



October 2003 Newsletter

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President's Message

SWCS membership is a personal commitment to natural resource management to achieve sustainability. The Mission of the Society is to promote and practice an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment. I believe that most members look to SWCS for professional development, like I do. SWCS helps me to fulfill two of my major career goals – networking with other conservation professionals, and developing technical and management skills in conservation technology. Over the years, SWCS has offered me many opportunities to network with other conservation professionals, and develop my technical skills.

I became a member of the Soil Conservation Society in 1976 when I came to work full time for the SCS, in Audubon, Iowa. I attended Iowa Section/Region meetings, and the Chapter Annual Meetings.

When I moved to Illinois, in 1992, I became the Board of Directors representative for my Region in Illinois. I was elected Vice-President in 1995, President-elect in 1996, President in 1997, and served as Past President, in 1998. I continued to be active on the Board of Directors as the Newsletter Editor until October 2000, when I moved to Nebraska. I have had the good fortune to attend six National Annual Meetings across the United States and Canada.

As Illinois Chapter President, I led an initiative to consider Springfield, Illinois for the site of the 2000 National Annual Meeting. The attempt was unsuccessful. However, we did join forces with the Missouri SWCS Chapter, and hosted the Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2000. I provided significant effort in budget development, fund raising and hospitality for the 2000 Annual Meeting.

The point I would like to make is that each member makes a personal decision, a personal commitment, about what they want to get out of the Society. It takes active members to have a good organization. I urge each Nebraska SWCS member to make a personal commitment to become active in the Chapter. Participate in activities, volunteer, and promote new activities.

MARVIN BROWN

Local Member Recognized Nationally

Julie Lamphere, current NE SWCS Chapter member and Forest Service Biologist at the USDA-National Agroforestry Center in Lincoln, received a 2003 SWCS Commendation Award in Spokane, WA at the annual international SWCS meeting.

The award script generally read as follows: Julia Lamphere was an active and dedicated member of the Northeast Nebraska Chapter of SWCS. She worked with other members to provide leadership and coordination for SWCS involvement at the 2001 Norfolk Master Gardeners' Plant Fair. Julia assisted in the organization of and provided her expertise to the growing of native grasses in the Wayne State College donated greenhouse space. This effort provided the opportunity for plant fair participants to view live plants at the plant fair. She has delivered numerous presentations to the general public and elementary schools on the USDA Backyard Conservation initiative. Her efforts are also recognized for continuing the SWCS Native Plant Display work at the Nebraska State Fair Park.

The Commendation Award states: *...presented to Julia....in recognition of distinguished professional achievement and service at the local, state, and provincial levels in helping to carry out the goals and objectives of the SWCS.*

Julie says that she misses the SWCS members she worked with while stationed at the Wayne NRCS Field Office, specifically helping to dig the grasses and otherwise meeting with those great members up north. She credits N.E. members' friendly, motivated, caring, and interested approach for her willingness to assist. Julie values this award very much since the nomination came from respected peers. She encourages others to recognize fellow members for their volunteer efforts by contacting the NE Chapters' Awards Committees. See "www.swcs.org" for more award nomination info.

Congratulations Julie!

Student Chapter News

The Soil and Water Resources Club started off another school year with their annual fall picnic. Several new students attended the event and everyone enjoyed the food and water balloon toss. The club is planning two tours this fall. One will be given by John Doran of the USDA-ARS on their "soil quality test kit" and the other will be a truck mounted soil probe demonstration given by Bill Zanner of the School of Natural Resources.



Nebraska Represented Well At The Annual SWCS Conference

Nebraska had a good sized contingent at this year's International Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society Meeting in Spokane, Washington. Nebraskans that attended the Northern Plains breakfast are pictured below. Back row left to right are Elaine and Tony Vrana, Anita Nein, Kim Stine, Darla Juhl, Craig Derickson, Steve Chick, Wally Valasek. Front row left to right are; Steve Nein, Robin Foulk, Margaret and Charles Reppert and Bob Nielsen. There were several other Nebraskans in attendance at the meeting that were not at this breakfast including Lower Platte North NRD Manager John Miyoshi and his wife Carol.



2003-2004 SWCS Directors

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SWCS NE Lapel Pins

We continue to have a good supply of Nebraska Chapter SWCS lapel pins. Two hundred of these have been sold in the past few years. The pins sell for \$5.00 each. They make good gifts and at the same time serve as a fund raiser for the Chapter. The pins are available from David Langemeier, dlangeme@inetnebr.com.

Nebraska SWCS Annual Meeting in Ainsworth

The Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Society held its annual meeting in Ainsworth, NE., June 11-13. Registration and the Wednesday evening meal were held at the Ainsworth Golf Course.

Mayor Russ Moody welcomed the group Thursday morning at the Ainsworth Conference Center, and Wally Valasek, SWCS President, opened the meeting. A history of north central Nebraska, grassland usage and ranching changes was presented. The speakers focused on how different climatic, economical, and environmental factors shaped the Niobrara Valley. Local Rancher Sid Salzman described his operation. Cort Dewing, NE School Lands representative, spoke on school lands policies on grazing and wildlife. Dennis Bauer spoke to the group about the Barta Brothers Univ. of NE, Extension Research Ranch, and Paul Hedron of the National Parks Service spoke on the Niobrara Scenic River plan.

The Nebraska business meeting began with election of officers for next year. It was noted that the chapter was very successful in hosting the Conservation Planning for Excellence Workshop that was held last November. The NE chapter also hosted the Northern Plains Chapter Development Workshop in March. Three scholarships of \$750 each was presented to college students this past year. Next years meeting will be in Northeast NE. The upcoming National Meeting in Spokane was also discussed.

A program was presented by Sheila Chance of Niobrara Valley Woodworking Products. The group then traveled to Sawle's Sawmill North of Meadville for a tour. The Sawle's own and operate a local sawmill. They specialize in producing lumber from Cedar and Pine trees that grow in the Valley. Several homes throughout the area and NE have installed cedar siding, produced at the mill.

Before the tour we met the family group who had spent the day shopping the local antique shops and touring the homes that were constructed using local lumber products.

That evening a pitchfork steak supper was held at the Meadville Park followed by the presentation of awards and entertainment.

Friday morning the group traveled to Nature Conservancy's Niobrara Valley Preserve. During a tour of the preserve the group viewed the bison herd while discussions covered how the herd is managed. The Bison are allowed to roam in a 7,000 acre pasture. They also viewed cedar harvesting, burn areas and a post peeler demonstration. The meeting concluded following lunch at the visitor center.



2003 Annual Meeting underway.



Sawmill, nice Nebraska Cedar lumber.



Have you ever rode a picnic table strapped to the back of a flat bed truck in search of buffalo?



Buffalo, finally found them on the back someplace...

NRCS Buffer Assistance Dedication

NRCS has provided technical assistance for a riparian restoration project and for a variety of buffer and related practices. All practices were used in construction of the new Lied greenhouse, Learning Pavilion, and golf course dedicated on Arbor Day at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, Nebraska. NRCS Northern Plains Regional Conservationist Richard Van Klaveren was among the speakers at the dedication.

NRCS was one of several public and private institutions that worked with the National Arbor Day Foundation in conceptualizing and constructing the conservation learning center, which features a component on the use of trees in rural landscapes. An area of the learning center showcases riparian buffers, windbreaks, shelterbelts, and living snow fences and the many conservation benefits that can be achieved through their use. The new greenhouse is a state-of-the-art facility in which the foundation expects to grow as many as 300,000 tree seedlings annually.

Completed this summer, a "tree-house" trail adjacent to the learning center features a handicapped-accessible tree house that enables trail users to view the South Table Creek riparian corridor from above. Conservation education programs at Arbor Day Farm annually attract more than 15,000 students from surrounding schools.

Your contact is Max Schnepf, Coordinator, NRCS National Conservation Buffer Initiative and NRCS Public Affairs Liaison Soil and Water Conservation Society, at 515-289-2331, ext. 15, or maxs@swcs.org

Support For SWCS Student Members

The Nebraska Chapter and the Northeast Nebraska Chapter have recently extended a hand up to prospective student members of SWCS. Both Chapters have graciously voted to set aside budget money for members of the SWCS Student Chapter, the Soil and Water Resources Club at UN-L, for SWCS membership.

The funds will be used to reimburse students who join the SWCS. Ten dollars per student, from each Chapter, for a total of \$20, goes towards their \$25 Student membership. This results in the potential for 15 Student members. Julie Lamphere, Student Chapter Liaison, will keep related records and handle reimbursements. This is a great way to start the new school year, and hopes are that there will be many good times and learning experiences for all. Julie works with students in regards to scholarships, SWCS meeting attendance (e.g. poster and paper presentation proposal deadlines), career opportunities, contacts, etc.

NORFOLK IN '04'

The Northeast Nebraska Chapter will host the annual SWCS meeting June 9 - 11, 2004 in Norfolk. Tentative topics include alternative agriculture ventures such as wineries, special forestry products, truck farming, livestock feeding operations, and more.

Plans include a golfing event & other Wednesday afternoon activities with a Bar-B-Q meal that night. Tours & speakers on Thursday, followed by an evening awards banquet with entertainment, and possibly a Friday tour as well. Stay tuned for more information. This will be the summer event you won't want to miss!

Workday Thanks and Display Update

First, many, many thanks to you early morning risers in August that helped cut back the 'overhangers' and clean up weeds, etc. at the Native Plant Display (in front of the 4-H Building) prior to Nebraska State Fair. Members Lyle Steffen and Craig Romary made it all worth waking up for. Also, more thanks to anyone who found the time to just stop by and pull/spray weeds throughout the growing season. The display received real nice comments from passersby before and during the fair. A wide variety of people, from the experienced to the young (even a couple of carnival workers), stopped by to compliment our efforts in plant education and landscape use of native plants. Kudos on the site are received frequently, even though the display has it's 'wanting' areas.

In related news - State Fair Manager Pat Lloyd has hired (back) Bob Henrickson as a very part-time consultant to the affairs of the grounds of State Fair Park Arboretum (which is really all of the fairgrounds - 325 acres). Bob worked there as Grounds Supervisor/Curator for much of the 1990s and is now Asst. Director for Horticulture for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum at UN-L. He and his crew handled the display pretty much on their own until he left about 2000. Thereafter, as has been said, it has needed our assistance again.

Mr. Lloyd has talked about a redesign to better suit his vision of a native landscape which is more maintenance-free and eye-appealing. To this end, 'Grass Plot' Liaison Julie Lamphere will be meeting with Bob and Mr. Lloyd in the near future. A peek at what he's thinking? Fewer species overall, and the planting of those that stand up (literally) on their own with little manipulation to be attractive. Plants could include little bluestem, sideoats grama, purple poppymallow and butterfly milkweed.

Anyone interested in lending a hand with the display at any time should contact:

Julie at 440-3431.

SWCS NE CHAPTERS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

The Nebraska chapters, Nebraska and Northeast, have two Foundations which provide scholarships to college students interested in the broad natural resources field.

University of Nebraska Foundation, Nebraska Chapter, Soil and Water Conservation Society. The University of Nebraska Foundation - Nebraska SWCS endowment fund was established in 1973 for providing scholarships to college students interested in the natural resources field. Dollars from our Nebraska chapters and from other donors are invested in this Foundation. Scholarships are awarded only from earnings of this investment. The dollar amount of the scholarships (which can not exceed the amount of earnings) given each year is decided at the Nebraska chapters annual business meeting. Eligible students are "regularly enrolled undergraduate students in the UN-Lincoln, Omaha, Kearney or NCTA campus."

The fund balance as of May 31, 2003 was \$12,681.87. Of this total, \$1,513.86 was investment income that is available for scholarships. For the 2003-2004 year, the UN-L Foundation SWCS Fund has been budgeted at \$1000 by the Nebraska Chapter. During the annual business meeting at Ainsworth, the Nebraska chapters voted to provide two \$750 scholarships for the 2003-2004 year.

Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation (NSWCF). The NSWCF was created in 1988 with the purpose of promoting and supporting special activities in education, public information and research. It is a part of the Nebraska and Northeast Nebraska Chapters. Dollars from our Nebraska chapters and from other donors are invested in this Foundation. The Foundation may use both principal and earnings for the projects which are selected by the Foundation's Board of Directors. In recent years they have been giving a college scholarship which may be used at any Nebraska college, although the students have usually been attending the University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

The Nebraska Chapter for the 2003-2004 year has budgeted \$1,000 for the NSWCF general fund. The NSWCF at their annual business meeting at Ainsworth voted to provide one \$750 scholarship for the 2003-2004 year. The amount budgeted by the Nebraska chapters for each foundation and the amount awarded to students each year are not necessarily identical amounts. The method of presentation of the scholarships is different for the two Foundations. The officers of the NSWCF present the check in person to the recipient. The recipients of the UNL Foundation scholarship have the money deposited directly in their student account at UNL.

In recent years, Paul Smith has led the committee that selects the students. Applications are generally due about December 1st. Selections are made and announced before the end of December. Both Foundations use the same scholarship applications and selection committee.

An on-line application for Foundation Scholarships is available at: <http://incolor.inetnebr.com/douggs/swcs/Scholarship_Application.pdf>

David Langemeier, SWCS NE Chapter Treasurer

7th Annual NE Chapter SWCS 2003 Golf Tourney

The Seventh Annual Nebraska Chapter SWCS Golf Tourney was held on August 22, 2003 at Highlands Golf Club of Lincoln. Twenty six golfers (12 members and 14 nonmembers) participated. A team, best ball tee-shot format was used. Winning teams were: 1st - Bob Rathjen, Tony Litty, Richard Langemeier, Glen Langemeier, Gary Wells; 2nd - Fred Kaizaki, Dana Snyder, JR, Craig Romary and Jim Hardy; 3rd - Tom Keep, Earl Lockridge, Marvin Brown, Paul Zillig; 4th - Tony Vrana, Gus Dornbusch, Gary Muckel, Keith Plummer; 5th - David Langemeier, Jim Culver, Roland Langemeier, Larry Ruzicka; 6th - Gene Sindelar, Bill Ruzicka, Norm Kempf, Joe Calder. Players were from Lincoln, Scribner, Fremont, Norfolk, Seward, Schuyler, and North Bend.

Flag prizes were given for all 18 holes. Everyone went home with more than one excellent prize thanks to the sponsors listed below.

Funds for a gift membership to a nonmember golfer were donated by Lyle Steffen, Jim Harder, Craig Romary, Robin Foulk and Claudia Stevenson. Richard Langemeier, a farmer and Master Gardener from Scribner, won the membership.

Prizes were donated by T.O. Haas Tire, Budweiser D & D Distributors, Wal-Mart, NARD, State Farm, Nebraska Corn Growers Association, Highlands Golf Club, Lower Platte North NRD, Lower Platte South NRD, Pappio-Missouri NRD, Middle Niobrara NRD, Diers Ford, Austad's Golf, Nebraska Soybean Offices, Stock Seed Farms, and the SWCS National Office. Please thank them when you see them.

A contribution of about \$250 is being made to the Nebraska Chapter SWCS University of Nebraska Foundation Scholarship Fund. This represents a portion of the entry fees; contributions by the Lower Platte South NRD and Gary Wells; and mulligans from the golfers.

David Langemeier welcomes comments on the timing, location and format for the year 2004 Eighth Annual golf event (email dlangeme@inetnebr.com).

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Clips from Discussion Items - Board Meeting 6/11/03

2004 Annual meeting, Charley visited with Jan Jorgensen. Northeast Chapter will host meeting in Norfolk. No one has agreed to take charge of it yet. It is proposed that 2005 meeting be held in the Panhandle. No offers from Northeast chapter as members have been moving.

Election Procedure Mailing or Electronic? Electronic appears to be getting better response. It is cheaper and more people are voting by e-mail. Concern that electronic vote could be followed up with paper ballots.

E-mails have been received from 165 of 209 members. Yet there remains a concern that some members do not have e-mail. In general board members were in favor of using an electronic means to conduct elections. Minutes of Teleconferences have been e-mailed to members. Feedback is that most appreciate receiving them. It was suggested that business and annual meeting minutes should be e-mailed to all as a way to keep memberships active.

Wally suggested that each section organize an activity. Example: Brown Bag meetings held monthly by Lincoln Chapter.

It was requested that boundaries of sections be researched. Confusion exists concerning Blue/Nemaha and South Central boundaries. Why sections? Board representation and keeping interest in out state areas.

Clips from Annual Meeting Minutes 6/12/03

New Business: Delegated to National Meeting.

Discussion revealed that Darla, Steve and Anita, Robin and Wally were all planning to attend. Item for silent auction meeting. Wally will get products from NE to fill a basket. Steve will take along polished agates and petrified wood. Wally will serve as the Nebraska Chapter delegate.

Election Procedure: Doug and Paul Smith. Revised voting process. Most votes were received by e-mail with very few by mail. Concerns of security are minimal. Dave asked if number of votes cost was higher with e-mail. Paul S. said yes and reported that Paul Z. had the same comment. **It was moved by Charles and seconded by Doug to carry out elections as much as possible by e-mail but allow postage motion passed.**

Excellence in Cons. Planning meeting: Corey, Julie, Anita and Rob served on committee as well as John. The meeting was successful. Attendance learned about GIS, TSP and other timely topics. Proceeds were around \$4700 after expenses. It was discussed at Board Meeting what to do with the money. Consensus was to divide money between NE Chapter and Northeast Chapter based on membership. It was moved by Jim and seconded by Corey that we divide proceeds as recommended by board 83% and 17%, motion carried.