

O K L A H O M A C O N S E R V A T I O N C O N V E R S A T I O N

Information for and about Oklahoma's Conservation Districts

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Remembering the Dust Bowl - OACD Area Meetings 2012

Local Conservation Representatives Attend Area Meetings of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts

Conservation leaders discussed issues relevant to each of their areas of the state at five Area Meetings of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts held in November 2012. A local conservation district hosted each of the meetings, sponsored by the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) and cosponsored by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) in cooperation with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). From 120 to 150 people attended each of the meetings.

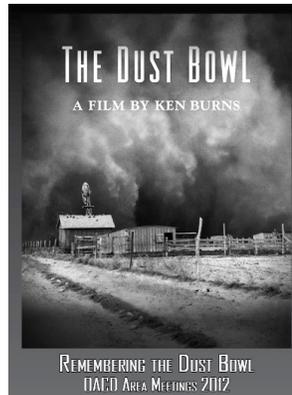
"Remembering the Dust Bowl," the theme for the meetings for Oklahoma's conservation district directors and employees, reflected the challenges faced by natural resource conservation entities during one of the hottest and driest periods in state history. The theme also focused attention on statewide previews of a new documentary called THE DUST BOWL by filmmaker Ken Burns. The 4-hour documentary premiered on PBS television stations Nov. 18 and 19 and featured many interviews with Oklahomans who survived that manmade natural disaster. Each Area Meeting included showing a 45-minute preview of the film.

Texas County Conservation District hosted the Area I Meeting in Guymon on Nov. 1. Kay County CD hosted the Area II Meeting in Oklahoma City on Nov. 7. Grady County CD hosted the Area IV Meeting in Chickasha on Nov. 8. Craig County CD hosted the Area III Meeting in Vinita on Nov. 14 and Latimer County CD hosted the Area 5 Meeting in Wilburton on Nov. 15.

Greg Scott, state soil scientist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, used a rainfall simulator to demonstrate benefits of the "no-till" farming method at the Area I, II, IV and V Meetings. Debi Carnott, OCC North Canadian River Project education coordinator, and Clay Pope, OACD executive director, presented the demonstration at the Area II Meeting.

Robert Toole, OCC Conservation Programs director, accompanied by OCC/CP watershed technicians Johnny Pelley at Area IV and Dennis Boney at Area V, presented and explained equipment used in operation and maintenance of upstream flood control dams.

At the Area I and III Meetings Jontie Aldrich, Partners for Wildlife program coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, explained how grants from his program helped local conservation districts acquire equipment for the purpose of increasing and restoring native wildlife habitat. Dan Herald, Texas *Area Meetings 2012*, continued on page three



Greg Scott, NRCS state soil scientist, used a rainfall simulator to demonstrate how no-till improves the ability of soil to capture and hold moisture.

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Our vision:
Responsible care for Oklahoma's natural resources.

Our mission:
To conserve, protect and restore Oklahoma's natural resources, working in collaboration with the conservation districts and other partners, on behalf of the citizens of Oklahoma.

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Conservation Calendar

For more events and information, click on

"Calendar of Events" at

<http://conservation.ok.gov>

NACD Annual Meeting,

Jan. 27-30, San Antonio, Texas

Oklahoma Environmental Expo

Feb. 1, Oklahoma City

Mammals...From Head to Toe Workshop,

Feb. 12, Frederick

OACD State Meeting,

Feb. 24-26, Midwest City

GIS Day at the Capitol,

March 5, Oklahoma City

Conservation Day at the Capitol,

April 1, Oklahoma City

National Land & Range Judging Contest,

April 30 - May 2, Oklahoma City

In our thoughts...

Jeremy Burroughs, Grady County CD engineering aide, lost his mother on Oct. 3.

Searles F. "Jick" Grant, Caney Valley CD manager, passed away on Oct. 22 following a massive stroke.

Glenda Moore, Tillman County CD secretary, lost her husband Wayne on Nov. 6.

Michelle Williams, Tulsa County CD secretary, passed away on Nov. 31.

Hal Clark, Cimarron County CD director and former Area 1 Commission member, lost his son Brad on Dec. 7.

Congratulations!

Christine Harper, Deer Creek CD manager, became a grandmother with the birth of Tyson Dean Beiland, a boy, on Nov. 26.

Thank you —

Dear Conservation Family,

I would like to thank my Conservation Family for the calls, text, cards and prayers during my mother's illness and her death. It meant so much to me to be lifted up by a great group of people. Thanks again,

Paula Stafford, Kiowa County Conservation District secretary

Thank you very much for the kind cards, prayers and thoughts that I have received from many people. I lost my husband Wayne on Nov. 6th. He had cancer for almost 5 years, so it was very hard. We had been married for 43 years, so I have many wonderful memories in my heart. Thanks again so much.

Glenda Moore, Tillman County Conservation District, secretary

OETA and Oklahoma Conservation Partnership Promote THE DUST BOWL premiere with public events, lessons and more

From August through November, OETA and Oklahoma's Conservation Partnership participated in a number of events to promote the premiere of a new documentary by award winning filmmaker Ken Burns. The two-part, four-hour film, THE DUST BOWL, premiered on Nov. 18 and 19 across the nation.

OETA, OACD, OCC and NRCS hosted "Screening and Community Conservation" events at six locations across the state in August, October and November, featuring excerpts from both episodes of the film, along with panel discussions including Dust Bowl survivors.

The events were held in Woodward on Aug. 26; Altus on Oct. 4; Guymon on Nov. 1; Stillwater on Nov. 5; Oklahoma City on Nov. 8; and Tulsa on Nov. 12. Dayton Duncan, author of THE DUST BOWL, spoke at the Tulsa screening and responded to questions from the audience. The next day Duncan spoke at the Governor's Water Conference and showed a short preview of the film. In addition, 45-minute previews were shown at all five OACD Area Meetings in November (see *Remembering the Dust Bowl* on page one).

OETA also aired a series of six segments called "Lessons from the Dust Bowl" on the topics "Soil Conservation;" "Flood Control Dam;" "Water Quality;" "Endangered Species;" "Climate Change; and concluding with "Then and Now." OETA news anchor Dick Pryor interviewed Mike Thralls, OCC executive director; Dean Graumann, OACD Area IV director and Greer County Conservation District board member; and Clay Pope, OACD executive director; about conservation practices and lessons learned from the Dust Bowl on the Oklahoma Forum program that aired on Nov. 18.



Dayton Duncan, author of THE DUST BOWL (right), with Pauline Hodges, Dust Bowl survivor. Hodges, served as a consultant and was featured in THE DUST BOWL. She attended all the Oklahoma preview screenings of the documentary film and participated in panel discussions at several of the events.



OCC, OACD and OETA presented Conservation Commendations to Dust Bowl survivors who were featured in THE DUST BOWL documentary. From left, standing, at the Guymon screening, were Joe Parker, OACD president; Karl Jett, OCC Area I OCC Commission member; Don Wells; Millard Fowler; Mark Norman, OETA acting director; Imogene Glover; Mike Thralls, OCC executive director; and Pauline Hodges; and, seated, Ina K. Labrier; and Virginia Frantz.

Awards & Recognition

Ashley Rhea, OCC/WQ monitoring specialist, was recognized at the November 2012 Commission meeting for five years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Johnny Pelley, OCC Conservation Programs watershed technician, was recognized at the December 2012 meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for 25 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Wes Shockley, OCC Water Quality monitoring specialist, was recognized at the December 2012 meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for 20 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Area Meetings 2012, continued from page one

County Conservation District director, and Bud Stout, district equipment manager, contributed to the discussion at Area I as did Coleta Bratten, Dewey County CD secretary. Robert Willy, Craig County CD chair, contributed to the discussion at Area III.

Verlin Hart and Gary Bledsoe, Lincoln County Conservation District directors and members of the Crosstimbers Prescribed Burn Association, explained how the burn association came into being and described how equipment is used in prescribed burn events.

Tom Buchanan, Lugert-Altus Irrigation District general manager, spoke about Irrigation Management and the federal Environmental Quality Incentive Program at the Area IV Meeting.



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Wildlife program helped Craig County Conservation District acquire equipment for the purpose of increasing and restoring native wildlife habitat, including the no-till drill shown above.

Frank Acker, Little River CD manager, and Scott Pace, NRCS district conservationist, provided an update on Ouachita Mountains Resource Conservation and Development programs at the Area V Meeting.

Cheryl Cheadle, OCC/Water Quality Blue Thumb coordinator, spoke about the Blue Thumb program at each of the meetings. Richard Zetterburg, NRCS assistant state conservationist for programs, gave a presentation about the Local Emphasis Area program at several of the meetings.

OACD Conservation Awards Area winners were recognized at each of the meetings.

All area winners will compete at the state level in the categories of Outstanding Conservation District, sponsored by Chesapeake Energy; and Outstanding District Director, sponsored by the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation; and Outstanding Landowner/Cooperator, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy of Oklahoma. The state winners will be announced at the OACD State Meeting Feb. 24-26, 2013, in Midwest City and awards will be presented during Conservation Day at the Capitol on April 1, 2013.

Land Legacy honors Mike Thralls Don Walker Conservation Leadership Award presented to OCC Executive Director

The Land Legacy organization presented its Don Walker Conservation Leadership Award to Mike Thralls, OCC executive director. The award was presented at an event that Land Legacy conducts annually in the Tulsa area called "Play and Preservation" held on Oct. 7th.

The award is named after Land Legacy's founding chairman and is given each year to the individual who most advances conservation efforts across Oklahoma. In the presentation it was stated that Thralls was selected in recognition of his strong leadership, not only last year "but during your entire tenure at the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, for advancing conservation in our state."

Land Legacy is a nonprofit land conservation organization established in 2003 in partnership with the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Its mission is to conserve and enhance rural and urban landscapes to improve the quality of life. The group's work includes urban parks and trails, farm and ranch preservation, and water quality protection. The organization also works with public agencies and other conservation organizations to establish long-term conservation goals and programs. Past recipients include Jim Horne of the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in 2010 and J.D. Strong of Oklahoma Water Resources Board in 2011.

NAAMLPL honors OCC's Dianne Ireton

Dianne Ireton, OCC/Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program administrative officer, was honored by National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs during the 34th annual NAAMLPL 2012 Conference held Sept. 23-26 in Des Moines, Iowa. She has worked for OCC's AML Program since 1986.

For many years Dianne has performed many "behind-the-scenes" tasks in support of NAAMLPL. She designed the association's first letterhead. From 1999 through 2003 she was the design and layout coordinator for the association newsletter. Dianne developed the NAAMLPL website and continues to maintain it. In addition, Dianne maintains an archive of NAAMLPL meeting minutes. "Dianne is a person who likes opportunities to utilize her skills to meet challenges," the NAAMLPL newsletter said.

In her job with OCC she plays a key role in the AML Emergency Program that deals primarily with sudden and unanticipated subsidences of abandoned underground mines where quick action is needed to help protect lives and property.

Dianne's design was selected as the OCC agency logo currently in use. A long time participant in helping stage the National Land and Range Judging Contest, she was selected as official Contest Honoree for 2011.



Some of the equipment used by the Crosstimbers Prescribed Burn Association



At the Area V Meeting in Wilburton, (from right) Robert Toole, OCC Conservation Programs director; and Dennis Boney, OCC/CP watershed technician; use the skid steer and attachments on the trailer in the operation and maintenance of flood control dams in the state.



Dianne Ireton was recognized at the December 2012 meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for receiving the NAAMLPL Stan Barnard Award. From left are Dan Lowrance, OCC chair; Dianne Ireton, OCC AML administrative officer; and Mike Thralls, OCC executive director.

OCC State Charitable Campaign Collects \$3,800 plus “Toys for Tots”

OCC has participated in the State Charitable Campaign for many years and employees have often contributed to various toy donation drives in the past. This year was the first time OCC held its own toy drive.

“Thanks to Santa Claus for attending OCC’s December Full Staff Meeting to help kick off our very successful toy drive,” said Kim Tweed, OCC’s State Charitable Campaign coordinator.

Campaign events included a pie auction that raised \$606 and a silent auction that raised \$644, along with pledges in the amount of \$2,550 for a total of \$3,800. In addition a large box full of brand new toys was collected and presented to members of the U.S. Marine Corps for its “Toys for Tots” campaign.

(From right) Mike Thralls, OCC executive director; Stacey Day, OCC Awards and Recognition Committee co-chair; Ben Pollard, OCC assistant director; and Jim Leach, OCC Water Quality Cost Share and Finance director; presented a box full of new toys to the U.S. Marines for its Toys for Tots Campaign in December.



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