

The Link

June 2001

The National Organization of Professional Black Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees

2001 Executive Board

President

William Hunt
Minnesota

Vice President

Ann English
Minnesota

Treasurer

Charles Roberts
Tennessee

Corresponding Secretary

Joyce Morgan
Washington, DC

Recording Secretary

Sylvia Rainford
Minnesota

Parliamentarian

Cynthia Jordan
North Carolina

Historian

Patti Jackson-Kelly
Iowa

2000 Regional Representatives

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Wytonya Jackson
Pennsylvania

Midwest

Fred Reaves
Wisconsin

National Headquarters

Emily Best
Washington, D.C.

Northern Plains

Leroy Stokes
Nebraska

South Central

Jacqueline Thibodeaux
Texas

Southeast

Eston Williams
Tennessee

West

Richard Bruce
New Mexico

Lead Story

Organization Member Receives National Awards

Submitted By: Johnnie Sanders-Bailey, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Louis Boyd, District Conservationist (DC) in Montgomery County, Tennessee, received awards from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Pearlie Reed and former USDA Secretary Dan Glickman at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. Boyd, a DC in the Clarksville Field Office, received his awards for his outstanding accomplishments and customer service. His accomplishments include the establishment and development of the Northern Middle Tennessee Farmer Association, installation of a significant amount of conservation buffers in Montgomery County, and assistance with the Tennessee Conservation Buffer Field Day.



NRCS Chief, Pearlie Reed and Award Recipient, Louis Boyd



Pictured (left to right) Former Under Secretary Rominger; Award Recipient, Louis Boyd; and Former USDA Secretary Dan Glickman

The President's Message



William Hunt

I am proud to serve as your President. Thanks to each and every one of you who elected me and the new Executive Board to lead The Organization during the next two years.

Let me introduce you to your new officers. They are Ann English, Minnesota, Vice President; Joyce Morgan, National Headquarters, Correspondence Secretary; Sylvia Rainford, Minnesota, Recording Secretary; Charles Roberts, Tennessee, Treasurer; Cynthia Jordan, North Carolina, Parliamentarian; and Patti Jackson-Kelly, Iowa, Historian. The regional representatives are the same except for the Midwest and South Central. The interim representatives in these regions are Fred Reaves, Midwest Regional Office, Wisconsin, and Jacqueline Thibodeaux, South Central Regional Office, Texas.

The newly elected Executive Board, consisting of the national officers and regional representatives, are willing and eager to serve you—the members of The Organization.

Before I explain our mission for the next two years, I want to thank the previous Executive Board for their contributions over the past two years. Look how far we have come! Thank you for a job well done and your inspired leadership during The Organization's critical formative years. We are proud of you.

The Organization held a successful planning meeting in Atlanta in December 2000 to chart its course for 2001-2002. We agreed on several actions that we believe will strengthen The Organization in future years, including the need to work toward self-sufficiency. As a result, we added two membership options—Sustaining and Lifetime Sustaining. We also decided training in many disciplines would become a critical part of our

annual TRAINING conference this year. Much of that critical training will assist you, our members, improve your knowledge and skills in your respective jobs.

Below is a list of the Executive Board accomplishments for the first four months in office:

- Established two interim membership options—Sustaining and Sustaining Lifetime—pending approval of the membership—at our annual training conference in Memphis, Tennessee, November 26-30, 2001. Nearly all national officers are Lifetime Members.

- Established a payroll deduction process to pay Lifetime and Sustaining Member dues.

- Completed the selection of Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs and members. All committees are active and are working on their goals and objectives. The Executive Board required all committees to develop business plans and budgets for the first time this year.

- Revised The Organization's web site to ensure information is current. Please visit our web site regularly for timely and pertinent information about The Organization, NRCS, USDA and our conservation partners. Our address is:

www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/ORGAN/ss.htm

- Informed NRCS and the conservation partnership's key leaders of our annual conference dates to minimize future schedule conflicts.

Much work remains to be done. This Executive Board will not rest on its laurels. We are working feverishly to plan our annual training conference to make it the best one ever! We will share those plans with you as they are developed.

We need your help. We cannot do this important work without your support. This is the best time ever to renew your membership with The Organization. Treasurer Charles Roberts can give you additional information about your membership options. Membership forms can be obtained on our web site. A copy is included in this newsletter.

This is your organization. It will be as strong and as effective as you make it.

What's New?

The Organization Website—

- **On-line Membership Form**—The Organization's membership form, is now available to fill-out and print online.

- **Direct Deposit**—You can now arrange to pay your Lifetime and Sustained membership dues through direct deposit. Contact: Charles Roberts treasure via e-mail at: croberts@tn.nrcs.usda.gov.

Group E-mail Service—

- **Listserv**—The Organization now has a group e-mail service. The Listserv allows The Organization members to share "Organization" information within the membership. Any Organization member may subscribe to the Listserv. The service posts any messages it receives and allows all subscribers to view and reply to it. Therefore, any e-mail message sent to the Listserv will go to all addresses who subscribe to it. You will actually receive a message from the Listserv as though someone e-mailed you directly.

Listserv was developed specifically for the purpose of communicating Organizational information to the membership. Junk mail such as poems, jokes, etc. will be strictly prohibited.

If you would like to subscribe to The Organization's Listserv, follow the instructions below.

To Subscribe to Listserv:

1. Send a message to: listserv@np.nrcs.usda.gov
2. Leave the "Subject" line BLANK
3. In the "body" of the message put type: **subscribe nopbnrcse**
4. Send the message.

Within a few minutes you should receive a reply from the listserv telling you that you have been subscribed along with a number of optional commands that can be used. You can then send messages to:

nopbnrcse@np.nrcs.usda.gov

Leadership that Makes You Proud!

*Submitted By: Denise Brooks,
Procurement Analyst, NHQ*

As we celebrate the tenth year of existence for The Organization, we pause to reflect on some of the changes that have occurred in Natural Resources Conservation since the birth of The Organization. One of the changes that we can be proud of

are our members who are in leadership positions. To the degree that information was available, we listed the leader, their current position, and the position they held within NRCS 10 years ago.

| Leader | Now 2001 | Then 1991 |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Charles Adams | Regional Conservationist, Southeast | State Conservationist, AZ |
| Edward M. Biggers, Jr. | Director, Management Services Division, NHQ | Contracting Officer, NY |
| Leroy Brown | State Conservationist, IA | State Conservationist, IA |
| Lawrence Clark | Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, NHQ | Deputy State Conservationist, IN |
| Walter Douglas | State Conservationist, SC | RC&D Coordinator, IN |
| James W. Ford | State Conservationist, TN | Regional Partnership Liaison, GA |
| Carlos Henning | Director, Resource Assessment Division, NHQ | Deputy State Conservationist, NJ |
| P. Dwight Holman | Deputy Chief for Management, NHQ | Assistant State Conservationist of Operations, NY |
| William Hunt | State Conservationist, MN | Deputy State Conservationist, PA |
| Gerlene C. Inman | Director, Administrative Support Division, NHQ | Personnel Management Specialist, NHQ |
| Andrew Johnson | Director, Civil Rights Division, | Resource Conservationist, NHQ |
| Leonard Jordan | State Conservationist, WA (until July 2001) State Conservationist, GA (effective July 29, 2001) | Area Conservationist, IN |
| Shirley Merritt | Acting State Conservationist, GA | District Conservationist, TX |
| Horace Smith | Director, Soil Survey Division, NHQ | State Soil Scientist, NC |
| Mary Thomas | Director & CI0, Information Technology Division, NHQ | |
| Kalvin Trice | State Conservationist, AR | Agricultural Economist, NHQ |
| Charles Whitmore | Regional Conservationist, Midwest | State Conservationist, IL |
| Holmer L. Wilkes | State Conservationist, MS | Administrative Officer, SNTC |
| Ronald Williams | State Conservationist, MI | District Conservationist, IA |
| Lillian Woods | Director, Guam | District Conservationist, MD |

It is worth mentioning, that many leaders Leroy Brown, Henry (Hank) Wyman, Thomas Weber did not make major career changes. However, they were very instrumental in giving so many new NRCS employees a start or support.

Also, there are many similarities about this group, but the greatest one is that they did their jobs well. They excelled within their career fields and were afforded greater opportunities. NRCS is a great place to realize your professional potential. We embrace the hope and promise of the tremendous

opportunities that will continue as a result of these members mentoring other deserving NRCS employees.

The National Organization of Professional Black Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees was the first agency professional organization created for its employees. It started off with a few individuals with a vision and a few willing workers. After 10 years, that vision has been transformed into a wonderful professional organization. All things are possible, if you persevere and believe.

MAKES YOU GO HMMMMM....

- There are still District Conservationist positions in the GS-9 and GS-11 grade levels. Yet, the very foundation of the Natural Resources Conservation Services rests on the accomplishments of the field office.

- The lower grade employees (GS: 5-9) within NRCS do not have a formal mentoring program to help with organizational awareness and professional development.

The Organization News

The Organization Awards 10 Scholarships

Submitted by Sylvia Rainford, MN

The Organization awarded \$250.00 scholarships to 10 students last year, President William Hunt announced. The net proceeds from the raffle this year were approximately \$900.

Winners from the raffle were A. Stigarll, Paririe View, Texas; \$1000; Ray Bowers, Franklin, Tennessee, \$250; and Rena Cutting, Greensboro, North Carolina, \$100. Two students won the first and third place prizes. None were scholarship winners. The Tennessee Chapter raised the most money by selling \$100.00 in tickets. Tennessee Chapter Member Hugh Jackson raised the most money as an individual—\$45.00 in tickets.

The Organization did not raise enough money from last year's raffle to fund 10 \$500 scholarships. As a result, The Organization reduced the amount of the scholarship from \$500 to \$250, Hunt said. "I hope we won't have to do this again in 2001," he said. "Students rely on these scholarships to help with their expenses. We need all of our members to help us raise funds to help the students this year."

Below are the recipients of The Organization's 10 \$250 scholarships for 2000:

1. Brooks, Rodney L., Senior, Fort Valley State University

Major=Agricultural Economics, GPA=3.2

2. Brown, Pamela J., Junior, Prairie View A&M University

Major=Agricultural Economics, GPA=4.0

3. Connor, Justin R., Senior, Morehouse College

Major=Biology, GPA=3.7

4. Fitzpatrick, Jason E., Sophomore, Tennessee State University

Major=Agricultural Business, GPA=3.3

5. Knight, Erika P., Sophomore, Fort Valley State University

Major=Agricultural Economics, GPA=3.7

6. Mitchell, Shundra L., Senior, Fort Valley State University

Major=Plant Science, GPA=3.7

7. Montaque, Dara A., Sophomore, Howard University

Major=Biology, GPA=3.6

8. Rodgers, Wavie L., Junior, Prairie View A&M University

Major=Agricultural Economics, GPA=3.7

9. Smith, Tyeisha L., Junior, Tennessee State University

Major=Agricultural Business, GPA=3.9

10. Turner, Nicole N., Junior, Florida A&M University

Major=Biological & Agricultural Systems Engineering, GPA=3.3

Installation of 2001 Officers - Atlanta, GA



2001 National Officers: (Left to Right) Patty Jackson-Kelly, Historian, Cynthia Jordan, Parliamentarian, Sylvia Rainford, Recording Secretary, Joyce Morgan, Correspondence Secretary, Charles Roberts-Treasurer, Ann English-Vice President, and William Hunt, President

The Organization's 1st Lifetime Member, Denise Brooks receives her Lifetime membership certificate from National Treasurer, Charles Roberts.



Installation ceremony in Atlanta, GA (left to right) Jim Tatum, Immediate Past President, Charles Roberts, Treasurer, and William Hunt



National Officers, Regional Reps, and Chapter President's attend the Planning meeting in Atlanta, GA - December 2000

On the Move in NRCS

Chief Pearlle S. Reed announced the following State Conservationists selections:

Robin Heard - State Conservationist in Pennsylvania, effective June 17, 2001.

James Alan Green - State Conservationist in Colorado, effective July 1, 2001.

Leonard Jordan - State Conservationist in Georgia, effective July 29, 2001. Mr. Jordan was the State Conservationist in the state of Washington.

Congratulations New State Conservationists!!!!



Book Review...

"One Door Closes, Another Opens"

Submitted by: Dorothea Martinez,
South Carolina

Have you ever been in a position where something happens that leaves you saying to yourself, "Wow, I can't believe that happened"? Well, if you've ever felt this way, you are not alone. Things happen to each of us that leave us in awe. It doesn't mean that all is lost or that the world will come to an end because a door has closed on something that you truly believed in or really wanted to happen.

Arthur Pine and Julie Houston's book, "One Door Closes, Another Opens," draws upon the personal stories of more than fifty celebrities that show us how we can push, kick, or wedge open the doors that are keeping us from success and happiness or accomplishing goals. The book offers advice on handling everything, from the pain of rejection to the fear of failure. This extraordinary book is proof that we can turn our setbacks into comebacks by believing that a closed door is a sign that fate has other plans for us.

Arthur Pine is the President of Arthur Pine Associates, Inc., a literary agency in New York City, and has

been associated with book publishing for nearly twenty-five years. He is also the author of *Your Family Business: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for making Both your Relationships and Business Rewarding and Successful*. Julie Houston is a freelance writer and editor who combines her work with raising a family. She also collaborated with Arthur Pine on his previous book.

While reading *One Door Closes...*, I found three points that really caught my attention and could be incorporated into everyday living: 1) A door closing should be viewed as a source for new strengths, not as failures; 2) Use the feeling of defeat as your motivation to get out of a bad situation; and 3) Use the closed door as your inspiration to accomplish more than you ever thought you could.

These points remind me of a scenario where a good friend of mine lost her job. She was devastated and scared. Being employed one day and sitting at home not having a job the next day can bring many changes in your life—changes which can produce feelings of inadequacy and depression. She experienced all of that and more. One day she announced that she was going to enroll in graduate school. She had always talked about getting her graduate degree, but never acted upon it. She applied and was accepted to graduate school at the University of South Carolina. During the time she was preparing to go to graduate school, I saw a positive change in her behavior. She was excited about starting school and working towards her master's degree. I saw a new surge of energy in her. We were talking one day after she had started graduate school and she told me that losing her job had been a blessing in disguise, because had she not lost the job, she probably would not have gone back to get her graduate degree. The most important thing I observed about her was that she used that setback as an inspiration to move forward and make a new beginning for herself.

I believe that if you really want something to happen, but it doesn't happen for you, then you should harness those feelings regarding that

disappointment to make a major comeback. Michael Jordan epitomizes that belief. It happened when he was a sophomore in high school in Wilmington, North Carolina. Confident that he'd make the team, Jordan discovered that his name was not posted on the list in the school gym. 'I thought that if I didn't stop looking, my name would be there, but it wasn't there,' he said. At the end of the day he went home, closed the door to his room, and cried. It didn't take long for him to snap out of it. He cried again when he told his mother, but that was it. From there Jordan worked on his playing skills, trying harder than ever. Nature assisted him. He grew from five feet ten inches to an agile six feet two inches, and the next year made the team. The rest is basketball history." "I knew I didn't want to have that feeling again," said Jordan, when it looked like the door to basketball was closed to him.

Arthur and Pine tell us to use the closed door as your inspiration to accomplish more than you ever thought you could. I relate this to the cancellation of our Organization's meeting last year. Upon talking to many other members of The Organization, I shared a great disappointment. After all, we had become accustomed to attending the annual training meeting and looked forward to going to the meeting for our personal growth and development. The cancellation afforded us an opportunity to really appreciate the importance of our Organization's meeting and the benefits we probably took for granted, such as information sharing, networking, professional growth, and skills development gained from workshops and training sessions.

Last year's setback has provided us with a greater appreciation for The Organization and all that it stands for. Therefore, when we come together this year, I believe we will be stronger as a group and will work towards accomplishing more than we've ever done before.

This book, "One Door Closes, Another Opens," encourages us to reflect on what has happened, inspires us to reach for higher goals, and become determined to be the best that we can be.

Chapter News

South Carolina Becomes 20th Chartered NOPBNRCSE Chapter

Submitted By: Perdita Savage Belk, Communications & Marketing Manager, South Carolina

The South Carolina Chapter of the National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees (NOPBNRCSE) recently became the 20th chapter nationally to be chartered. William Hunt, Minnesota state conservationist and NOPBNRCSE national president, and Jim Tatum, immediate NOPBNRCSE national past president, traveled to South Carolina to present the charter, induct officers, and provide words of encouragement. The event was held at the Fort Jackson Officer's Club in Columbia, SC, on April 4, 2001.

Hunt, on his first trip to the Palmetto State, encouraged the chapter not to, "rest on your laurels, this is just the beginning. Maintain the momentum!" He also highlighted key goals of the national chapter, which include chapter development and membership, which will significantly impact the Organization's long term goals. Hunt offered that an "ambitious program" for the Organization will be announced soon, and stressed the need for \$500 life memberships. "A few people committed to a common purpose can achieve great things," he emphasized, reinforcing that membership in the Organization is open to everyone, not just black employees. Hunt continued that he wants the NOPBNRCSE to be the best organization in all of USDA and very active in every facet of NRCS programs and services.

Tatum provided equal challenges to the newly formed SC Chapter, offering a historical perspective and citing the Organization's humble beginnings in the early 1990s. As a founding member and the Organization's first national treasurer, Tatum noted that, "South Carolina has undertaken a monumental task to establish a chapter" and commended South Carolina State Conservationist Walt Douglas for his ongoing support.

"This is certainly a momentous occasion," commented Douglas, who was also a founding member of the national Organization. "I am confident that the South Carolina Chapter will provide our employees with numerous opportunities for professional and personal development."

Hunt and Tatum both emphasized that the Organization is designed to provide professional development for NRCS employees because no one can afford to operate on outdated tools, skills, or attitudes. Additionally, the Organization must be in control of its own destiny, which will happen through increased membership and financial resources. Having grown from just under 200 members in 1992 to over 400 in 2000, the Organization's goal is to have an overall membership of 1,000 and a budget that will allow self-sufficiency over the next one to two years. "Join the Organization," said Tatum, "it's the wave of the future!"

After presenting the charter to South Carolina Chapter President

Wilfred Pace, Hunt, Tatum and Douglas were presented with plaques of appreciation for their support and leadership of the Organization.

Providing leadership for the state chapter in addition to Pace are Vice President Perdita Savage Belk, Treasurer Dorothea Martinez, Secretary Sharon Lane, Parliamentarian Cleveland Mitchell, and Historian James Williams. The charter will be officially presented again at the November national meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. The South Carolina Chapter already has plans to become active on the state, regional and national levels. Funding raising and community projects are currently in the planning stages, and the Chapter hopes to participate in both the regional and national conferences, with several members serving on national committees.

Contact Wilfred Pace at (803) 245-4311 with any questions or additional information concerning the South Carolina Chapter of the NOPBNRCSE.



South Carolina NOPBNRCSE Chapter officers are already active in fundraising and community planning activities. Pictured left to right (front row) Bill Hunt, James Williams, Dorothea Martinez, Cleveland Mitchell, and Sharon Lane. Pictured left to right (back row) Wilfred Pace, Jim Tatum, Walt Douglas and Perdita Savage Belk.



NRCSers gather for the South Carolina Chapter's charter luncheon at the Fort Jackson Officer's Club in Columbia, SC.

**Illinois Chapter Sponsors
1st Southern Illinois
Black College Expo**

Submitted by: Cara Clark, Visual Information Specialist, Illinois

The Illinois Chapter of The Organization along with the support of Illinois NRCS and the Jefferson County SWCD sponsored its first Southern Illinois Black College Expo, which was held April 20th - 21st at the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, Illinois. The theme was ***“Preparing Our Youth for the Future.”***

The purpose of this event was to expose Southern Illinois African American youth to black universities throughout America. More than 100 students attended and took advantage of this opportunity to receive helpful information and applications from 15 representatives from 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities and other Black Universities. The following colleges and universities represented at the Expo:

- Alabama A&M
- Chicago State
- Delaware State
- Harris Stowe
- Kentucky State
- Lane College
- Lincoln University
- Morgan State
- North Carolina A&T
- Philander Smith College
- South Carolina State
- Southern University-Baton Rouge
- Tennessee State
- University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- University of Maryland-Eastern Shore

The African American Communities of southern Illinois were very excited about making this opportunity available to their children in their pursuit for continued education. The Expo attracted local news media, High School Guidance Counselors, Superintendents, Principals, teachers, NAACP county presidents - Rev. James Gordan, Jefferson County; and Willie Lawson, Clinton County.

Mayor Mark Terry, James Malone, Mt. Vernon City Councilman, and Lewis Nichols, President Illinois Chapter welcomed the students and college representatives. The Illinois Chapter appreciates the support of



Representatives from 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Universities and other Black Universities.

Illinois State Conservationist Bill Gradle, Dave King RC&D Coordinator of Macomb, IL and the members of the Hoosier-Buckeye Chapter who traveled to attend and support the event.

Illinois Chapter members Roscoe Allen, Outreach Coordinator, Florine

Johnson, Outreach Coordinator-East St. Louis, IL, Mary Wheeler Soil Conservation Technician -Mt. Vernon, IL, and Gary Barnett, Resource Planning Specialist -Anna, IL worked extensively to make this event a huge success. Great Job!!!



Midwest and Northern Plains Held Joint Regional Training Conference in Kansas

Submitted by: Carzella C. Pritchett, Outreach Coordinator, Springfield, IL

Photos Courtesy of: Mary A. Wheeler, Conservation Technician, Mt. Vernon, IL

The Midwest and Northern Plains Regional Training Conference has provided an excellent opportunity for those in attendance. Members of the Organization received valuable training and offered feedback on issues and concerns. This training was sponsored by the collaborative efforts of Regional Conservationists Charles Whitmore and Richard Van Klaveren.

The Organization has made a strong start under the new leadership of



National President, **William Hunt**. Mr. Hunt's opening remarks introduced the idea of a name change. He envisions The Organization as a major training provider for the Natural

Resources Conservation Service. Other changes include the implementation of payroll deductions plan for lifetime and regular membership.

This year's theme is "A New World of Opportunities". The session began on June 6th in Overland Park, Kansas.

Training on writing Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA) responses was provided. Recruitment and Retention was also addressed thoroughly by the



Midwest Regional Representative **Fred Reaves**.

Participants chose from 3 breakout sessions. The first session emphasized the Integrated Accountability, Performance Results / Measurement Systems, and Workload Management. This session used the same type of data that NRCS provides to Congress for budget purposes. Budget Allocations comparisons were made with Total Cost Accounting System (TCAS) hours by Program

Codes. This training group was a pilot for testing and implementing a new "Conservation Journal System" reporting method, which will make reporting easier and faster. Discussion pointed to the lack of Activity codes in reporting. Dana York, Director of Operations Management and Oversight Division led this portion of the session.



Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Director, **Elly Cleaver** conducted the second session. Each participant received a comprehensive notebook outlining the

ADR and Mediation process. This training augments the ADR program initiated by NRCS and promotes the use of non-adversarial resolution of workplace and program disputes.



Resource Conservationists **David McKay and Alan Boerger** provided training for the third session training on the use of Tool Kit. David, a programmer, helped

design the Tool Kit program. This training included Arcview, Soils Data, and Geographic Information Systems some of the latest technology available. It provided hands-on-training and discussion to enhance the skills of participants.



Anita Dixon, Director of Tourism from Kansas City, Missouri gave a presentation on the substantial contributions made to world by African Americans.

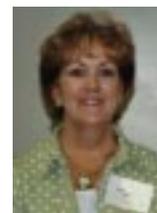
She quoted a statement made by Harriet Tubman who said, "I would have brought many more people to freedom if they had only known that they were slaves." This observation was made by an individual who could not read or write. Tubman was gifted with keen discernment and observation. Anita also shared some of her personal struggles while providing care and treatment for her autistic daughter. She gave countless illustrations of the untapped information that senior citizens hold. Her tourism

business was partially founded on this knowledge and locally led community involvement.

A Workforce Planning session was conducted by **Karen Karlinchak** and **Diane Anderson** from the Human Resources Management Division at National Headquarters. This training session featured projections used in workforce planning. Detailed information was given for the personnel needs of each state and number of individuals for each series and discipline.



Caryl Butcher, National Ethics Advisor provided Ethics training. This session was designed to keep us informed of the laws and provides practical examples for increased understanding. The laws of ethics are complex and mind boggling. The consequences for breaking the code of ethics include termination, imprisonment, and fines. So when in doubt about an ethical decision to accept or give gifts ask first. Hopefully this training will prevent mistakes and eliminate the perception of wrong doing.



Debbie Kaiden, gave training regarding the Thrift Savings Plan. She emphasized many ways to access and make changes to your individual accounts. She explained how borrowing is permitted and under what circumstances it is allowed. Booklets were also distributed detailing aspects of the plan.

The keynote speaker for the Banquet was **Andrew Johnson** Director of Civil Rights.



While sharing his armed service experience with us he spoke of Colan Powel's top 10 list. He expounded upon the different styles of leadership and gave pointers on how to be a good leader. Commendations were given to the Midwest for the exemplary and the professionalism, John Glover and Victor Blackburn contribution to his staff.



Gary Kobylski
Coordinator for Operations Management in the Midwest spoke of a decline in availability of management training. The need

for the development of a training module was great. He facilitated the development of management training tools without funds thanks to the help of others.

Panel discussion questions were addressed by the Regional and State Conservationists. The Closing



remarks made by **Charles Whitmore** left us with a charge to help 10 other individuals.

Candid Shots of the Joint Regional Training Conference



Announcements and Upcoming Events...

Call for Papers

Submitted by: Ann English, Vice President, MN

You are invited and encouraged to actively participate and play an integral role in the success of the 9th Annual Training Conference of the National Organization of Professional Black Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (The Organization), November 26 – 30, 2001 in Memphis, Tennessee. The theme of this year's training conference is "Embracing Opportunities – Building a New Tomorrow".

Share Your Knowledge and Expertise

We invite you to submit proposals for oral papers, posters, and computer software demonstrations at the 9th Annual Training Conference. Proposals from all professional

sectors and students are encouraged.

The technical papers, posters, and demonstrations should focus on the following:

- New and Emerging Technology Development
- Research Needs
- Certification of Professionals

Abstracts must be submitted for oral papers, posters, and computer software demonstrations. The abstract should describe the presentation in 400 words or less. Please indicate whether you are presenting an oral paper, poster, or computer software demonstration. Abstracts will be reviewed for their correlation of the subject matter mentioned above.

Presentations

Poster Presentation – informal presentations using printed materials. Posters will be 4' feet x 8' feet display. Posters will be displayed for 2 full days. Computer display equipment, sound, or projection equipment, or freestanding displays are not permitted.

Oral Presentation – 5 minute presentations will be presented at Tuesday, November 27th luncheon. Flipcharts and projectors will be provided at presenter request. All other AV equipment is the responsibility of the presenter.

Computer Software Demonstration – 30 to 45 minute maximum presentation. The proposal should include: intended audience, time required, objective, how the session will contribute to the training conference theme, and presenters.

Abstracts may be submitted electronically, via e-mail attachment or disk (Microsoft Word 97, (***.doc) or as text in an e-mail). Please send a hard copy by mail. Computer disks will not be returned. Hand written abstracts will not be accepted.

Abstracts should be named using the first eight letters of the author's last name, i.e. mobley.doc.

If more than one abstract is being submitted, each abstract should be individually named mobley1.doc, mobley2.doc, etc.

Authors may submit text only with no graphics, charts, or special formatting in the following order:

- reference of presentation: oral paper, poster, or computer software demonstration
- Program topic relevant to the abstract proposal
- Abstract proposal title
- Name, mailing address, fax, and e-mail address of author(s) (if multiple authors submit an abstract, one should be designated as the contact)
- Abstract proposal of 400 words or less

Send abstract proposal to:

Lawrence E. Clark Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, P.O. Box 2890 5004-S, Washington, DC 20013
E-mail: lclark@usda.gov

Timeline

July 27, 2001 – Deadline for abstract submission

August 24, 2001 – Oral and computer software demonstration presenter notified of acceptance.

August 31, 2001 – Poster presenter notified of acceptance.

Registration - All individuals presenting papers, posters, or computer software demonstrations must be registered as a training conference attendee.

Information

• The Organization does not reimburse authors for expenses incurred – either in the preparation of abstracts or for travel to the conference.

- One author may submit no more than three proposals.
- Conference information will be updated on The Organization's web site:

<http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/ORGAN/ss.htm>.

General questions about the conference should be directed to Demitrice Boozer at (515) 284-4525 or Hugh Jackson at (615) 453-3838 ext. 3, Planning Committee Chairpersons.

2000 Accomplishments Report

All committee chairpersons and chapter presidents who did not submit a report of their accomplishments should send at least a 2 page report to: Dortha Martinez (803-253-3899) at

dmartinez@sc.nrcs.usda.gov by July 15, 2001. Thanks to each of you who have already sent your information. We will begin asking for the 2001 Accomplishment reports in November 2001.

Speaker's Bureau

The Organization will set up a resource database of potential speakers for Black History Month, professional society presentations, and related occasions. If you have experience as a public speaker and would like to be included in our resource database please send the following materials to Jane't Carnes (530-792-5905):

janet.carnes@ca.usda.gov

a. Bio outlining your professional and personal experience in a career field or area of expertise

b. Synopsis of oratorical presentations

c. Availability for speaking engagements (conditions in terms of how much advance notice, accommodations needed, etc)

This activity will be a service offered through The Organization. Therefore, we are looking for volunteers not services for hire.

Annual Training Meeting Volunteers

We need recorders, photographers, moderators, evaluators, and typists to help develop daily summaries and collect evaluations for the sessions and generally help during the meeting. We will hold a training session for the volunteers in August-September. If you are planning to attend the meeting and would be willing to help, please denote your interest and contact Denise Brooks (202-690-4242): denise.brooks@usda.gov. Note that you must be a paid member.

Human Interest Stories

We would like to highlight the personal success of members of the organization. We will post short stories about members' personal achievements on a space available basis in the LINK. Include sufficient information that tells about your current position within NRCS and how to contact you. The range of

successes may span from a triumph you have made over a major illness, community recognition, professional license or certification, to foster parent, etc. Submit your information to Renna Owens (734-844-8890): rennaowens@aol.com.

Annual Meeting 10th year Souvenir Booklet

The Ways and Means Committee sent out information packets and prices for members to begin collecting ads, business cards, and patrons (names) for the booklet. Ads are priced as follows: 1/4 page - \$12.50, 1/2 page - \$25, and a whole page - \$50. Patrons (per name) - \$2. Business cards are \$5 each. Send your information and funds by September 28, 2001 to Mr. Frank Ellis (904-755-5100 ext 103), 3804 South 1st Street, Lake City, FL 32025-4212.

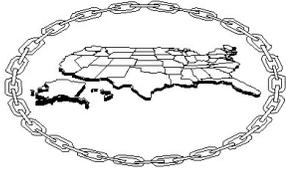
Annual Training Meeting (tentative schedule)

Memphis, Tennessee
November 26-30, 2001

Some Things Change, but Still Stay the Same!

Sylvia Rainford relinquished her post as Editor of the Link to become a member of The Organization's Executive Committee. Sylvia did an outstanding job as the Editor and Communications Committee Chairperson! Thank you for your leadership and tireless contributions!

Cara Clark remains as the design layout editor for the LINK and Renna Young Owens joins the team as Editor and Communications Committee Chairperson. We will continue to provide the same or better products to keep members of The Organization informed. You can help by submitting noteworthy news items to us when they happen. Leadership has changed, but we will maintain our superior quality.



The National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees
(The Organization)
2001 Membership Application

Any person or organization subscribing to the purpose of the National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees is eligible to apply for membership. Please type in your information before printing. You may print a blank form to fill out by hand. Please print clearly. Feel free to copy blank form and distribute as needed. *(Please send 2 signed copies to the treasurer.)*

Charles V. Roberts, Treasurer, The Organization,
 P. O. Box 2282, 111 New Port Lane, Hendersonville, TN 37077-2282
 Please Print 3 copies: (2 for Treasurer and 1 copy for your records)

Choose Type of Membership

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Membership (\$500.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-Year membership for 2001 (\$45.00) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 payment (\$500.00) | Applicable to anyone who desires to be a member of The Organization. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 payments (\$125.00) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 payments (\$62.50) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 payments (\$250.00) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 payments (\$100.00) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 payments (\$50.00) | |
| | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Life Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Annual Membership |
| <i>Applicable to Life members who contribute \$45.00 or more annually after becoming Life Members. (A minimum of \$130 if direct deposit is used.)</i> | <i>Applicable to any member who contributes more than \$45 towards the support of the Organization.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer to mail my payments | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer to mail my payments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer Direct Deposit. | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer Direct Deposit. |
| SSN#: _____ - ____ - _____ <i>(Required)</i> | SSN#: _____ - ____ - _____ <i>(Required)</i> |

Choose Type of Membership

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss First Name _____ M.I. ____ Last Name: _____
 Title Agency: NRCS. Other: _____
 Office Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____
 Phone: () _____ Fax:() _____ E-mail: _____

(If you prefer to receive Organization mailings at a different address please provide mailing information below.)

Office Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Yes I would like to be listed in The Organizations Network Directory!

What Region are you in?:

- East Midwest NHQ Northern Plains South Central Southeast West

Are you a Chapter Member? Yes No (if yes, which one?) _____

(Note: Chapter dues are not accepted or processed at National level. Please send your chapter dues to your local chapter).

If asked, I am willing to serve on the:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Constitution & Bylaws | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Black Colleges & Universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awards | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Career & Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Liaisons | <input type="checkbox"/> President's Advisory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Ways and Means |

Total Enclosed \$ _____ **Signature** _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Date Received: _____ Authorized Initials _____

Renna Owens, Editor
Cara Clark, Designer

The Link

47412 Torrington Drive North
Canton, MI 48188