agronomy. He served with the military intelligence during the Korean War, spending time in Japan and Korea 1951-1953.

Bob was united in marriage to Sondra V. Johnson March 27, 1960, at Cambridge.

During his career Bob worked for the USDA-Soil Conservation service at Wahoo, Lincoln, Stapleton, Broken Bow, Ord, Bridgeport and Grand Island. He worked at Bridgeport from 1963 to 1979 as District Conservationist.

Bob was the Area Conservationist at Grand Island from 1979 until the time he retired in 1990. He was in charge of 26 field offices covering 29 counties while at Grand Island.

Bob retired November 30, 1990 after working for the USDA-Soil Conservation Service for 39 years. For about ten years after retiring, he helped his son on the family farm near Berwyn by cutting down cedar trees and digging musk thistles among other things.

} IN THE NEWS.....

- ❖ UNL Soil & Water Resources Club tour of the UNL East Campus Organic Farm. Student volunteers do much of the work to grow fruits and vegetables that are sold through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares and at farmer market stands on campus. The goals is to be profitable enough to pay the rent on the lot (i.e. not lose out to more profitable campus ventures) and help students gain experience and knowledge on organic farming on a small plot of ground. More info can be seen at [The Student Organic Farm | Sustainability \(unl.edu\)](http://The Student Organic Farm | Sustainability (unl.edu)).





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- ❖ 2020-2021 scholarship recipient [Student Spotlight: Lily Woitaszewski | IANR News \(unl.edu\)](#)
- ❖ [Update on 2019 Tunnel Collapse and Canal Washout – Water Flowing for 2020 Growing Season | CropWatch | University of Nebraska–Lincoln \(unl.edu\)](#) – Nebraska SWCS Chapter Member Gary Stone contributing.
- ❖ [Faculty Spotlight: Gary Bentrup | IANR News \(unl.edu\)](#) Nebraska SWCS Chapter Member.
- ❖ [Virtual 2021 NCF-Envirothon](#)



- ❖ Water Law 101: A six-part series of articles covering basic water law in the United States, predominately in the western part of the country, and how it affects this finite resource. This link will contain all 6 articles in the series eventually, as well as other articles written by Nebraska Chapter member Gary Stone. [Gary Stone - Extension Educator | CropWatch \(unl.edu\)](#)



SWCS OFFICER AND DIRECTOR NEEDED

Claudia Stevenson

The Nebraska SWCS is in need of nominations for an officer for 2021/2022 and director for the period from 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2024.

The officer position needed is a Vice-President. This is a one-year terms however the vice-president is expected to move on to the presidency the following year.

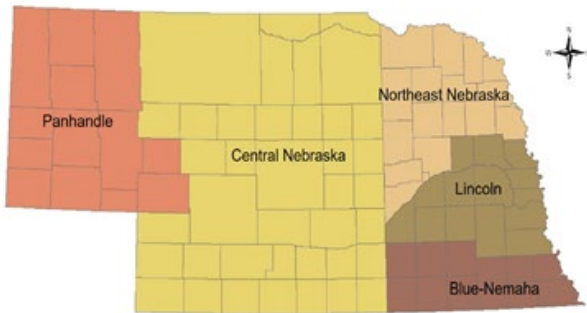
There is a need for director positions in the Blue-Nemaha, Panhandle and At-Large. Directors serve a three-year term and the director must reside in the respective section. The Directors help on the Annual Meeting committee when the meeting is held in their area.



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Nebraska Chapter SWCS – Board of Director Sections



Anyone interested in these positions or wanting to nominate someone can contact Claudia Stevenson (bcjbs@msn.com) or Dave Bedlan (dave.bedlan@usda.gov).

Please make contact by May 31, 2021. A ballot will be sent out to the members and the results announced at the June 2021 Annual Meeting. Thank you for your consideration on the officer and director positions.

NEBRASKA SWCS CHAPTER LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

Thanks to Claudia Stevenson a Nebraska SWCS Chapter Leadership Handbook outlining important information regarding the chapter. The handbook can be found on the [NE SWCS website](#).

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION FOUNDATION Kris Reed

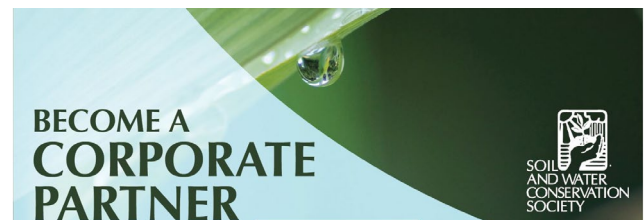
All Nebraska SWCS Chapter members are members of the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation, and the Foundation Board of Directors would like to hear from you regarding ideas for educational or demonstration type projects. Look around your office or those you associate with to see if you know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

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. Tribute cards can be requested from any Foundation member. Please see the updated Foundation brochure at nebraskaswcs.org for more information. In addition, take a look at the Honor Roll of Memorials and Recognition.

2020-2021 NSWC Foundation board members are:

- President- Kris Reed
- Vice President - Ed Harms
- Secretary – Mike Kucera
- Treasurer and Registered Agent – Craig Romary
- Director – Dick Ehrman
- Chapter President – Dave Bedlan (non-voting member)



Do you belong to a business or organization looking to support natural resources and SWCS? Check out the benefits of corporate SWCS membership at <http://bit.ly/SWCScorp3> including international exposure and identity at SWCS events, in publications and with social media.

CONSERVATIONISTS PRAYER

Thou shall inherit the Holy Earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shall safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy decedents may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in the stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy decedents shall live in poverty or perish from the face of the earth.

Unknown

Contributred by Ed Harms



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Nebraska SWCS Chapter
4967 Lariat Loop
Torrington, WY 82240

THE 38TH ANNUAL NEBRASKA SWCS LEGISLATIVE MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY FEBRUARY 8, 2021 “SOIL HEALTH FOR NEBRASKA WEALTH – THE HEALTHY SOILS TASK FORCE REPORT”



“STORMIN NORMAN” Ed Harms

One of the great aspects of conducting Annual Meetings is the opportunity to experience various sites in the Nebraska Chapter area. Norm Helzer made the trip with other members to Panorama Point (Elevation 5424) during the 2012 annual meeting at Kimball.

Please consider joining us in Ogallala June 24-26 for the 2021 annual meeting!



NEBRASKA SWCS ANNUAL MEETING

Ogallala, Nebraska June 24, 25, 26 - 2021

Thursday, June 24, 2021

- 12:30-1:00 PM Registration – Best Western Plus Ogallala Inn – 110 Pony Express Ln, Ogallala, NE
- 1:00-4:30 PM Tour Nebraska Game and Parks Visitor Center @ Lake McConaughey Dam Tour to follow
- 4:30 PM Optional tour near Paxton
- 4:30 PM Travel back to Ogallala
- 6:00 PM Evening Meal on your own. Suggestions below.

Friday June 25, 2021

- 8:00-9:00 AM Registration - Best Western Plus
- 8:00-9:00 AM Silent Auction Item Viewing
- 9:00-11:30 AM Grant Nebraska – Tour UNL Stumpf International Wheat Research Station
- 11:30 AM-12:00 PM LUNCH @ Research Station – brown bag provided with registration
- 12:15-2:00 PM Travel to Madrid and tour High Tunnel (EQIP project)
- 2:00-2:30 PM BREAK @ Madrid Country Store
- 2:30-4:30 pm Tour and discussion of Wellhead Protection sites at Grant, NE
- 4:30 PM Travel back to Ogallala
- 6:00 PM Banquet with Awards @ Open Range
- 8:00 PM Silent Auction and "Who's in that photo?" @ Best Western Plus

Saturday, June 26, 2021

- 7:30-9:00 AM Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation Meeting & Breakfast Location: Best Western Plus
- 9:00 AM-12:00PM Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Society Chapter Meeting Location: Best Western Plus

Eating Places

Ogallala: Front Street Steakhouse, Open Range Grill (fabulous hamburgers), Peking Chinese Restaurant, Golden Village, Pizza Hut, Driftwood Grill (and tap house), Margaritas, Mi Ranchito. In Paxton there is Windy Gap (great sirloin) and Ole's (a top destination for many people)

Lodging: A block of rooms will be reserved.

This will be held until end of May.

Ask for SWCS

[Best Western Plus Ogallala Inn](#) @ 110 Pony Express Lane,

Ogallala, NE 308-284-7011 \$99/night plus tax

\$15 registration to cover lunch, break and all tours. Complete registration form and mail to Corey Brubaker - address and phone number on the registration form.

RSVP by June 12. If you plan to pay at the door, please contact Corey at nebraskaswcs@gmail.com or 402-437-4164.

Registration will be in the meeting room at the motel from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. on the 24th and we will head to the Nebraska Game and Parks Visitor Center at Lake McConaughy. They will give us history of the dam and then a tour of their hydro plant and Morning Glory. There will be several options for people to do following this tour and suggestions on where you could eat on Thursday evening.

The second day (the 25th) will start with a tour of the new Henry J. Stumpf International Wheat Center located east of Grant, NE. University of Nebraska at Lincoln has research for many different projects and not just on wheat. After lunch, is a tour of an EQIP High Tunnel for raising and selling vegetables near the town of Madrid. There will be a short stop after this tour at a unique store in Madrid for refreshments. Since there is a new program getting started in Nebraska by NDEE and NRCS to address the area near community drinking water sources we are looking into visiting the well site for drinking water for Madrid, Grant or Ogallala (The wellhead portion is pending at this time).



Healthy Land
Clean Water
For Life

#ImWithHugh

2021 Nebraska SWCS Chapter ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION - Due June 12, 2021

Pre-registation preferred to get a count for meals and tours

Meeting Registration (Includes all tours, breaks and Friday Lunch).....\$15 x _____ =\$ _____

Thursday Evening Meal On your own

Chapter Banquet - at Open Range.....Order from menu

Foundation and Chapter Business Meeting and Breakfast\$3 x _____ =\$ _____

Annual Meeting - June 24, 25 and 26 - 2021. Ogallala, Nebraska

Please make checks payable to NEBRASKA CHAPTER SWCS	Mail Checks to
Name: _____	Corey Brubaker Federal Building, Room 152
Name: _____	100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, NE 68508
Address: _____	76th YEAR for SWCS
City _____	<i>If you plan to pay at the door, please contact Corey Brubaker so we have a count.</i>
State: _____ zipcode _____	nebraskaswcs@gmail.com 402-437-4164