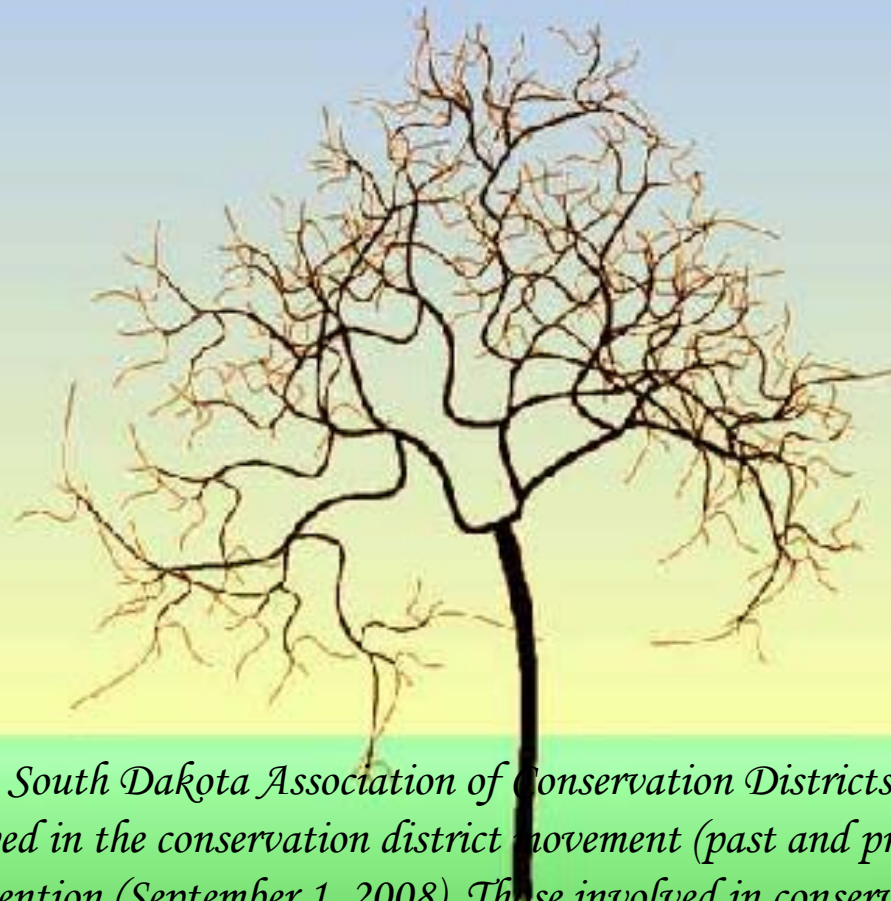
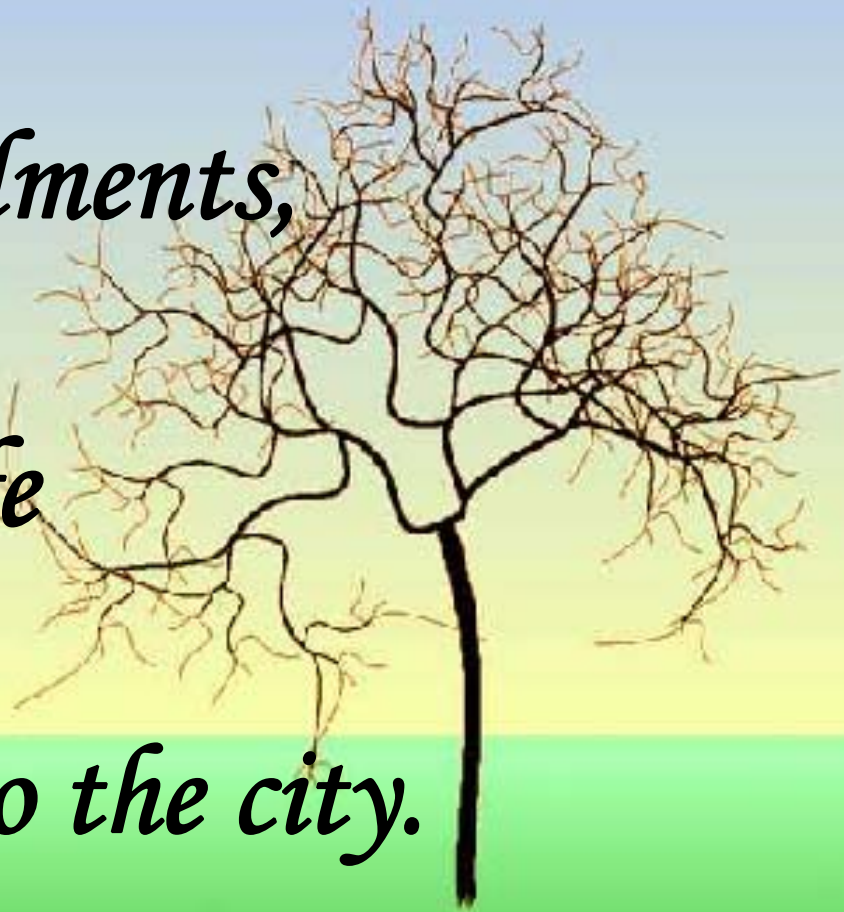


In Memoriam 2009



As in the past, the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts will continue to honor those involved in the conservation district movement (past and present) who have died since the last convention (September 1, 2008). Those involved in conservation include board officials, auxiliary members, district employees, NRCS/agency staff, and other friends of conservation. We include a brief biography and photo of each person in the memorial service.

*Blessed are they
that do His commandments,
that they may have
right to the tree of life
and may enter in
through the gates into the city.*





Tony Dean

An outspoken communicator, champion for fish and wildlife resources, accomplished sportsman, and warm and caring family man, Tony Dean reached over 200,000 people each week with his award-winning Tony Dean Outdoors TV show and Dakota Backroads Radio. He educated his audience about threats to the environment and wildlife, as he wove stories about the outdoors into his show and articles. Tony was also active on the political front, lending his voice to environmental issues: efforts related to protecting wetlands, soil and water conservation, and climate change. He is survived by his wife Darlene and four children.

Shirley Blumke

Deuel County Conservation District

Shirley Blumke and her husband Harley raised their four children on the family farm near Estelline. Shirley was a member of the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary and often accompanied her husband when he served as area director to the State Association board of directors. She was an active member of Hidewood Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church where she taught Sunday School, Bible School and had also served as the Ladies Aid president. Shirley enjoyed singing, all kinds of music and baking for others.



Arlan Jerke

*USDA- Natural
Resources Conservation Service*



During his 34-year career, Arlan Jerke assisted producers in installing conservation practices in BonHomme, Haakon, Turner and Brown Counties. He joined the Army National Guard upon his graduation from Avon High School and served in the Guard for 15 years. Arlan began his career as a soil conservation technician with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in his home county. From Tyndall, he moved to the Philip field office, then to Parker and spent the majority of his work life in the Aberdeen field office. Arlan is survived by his wife Carol and three children.

Orland Olson

Lake County Conservation District

Orland Olson farmed in the Nunda area on the home place most of his adult life until 1997 when he retired. He served 24 years on the Lake County Conservation District Board of Supervisors from 1979 through 2003. Orland was always very conservation-minded and supportive of all Lake County Conservation District projects. He was always very generous with his time and talents to the Conservation District and all the organizations he served with, including the Rutland School Board and the Crop and Livestock Board.



Hollis Haisch

Gregory County Conservation District

One of the founders of the Gregory County Conservation District, Hollis “Curley” Haisch served for 35 years. He and his wife Rose operated Mulehead Ranch north of Bonesteel, raising cattle and irrigated crops. Their ranch was well known for great goose and deer hunting excursions. Curley was also a member of his Township Board and the South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association. Famous in the area for their unselfish generosity, the South Dakota Hall of Fame inducted Rose and Curley in 1998 in the “Unsung Heroes and Good Hearts” Category. They never had any children of their own but their hired men and families became a close part of their lives.



Bob Kriege

Harding County Conservation District

The urban representative on the Harding County Conservation District from 1988 until 1995, Bob Kriege rarely missed a meeting and was always one of the first to help with a Conservation District project. He worked as a predator control officer for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and later for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks. Even after his retirement, he was still known to trap the pests around town.



Raymond Wieseler

Hyde County Conservation District



Raymond Wieseler lived a life of service, beginning with joining the National Guard after graduation from Highmore High School and serving over twenty years on the Hyde County Conservation District Board and the Highmore Fire Department. Ray farmed around the Highmore area, demonstrating his strong belief in conservation and preserving the land for future generations. The Conservation District recognized Ray and Donine's accomplishments with the 1995 Soil and Moisture Award. The Conservation District considered Ray a great asset to the board who was always able to keep things lively during a meeting. The twinkle in his eye warned you the discussion on the motion made was going to be plenty. Ray is survived by his wife, Donine, and three sons.



Verlyn Godber

Sanborn County Conservation District

Verlyn Godber served as a Sanborn County Conservation District supervisor from 1997 to 2001. After graduating from Letcher High School, Verlyn joined the Army and was stationed in Japan during the Korean War. He returned home to farm upon his discharge. Verlyn and his wife LaVay farmed over 50 years near Letcher, raising one son and two daughters. He was a member of the Letcher Community Church, American Legion, DAV and Senior Citizens.

Gene Steuven

SD Dept of Environment & Natural Resources



Gene Stueven was a committed, genuine, kind and loving son, husband, father and friend. His positive attitude was real. His hearty laughter was contagious. He was a man of many passions and taught others to live passionately as well. Gene's first love was to the outdoors and since his connection to water was so strong, it was only natural that he chose a profession that focused on protecting it. The day after Gene graduated from Augustana College, he earned a position with the South Dakota Department of Environment and

Natural Resources as a project scientist for the Watershed Protection Program. He remained loyal to that job for 20 years and stayed committed to improving the quality of lakes and streams but also to improving the program that he managed. His co-workers were not only colleagues, they were his close friends. Gene is survived by his wife Stacey and two daughters Julia and Sophia.



Lores Njos

Harding County Conservation District

Lores Njos represented the urban areas on the Harding County Conservation District board of supervisors from 1969 until 1988. Even after he retired from the board, he still checked in and kept abreast of conservation district happenings. Raised on a sheep ranch west of Table Mountain in Harding County, he worked on ranches, in oil fields and as a small businessman before acquiring Harding, Camp Crook and Reva mail routes. A rural mail carrier for 30 years, Lores estimated he drove a million and a half miles during those 30 years. He played guitar with the popular country western band, "The Satellites" in the 1960s and early 1970s. Lores was the first to help with a project of any kind. "No" was not in his vocabulary. His wife Janet and their two children were frequently told that Lores was the nicest guy anyone ever met.



We recognize more members of our conservation family have passed away this year than those we highlight tonight. We hang this final ornament to honor their memory. They remain in our hearts and prayers.

*Our death is not an end if we can live
on in our children and the younger
generation. For they
are us, our bodies are
only wilted leaves on
the tree of life.*

- Albert Einstein



