

Conservation Conversations

September 2007 - Issue No. Four

*Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet
Department for Natural Resources
Division of Conservation*



Stephen A. Coleman

Letter from the Director of the Kentucky Division of Conservation

Welcome to the latest edition of Conservation Conversations. I hope that you look forward to each edition of the newsletter as much as I do. I would like to thank everyone who furnishes articles and photos for use in the newsletter. This is what makes it “your” newsletter and such a valuable communication tool for all conservation districts.

I would like to mention that once again we had a very successful KACD Convention in Louisville. It is always enlightening to meet collectively with the many district supervisors and employees across the state and to discuss the latest issues facing conservation districts today. The meeting was very well attended and informative. Thanks to the many individuals, and particularly the staff of the Division of Conservation, who work hard and do an outstanding job to make this annual convention the success that it is each year. We have included a lot of information and photos of the convention in this newsletter that we hope you will enjoy.

As we have mentioned before, these are exciting and changing times for Kentucky’s conservation district programs and operations. It is also a very challenging time as we deal with issues like USDA office restructuring and office closings, aging dam rehabilitation and district funding. In addition to much discussion at the convention, I and other members of our conservation partnership continue to meet with many of you one on one. We will continue to work with each of you as we explore options, alternatives and solutions to these pressing issues. We urge all districts to be diligent in their efforts and to work together to help each other through these challenging times.

Before I close, let me mention another critical issue that needs your attention. That is the continued hot and dry weather that has plagued the state for an extended period of time. The short-term forecast shows little relief and the long-term forecast is not very promising either. This has caused many problems for our farmers and many of our communities. I urge you to conserve water and to promote water conservation with the landowners and citizens in your communities. Hopefully, we will soon see an end to this dry weather pattern and will be able to get back to normal. In the meantime, it is imperative that we do our part to educate the public concerning this critical situation.

In closing, feel free to contact me or any of the division staff if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Coleman, Director
KY Division of Conservation

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DOC Welcomes Two New Employees

Water Quality Liaison

Amanda Abnee Gumbert is the new water quality liaison between the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Kentucky Division of Conservation. Amanda's responsibilities include promoting the Agriculture Water Quality Act, assisting in agriculture related 319(h) projects and coordinating other related watershed projects.

Prior to this position, Amanda worked for six years with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service's Environmental and Natural Resource

Issues Task Force as an extension associate. Her major area of work is water quality education, focusing on watershed management and agricultural water quality issues. She has also addressed other environmental issues such as air quality and solid waste as they relate to water quality. Amanda has earned both a Bachelor of Science and a Master's Degree in plant and soil science from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. She attributes her love of natural resources to growing up on a farm in Robertson County, Kentucky.

Amanda lives with her husband, Mark, in Lexington.



Amanda Abney Gumbert

Environmental Engineer

As of July 16, 2007, Mr. George Haynes is the new Environmental Engineer for the Division of Conservation who will be providing program support and administration to the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program. He is originally from Vicksburg, Mississippi. He graduated from the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) in 2001 with a degree in general engineering. His environmental experience includes hazardous and non-hazardous waste, wastewater test-

ing and wastewater treatment, environmental compliance, wastewater permits, and environmental cleanup at out-of-compliance facilities. He enjoys working to preserve the environment and looks forward to working with everyone in assuming his responsibilities within the State Cost Share Program.

George is married to Candace Haynes and they have five beautiful children. The family resides in Nicholasville.

George enjoys sports, discussing current events, and fishing in his off-time.



George Haynes, II

Award Recipients Recognized at Annual KACD Convention

By Martin Bess

The Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) held its 64th annual state convention July 14-17, 2007. The annual convention keeps attendees up to date on environmental issues, federal and state programs and new technologies available to deal with the future of conservation. In addition, the convention emphasizes the importance of conservation and environmental efforts by recognizing individuals that go above and beyond the call of preserving the state's natural resources. It also honors producers who take the initiative to implement sound, innovative and cost-effective conservation techniques and best management practices, while demonstrating and educating other members of the community about the problems and solutions associated with soil and water conservation. **Those recognized this year for outstanding service and accomplishments are as follows:**

The 2007 Distinguished Service Award was presented to Senator David E. Boswell, Representative John A. Arnold, Jr., and Representative Don Pasley. Each was awarded for his outstanding career and service in promoting the wise use, management and conservation of our natural resources. Each of these individuals has been instrumental in supporting conservation district programs and initiatives over their distinguished careers as members of the Kentucky General Assembly.



John Arnold, Jr.



Don Pasley



David Boswell

Rebecca Tracy (left) of Barren County received the **KACD Auxiliary Non-Traditional Scholarship**



Raymond L. Adams (left) received a **Special Recognition Award** for his behind the scenes assistances for many years in making the KACD awards program the tremendous success that it has been. From "Conservation Conversation" weekly radio programs to the awards program slide show he provided his pleasant and strong voice for conservation.



Anthony Mullins, DOC Field Representative, had the daunting task of filling Ray's shoes this year as the narrator of the various slide shows.



Susan Neumann (center) teaches 9th through 12th grade at Model Laboratory School located in Richmond was named **Secondary Education Teacher of the Year**. Ms. Neumann has continued her education to help assist the students in her school and her community. Her approach to environmental science is to experience the environment first



Kirby O'Donoghue (left) of Breckinridge County received the KACD Auxiliary George Crafton Scholarship.



Award Recipients Recognized at Annual KACD Convention

- Continued -



Shelby Ison (center) who teaches Sciences and Language Arts to the 4th grade at Northside Elementary School in Midway in Woodford County, was named **Elementary Teacher of the Year**. She uses inquiry based science in her instruction to help students think critically and use their problem solving skills and plans activities across the curriculum.



James & Claude Costigan (two men on right) of Franklin County received the **Outstanding Conservation Cooperator Award**.



Scotty & Judee Vanderpool (left and center) of Boyle County received the **Runner-Up Outstanding Conservation Cooperator Award**.



Michelle Simon (left) of Campbell County received the **KACD Auxiliary Natural Resource Scholarship**.



Calloway County Supervisors and Staff



Mercer County Supervisors and Staff

Calloway County and Mercer County conservation districts received the **Outstanding Conservation Districts Award** for the western and eastern regions, respectively.



Award Recipients Recognized at Annual KACD Convention

- Continued -



John Young, Christian County



Robert Wade, Jr., Hardin County



Myrel Trunnell, Daviess County

A New Convention Tradition: The No-Till Hero Award

Mr. Michael Hubbs, NRCS State Conservationist, presented **The No-Till Hero Award** to Mr. John Young from Christian County; Mr. Myrel Trunnell from Daviess County; Mr. Robert Wade, Jr. from Hardin County; Mr. Robert James from Fayette County; Mr. Jack and C.J. Clark from Whitley County; and Mr. Lowell Clifford from Hilltops Grazing in Harrison County. The Kentucky Conservation Partnership consisting of NRCS, KACD, the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Division of Conservation are pleased to start this tradition of annually recognizing individuals who play a leadership role in no-till conservation and prescribed grazing systems.



Robert James, Fayette County



Jack Clark, Whitley County



Lowell Clifford, Harrison County



Award Recipients Recognized at Annual KACD Convention

- Continued -

The Outstanding Conservation District Environmental Education Award was earned by the Fayette County Conservation District.

The most important educational activity the Fayette County Conservation District participates in is the Annual Farm Field Day where they work in conjunction with Fayette County's Cooperative Extension Service, Farm Bureau, Cattlemen's Association and USDA Service Center to host an event open to all Fayette County residents.



In association with the Fayette County Schools System, the district has been able to cooperate in programs that offer bilingual lessons on soil and water quality, agriculture and wildlife.

The district has also helped numerous schools in Fayette County through grants to build or increase the use of outdoor classrooms.



Other successful programs include a Bird Festival with lessons from Project WILD and Project Flying WILD and the Envirothon team.



When the supervisors and employees of the Fayette County Conservation District look to the future, they would like to see a great increase in education programs to allow all Fayette County citizens to recognize and become involved in the agricultural and environmental issues and concerns in their community.

A Page in Conservation History

By Curtis M. Kirk



Judge Is Using

The Lexington Herald Leader
May 31, 1965

Helicopter To Visit Farms

Garrard County's Ray Wilson Needs Aircraft In Work

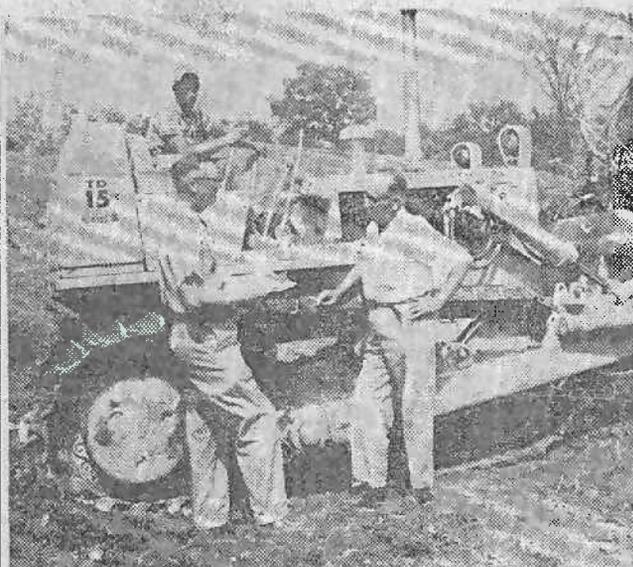
By JOHN JENKS
Herald Farm Editor

LANCASTER, KY., May 30—Garrard County Judge Ray Wilson uses a helicopter to visit 2,980 acres of farmland he owns in Garrard and Jessamine counties, and he says he could not supervise the extensive land operations if he did not have this means of speedy transportation.

The judge, who is also a fixed-wing pilot, purchased the two-place helicopter that has a 350-mile range about nine months ago. He is so pleased with the aircraft that he is considering buying a five-place machine that has a range of 1,200 miles when it is available.

Judge Wilson uses the helicopter to fly to his office in Lancaster, setting it down in a field near here. He hovers over the town before landing, and shortly afterwards there is a ride available to him.

After completing his office



BIG DOZER ON GARRARD FARM — Sam T. Vanover, left, Soil Conservation Service technician in the county, talked with Garrard County Judge Ray Wilson how the big bulldozer purchased by him and Jimmie Majors, on seat, will help in saving natural resources on the extensive farm land owned by the official. There are many conservation projects on the farms owned by Judge Wilson.

After completing his office duties he catches another ride to the field and starts out on his tour of the farms. He parks the vehicle at night in a field near his country home.

Buys Big Dozer

One of the leading advocates of conservation in this section of the state, Judge Wilson recently purchased with Jimmie Majors a big TD-15 International dozer for use on his farms. His conservation practices include building of farm ponds, spring development, grass waterways and pastures planting.

Sam T. Vanover, SCS technician in Garrard, and Junior Long, conservation aide, work closely with Judge Wilson in planning projects to save natural resources. Recently William E. McGaughy, Lexington, SCS area conservationist, conferred with the official here and said he was impressed "with Judge Wilson's dedication to conservation."

The Judge has 60 acres in burley on his farms, and this summer planted the No. 9 and 21-10 hybrid varieties. He owns 700 head of beef cattle.

Garrard has one of the best soil conservation districts in the state, and Cecil O. Morgan, chairman, and the SCD board of supervisors cooperate with Judge Wilson in his farm plans to save natural resources.

Thanks to Kimberly Bartley, Kathy Simpson and the Garrard County Conservation District for this history moment.



HOUD OF AIRCRAFT — Garrard County Judge Ray Wilson, right, shows William E. McGaughy, Lexington, U.S. Soil Conservation Service area conservationist, the helicopter he uses to visit his farms in Garrard and Jessamine counties. The "whirly-bird" rested on a field near Lancaster.



Conservation is fun in Hopkins County

By Connie Gray



The second graders at Jesse Stuart Elementary School were told they were going to “twist and shake” by the Hopkins County Conservation District’s Environmental Educator, Vicki Presley. The kids were rocking to the tune of *Palisades Park*. This doesn’t sound like conservation education but during the process of twisting and shaking the children were making butter by holding tight to baby food jars containing cream which they shook, twisted, rocked and wiggled the jars until butter formed. Once the butter had been made the students enjoyed the fruits of their labor by eating the butter on crackers. Vicki’s lesson plan for the day was teaching the youngsters about processing agricultural food.

The Hopkins County Conservation District Environmental Education Program was started about four years ago. Vicki said, “They (the Hopkins County Conservation District Supervisor’s) saw a need for educating students in Hopkins County about agriculture and decided to initiate teaching lesson on agriculture in the classrooms of Hopkins County. A lot of the students, if you asked them where a hamburger comes from, they would say McDonalds, not from a cow.”

Vicki teaches 75 different lesson plans in over 15 different schools in Hopkins County. Vicki has had 9,947 student/teacher contacts last year, alone. Presley has also incorporated conservation education into civic and church organizations within the county. She has presented Backyard Conservation to the Golden Age Group from the First United Methodist Church of Madisonville. Vicki went on to say, “Most of our lives depend on agriculture and most people don’t realize how much agriculture affects their lives. I didn’t come from a farming family, so I have learned a lot.”

Vicki is known by many names such as the Pumpkin Lady or the Tree Lady depending on the program she is presenting that day. Every day is an exciting day in the Hopkins County School System when Vicki comes to visit. She loves her job and it shows in the faces of the Hopkins County youth she’s involved with. The students enjoy a different experience in the classroom with unique, fun topics. Vicki went on to say, “The students love it. They’re learning and don’t realize they’re learning and that makes my job worth while.”

14th Annual Marshall County Agriculture Day

By Debbie Hinton

Over 400 students visited the farm of former Marshall County Conservation District supervisor, Wavil Joseph, and current board supervisor, David Joseph, on March 27, 2007. This was the 13th time in 14 years for the field day to visit the Joseph farm.

Students arrived at the farm to popcorn being popped by the conservation district with the corn that was produced on the farm. The students were then divided into groups and visited stations.

A new station this year was located at the soils stop. Students were able to go into a “soil tunnel”. This tunnel was developed with the Calloway County Conservation District. It gave the students the opportunity to see what takes place underground in the soil.

Even in a rural county, this is the first time some of the kids actually visit a working farm, watch farming equipment in action, and see live-stock up close.





**Where are they going next?
West Kentucky Conservation Districts Travel the Country**
By Debbie Hinton



The supervisors from Fulton County and Hickman County conservation districts along with NRCS and conservation district staff and farmers from Lake County Tennessee traveled to Dyees, Arkansas on July 2, 2007, to view various irrigation systems.

The purpose of the trip was to view new irrigation systems that could benefit farmers in Fulton County's lower bottoms and other farmers with semi-level ground during drought conditions.

The group visited the Mark Fincher Farms and the Henard Farms in Poinsett County, Arkansas.

While on the Henard farm the group viewed irrigation done by polypipe on 40-acre blocks (fields) of soybean and rice. Water was pumped at the rate of over 3,000 gallons per minute through 12-inch polypipe stretched a distance of one quarter of a mile to the fields.



Polypipe irrigated soybeans and rice.

Irrigation on these fields runs for 72 hours. The cost for the irrigation varies per acre depending upon whether fuel powered or electric powered pumps are used. Fuel powered pumps are running \$ 7.50 per acre versus electric powered pumps at \$2.50 per acre.

The group then traveled around to other sites in the area where they viewed tiered level irrigation and row irrigation on soybean fields.

They also discussed the differences in crop rotation, fertilizer costs, and land values in Fulton and Hickman counties in Kentucky and those of Poinsett County Arkansas.

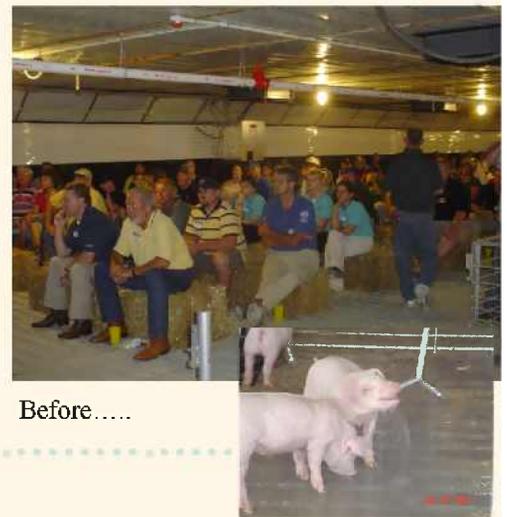
The group extended an invitation for farmers in Poinsett County to come visit Fulton and Hickman and see their farming operations.

Huge Turnout for Fulton County Field Day
By Debbie Hinton

More than 300 people attended a field day on June 28, 2007 at the farm of Ralph Wayne Adams, a Fulton County Conservation District Board member. This field day was to highlight the new construction and operation of his two hog buildings. The field day was sponsored by the Kentucky Soybean Association, the Fulton County Conservation District, Kentucky Farm Bureau and Tosh Farms.

In the last two years a lot of controversy has occurred in Fulton and Hickman counties over the development of these hog operations. The field day was held to showcase how modern hog operations are run in comparison to years ago. Those present were allowed to view the hogs in one barn and see what a new empty barn was like before the hogs arrived.

The Kentucky Soybean Association highlighted the importance of soybean production in regard to the feeds that this hog operation was utilizing.



Before.....

Agriculture Week Recognized in Fulton County

By Debbie Hinton



The Fulton County Conservation District and the Fulton County Farm Bureau hosted a breakfast on March 20, 2007, for local leaders and officials in the community to recognize National Agriculture Week in Fulton County. Both conservation district and Farm Bureau representatives were able to discuss the farming issues of Fulton County with the local leaders in an informal setting.



New Employee at Harrison County

By Kim Richardson

Harrison County is pleased to announce their new administrative secretary and technician, Ann Ward. Ann, a Harrison County native, comes to the district with experience working as a surgical technician at an equine hospital. She is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a degree in agriculture communications, economics and public service and leadership with emphasis in public service and leadership and is a certified nursing assistant.

The Harrison County Conservation District is looking to expand their educational outreach. They are very lucky to have Ann and Tom Zach Evans on their staff. Both district employees are very enthusiastic to get an Envirothon team started in their community.

If you get a chance, call Ann and welcome her in to the conservation family!

Conservation District Employees' Training Workshop

On **Wednesday, October 3, 2007** a training workshop will be held for all conservation district employees at the Nolin RECC Cooperative Meeting Center in Elizabethtown.

The goals of the workshop are to enhance district employee knowledge and understanding of conservation district operations and programs and expand their professional skills.

TENTATIVE WORKSHOP AGENDA

8:30 – 9:00 Registration (Coffee & Doughnuts)

9:00 – 10:45 Session One

- Welcome, Introductions and Workshop Goals: Steve Coleman
- Computer Security: Lena Allen, NRCS
- Security Background Checks: Katrina Beckley, DOC
- AWQA & Water Quality Education: Amanda Gumbert, UK/DOC
- Infrastructure Loans: Curtis Kirk

10:45 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:30 Session Two

- DOC Report : Steve Coleman
- NRCS Report: Mike Hubbs or staff
- Small Group Breakout Break Out Sessions: all employees and DOC staff
 - Group #1 - Budgets, Millage Taxes, and funding
 - Group #2 – District Concerns, Office Space, etc.
 - Group #3 – Personnel Management and Personnel Policy
 - Group #4 – Meetings, Minutes, Records, etc.
 - Group #5 – Planning, Reporting, Accountability

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch on Site

1:30 – 3:00 Session Three

- Supervisors Leadership Development Topics for Employees: DOC Staff
- District Websites: Chris Blackburn, DNR or District Employees
- Conservation District Programs Question and Answer Session: DOC Staff

3:00 – 3:15 Break

3:15 – 5:00 Session Four

- Office Success Stories: Volunteer district employee and DOC staff
- Large Group Topics Discussion: All employees and DOC staff
- Question and Answer Session: all presenters and DOC staff

5:00 p.m. Adjourn



If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact Curtis Kirk or Anna Harmon at 502-573-3080

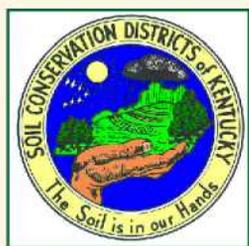
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2007 Conservation District Quarterly Calendar

- September**
- Financial and Annual Reports Due to Frankfort Office
 - Writing and Art Contest Material Delivered to Districts
 - KACD Board of Directors Meeting—11th at 10 AM
 - Equipment Revolving Loan Payments – 10th
 - Deadline for NACD Conservation Education awards (teacher and district) to National Office—15th
 - Soil and Water Conservation Commission Meeting—17th at 9 AM
 - State Cost Share Status Reports
 - Monthly Treasurer Reports and CD Employees' Time Sheet
- October**
- Area Conservation District Employee Training Meeting—DOC Field Representatives
 - Deadline for NACD Conservation Service Awards Nominations to National Office—1st
 - Equipment Revolving Loan Payments—10th
 - State Cost Share Status Reports
 - Monthly Treasurer Reports and CD Employees' Time Sheet
- November**
- National Conservation Poster Contest entries due to Frankfort Office
 - Equipment Revolving Loan Payments—10th
 - KACD Board of Directors Meeting—13th at 10 AM
 - Conservation District Supervisors Leadership Development Workshops
 - State Cost Share Status Reports
 - Monthly Treasurer Reports and CD Employees' Time Sheet
- December**
- Writing and Art Contest—Top Scholl Entries Judged at District Level and Due to Courier
 - National Conservation Poster Contest entries Due to National Office—1st
 - Equipment Revolving Loan Payments—10th
 - Conservation District Supervisors Leadership Development Workshops
 - State Cost Share Status Reports
 - Monthly Treasurer Reports and CD Employees' Time Sheets