75th Anniversary Celebration of the Franklin County Conservation District

Thursday January 21, 2016
12:00 PM
Celebration Hall ~ Franklin County Fairgrounds
Ottawa, Kansas

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”
Aldo Leopold
Congratulations to the Bankers Award Winners!

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GOPPERT STATE SERVICE BANK

Congratulations to the Bankers Award Winners

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1250 E Logan
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207 E Broad St.
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106 E 5th
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Congratulations to the Bankers Award Winners. Thank you for your dedication to conservation!

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Proudly Serving Anderson, Franklin, and Johnson Counties

Congratulations to

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Thank you to our meal sponsors!
Franklin County Conservation District Annual Meeting

Lunch

Catered by L&M Catering and provided courtesy of:
Frontier Farm Credit, Goppert State Service Bank, Kansas State Bank,
Mid-America Bank, Patriots Bank and Peoples Bank

Business Session

Approval of 2015 Financial Report as printed
Approval of 2015 Minutes as printed
2015 Annual Report Highlights
Election of Supervisors
Recognition of previous Supervisors & Employees

Bankers Awards

Presented by Goppert State Service Bank, Kansas State Bank,
Mid-America Bank, Patriots Bank and Peoples Bank

Soil Conservation Award presented to
Donald & Nancy Johnson
Ken & Susan Taylor
Water Quality Award presented to
Frank Austin

Drawing for $100 Gift Certificate for Drill Rent
Provided by the Franklin County Conservation District

Election Results

Adjournment of business meeting

We understand many of you are on your lunch hour; feel free to excuse yourself if you need to return to work at this time. Otherwise we welcome you to stay and view the 30 minute documentary

“When the Well Runs Dry”

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**INCOME**

- Conservation Partners Donations $0
- County Budget Allocation $43,780.00
- Grants $0
- Information & Education $333.24
- Interest $2.69
- Miscellaneous $0
- State Aid to Cons Districts $21,975.00

**TOTAL INCOME** $66,090.93

**EXPENSES**

- Administrative Expenses $5,058.74
- Annual Meeting $24.95
- Equipment Purchases/Repairs $45.85
- Information & Education $4,991.30
- Miscellaneous $0
- Payroll, Taxes & Benefits $59,773.56
- Travel & Trainings $4,259.89

**TOTAL EXPENSES** $74,154.29

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### 2015 Financial Report: Enterprise Account

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**INCOME**

- Conservation Partners Donations $2,714.20
- No-Till Drill Rental $3,913.00
- Interest $8.58
- Retail Sales/Services $2,441.52
- Equipment Sold $0
- Miscellaneous $0

**TOTAL INCOME** $9,161.59

**EXPENSES**

- Administrative Fees $13.00
- Annual Meeting $1,839.55
- Equipment Purchase $0
- Equipment Repairs $574.14
- Goods for Resale $2,412.73
- Information & Education $83.88
- Travel & Trainings $10.00

**TOTAL EXPENSES** $4,933.30

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- Interest income $84.29
- Balance December 31, 2015 $28,151.40

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MINUTES OF THE 74th ANNUAL MEETING

The 74th Annual Meeting of the Franklin County Conservation District was held on January 22, 2015 at Celebration Hall in Ottawa, Kansas with 83 conservation friends in attendance. Chairman Ron Dunbar called the business session to order at 12:43PM. He introduced the board members and office staff as well as recognizing county banks and county commissioners. Ron expressed thanks for the board, the banks and hundreds of guests who have enjoyed the meals provided by L&M Catering over the years and presented Madeline with a flower arrangement. Treasurer Doug Smith presented the 2014 financial reports for the Operations, Enterprise and Certificate of Deposit. Motion was made by Gene Vining to approve the Treasurers' Reports as presented, seconded by Jack Wray. Motion carried. Vice Chairman Steve Curtis informed guests that the minutes of the 73rd Annual Meeting were printed in their program and asked if there were any questions or correction. A motion was made by Roger Maxwell to approve the minutes as printed, seconded by Paula Smith. Motion carried.

An election was conducted by Darren Hibdon, Franklin County Extension Agent, to fill the expiring terms of Ron Dunbar and Doug Smith. The nominating committee had nominated Ron Dunbar and Doug Smith prior to the meeting. Additional nominations were asked for from the floor. Since no further nominations were made, Gene Van Horn made a motion to cease nominations, seconded by Alan Maxwell. Motion carried. Ballots were collected and counted by Darren Hibdon.

Cecil Rockhold shared a few highlights from the 2014 Annual Report which was printed in the program. Keri Harris highlighted several of the education programs provided through the Franklin County Conservation District in 2014. Motion made by Galen Harris to adjourn the business session, seconded by Elmer Grey, motion carried. Business session adjourned at 12:56 PM.

Key Banker Blake Jorgenson, Kansas State Bank presented the 2014 Kansas Bankers Awards for Conservation on behalf of the Franklin County Bankers Association. Honorees included Mr. and Mrs. Jim Dorsey, Mr. & Mrs. Brent Dorsey; Mr. & Mrs. Norman Reed for soil conservation and Mr. & Mrs. Lee Nitcher for Water Quality.

Ron Dunbar presented Gary Bruner, retired NRCS District Conservationist with a plaque in honor of his years of service to conservation in Kansas. Ron also took a moment to honor and remember Rick Porter, retired RC&D Coordinator and Pat Lehman, KACD Executive Director; both of who passed away suddenly earlier this month.

Darren Hibdon presented the election report that Ron Dunbar and Doug Smith had both been reelected to serve a three-year term on the Conservation District Board.

Two gift certificates for free drill rental up to 10 acres were given away as door prizes. Chairman Ron Dunbar thanked everyone for their support of conservation; especially the local businesses that had purchased an ad in the program, the banks and county commissioners. The program concluded at 1:10 PM.
A look back at Conservation’s beginnings through a narrative from Dr. Larry Butler’s television show *Out on the Land*

In the early 1930’s along with the greatest depression this nation ever experienced came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. Following the severe and sustained drought in the Great Plains the regions soil began to erode and blew away creating huge black dust storms that blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside. Thousands of dust refugees left the black fog to seek better lives. But the storms stretched across the nation. They reached south to Texas and east to New York; dust even sifted into the White House and onto the desk of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. On Capitol Hill, while testifying about the erosion problem soil scientist Hugh Hammon Bennet drew back the curtains to reveal a sky blackened by dust. Congress unanimously passed legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national policy and priority. Because nearly ¾ of the continental United States is privately owned Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land. In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form soil and water conservation districts. Brown Creek Soil and Water Conservation District in North Carolina was the first District established. The movement caught on across the country with district enabling legislation passed in every state. Today the country is blanketed with nearly three thousand conservation districts. Although called by different names in various states, they share a single mission: to coordinate assistance from all available sources, public and private, local, state, and federal in an effort to develop locally driven solutions to natural resource concerns. More than 17,000 citizens serve in elected or appointed positions on Conservation Districts governing boards. The Districts work directly with millions of cooperating land managers nationwide to manage and protect natural resources. Among other things Conservation Districts help implement farm, ranch and forest land conservation practices; conserve and restore wetlands; protect groundwater resources; and reach out to communities and schools to teach the value of natural resources and encourage conservation efforts.

*The above narrative is a transcript from “Out On The Land” season 6; episode 76, on RFDTV*
Franklin County Conservation History

Forming a conservation district in Franklin County was not a readily accepted idea or an easy task. Five men who had the insight and felt there was a need to conserve the land took up the challenge. These five men were: Leslie Hunter, Harry Funk, Chester Wagner, Harry Scott and H.M. Ward shown in the Conservation Districts file photo to the right.

Many meetings and three elections were held before the patrons of Franklin County passed the resolution to form the conservation district. The official charter was signed on April 25, 1941 making it the 14th district formed in the state of Kansas. The Cooperative Extension Service played a key role in organizing and assisting the new districts.

Each district has a governing body of five board of supervisors who are elected by local landowners and serve three year terms. They share their experience and knowledge of community needs to guide the district in setting goals and priorities for carrying out resource conservation programs. While there have been many Franklin County residents who have served on the board since 1941, none have served as long as Leslie Hunter or Albert Dunbar. Leslie Hunter served the local board for 35 years and served as president of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts in 1960. He also served on the Marais des Cygnes Drainage District board and ASC Committee. Albert Dunbar also served on the board for 35 years.

Albert represented the district on the RC&D Council, Franklin County Planning Commission and by attending many state and national conservation conventions. Pictured at left are Leslie Hunter and Albert Dunbar. A complete list of those who have served on the Conservation District as elected supervisors and appointed advisors is printed on the back page of this program.

An annual meeting is held each January to report district activities and accomplishments; the meeting is open to the public and is held the Thursday immediately following Martin Luther King Jr Day. An election is held during the annual meeting to fill three year terms for position of board supervisors. The Kansas Bankers Association Awards have been part of our annual meeting since 1945. The annual bankers awards for conservation work are presented during the annual meeting. A complete list of award winners, dating back to 1945 is printed on the placemats at each place setting for today’s 75th Anniversary Celebration.

At first few districts had staff to assist the supervisors in their many tasks. Minutes from June 1955 indicated actions were taken to approach county commissioners for the purpose of obtaining an allotment to hire a part time secretary. The county commissioners did allow a “clerical fund” so the board hired a part time stenographer. In early 1964 a motion was made to prepare a budget to present to county commissioners for additional funding. In 1965 it was also recorded that state matching funds in the amount of $2,500 was received. The district was now funded by county and state monies for the first time. Over time the county and state funds have increased. The district began to bring in enterprise funds through the sale of marking flags, grass seed, pipe, a drill and planter for rent. Without the enterprise funds it would not have been possible for the district to meet the demands of the Food Security Act and to facilitate the purchase of the necessary office automation and field equipment necessary to carry out the provisions of Food Security Act, Conservation Reserve Program, and other conservation programs as they evolved over the years.
2015 Annual Report

January:
~ Annual Meeting was held January 22, 2015 at 12PM at Celebration Hall.
~ Ron Dunbar and Doug Smith were both reelected to serve a term of three years on the Board.
~ Scholarships for the No Till on the Plains Winter Conference were awarded to eight Franklin County landowners.
~ Welcomed Jose Mendoza, Supervisors District Conservationist, to Paola as part of the NRCS Management Unit.
~ Assisted with Farm Bill information meetings in Ottawa by advertising the meetings and providing refreshments.
~ Staff attended the National Association of Conservation Districts 69th Annual Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana.
~ Supported NACD, KACD, KACD Employees Organization, KACD Auxiliary through payment of annual dues.
~ Continued partnership and promotion for Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) by donating $1,000.00 to KFAC to assist with scholarships for two teachers to attend the summer graduate workshop.
~ Staff assisted by presenting The Soil Tunnel Trailer to 16 groups of students, 500+ students total, at the Johnson County Slice of Ag event at the Overland Park Convention Center. Johnson County staff assists with our April Earth Festival.
~ Received notification that District Manager Keri Harris had been nominated as potential board of directors member for the Kansas Association of Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE).
~ Conducted SFY16 cost share program application period January 2 - February 27.

February:
~ Supervisors were rotated for 2015 as follows: Stephen Curtis, Chairman; Doug Smith, Vice Chairman; Cecil Rockhold, Treasurer; Dwayne LaGalle, Member; Ron Dunbar, Member.
~ Co Sponsored the third bi-annual Ag Stewardship Workshop in Overbrook with Douglas, Osage and Shawnee Counties.
~ Promoted the Annual Women Managing the Farm Conference.
~ Staff attended NRCS program rollout training focused on the implementation of federal conservation programs.
~ Utilized NACD Marketplace to order preprinted educational materials for distribution focusing on Soil Health.
~ Supported the Richmond Fair with annual donation.
~ Hosted, as a satellite location, the 8th Annual Kansas Farm Bureau, Ag in the Classroom and Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education Be Ag Wise Workshop focusing on water. Participants were able to use Skype and hear presentations from the main site in Manhattan while still participating in hands-on lessons in Pittsburg, Great Bend and Ottawa. 9 participants attended in Ottawa.
~ Franklin County producers Jim Dorsey, Francis Peed, Lane Curtis, Darren Williams, Burke Sink, Doug Smith, Dwayne LaGalle, and Stephen Curtis attended the No Till on the Plains Winter Conference.
~ Staff assisted Johnson County extension Office with information on our Great Plains 6 foot No Till Drill. Johnson County Extension is looking to purchase a drill to have available for rent and was gathering information on different types of drills and how the rental process works through neighboring conservation districts.

March:
~ Presented an update on programs and conservation history to the Franklin County Commissioners as part of new funding request process. Presentation focused on conservation district history and how many of our services and programs are already working to goals outlined in the new, still draft, Vision for the future of Water in Kansas. Presentation also reminded the commissioners that the county funds received by the Conservation District are used for the promotion and implementation of conservation of all natural resources including soil, water, air, plants and animals. Requested amount of funding was $46,000.00, an increase from $43,780 we had received for nine of the last ten years. The board felt an increase was justified due to increases in mileage rate, postage rate, KPERS, and meeting registration rates.
~ Welcomed new KACD Executive Director, Jim Kruger after the unexpected passing of Pat Lehman in January.
~ Staff attended the KACD/KDA-DOC Spring Workshop in Manhattan. Topics of discussion included 2016 budgets, changes to the state buffer initiative; updates on grazing management plans for cost share applicants; new financial management checklist for supervisors; and the public meetings being held across the state for input on the development of the Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas.
~ Researched on the possibility of including cost share for the Haney Soil Health test as part of our local cost share program. After visiting with several KSU R&E staff it was determined there are many variables and at this time is not recommended that we include it on our cost share program at this time.
~ Conservation District board provided comment to the Kansas Water Office; Water Vision Team regarding services offered through the Conservation District to assist with the implementation of the Water Vision.
~ Participated in Health Fair for West Franklin elementary students with a hands-on lesson teaching students about health choices start with healthy soil. 189 students participated.
~ Staff presented Incredible Journey, an interactive lesson focusing on the Water Cycle, at Central Heights after school program. There were 14 students who participated.
March continued:
~ Participated in the Franklin County Children’s Coalitions Spring Fling by presenting The Soil Tunnel Trailer to 23 people.
~ District Manager Keri Harris was elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) through 2017.
~ Supported KACD Education & Youth Committee with annual donation.
~ Conservation District board agreed to move forward with sponsorship of a WRAPS grant focusing on the upper Marais des Cygnes watershed. It was later discovered, after visiting with KDHE, the upper MdC as its own watershed does not have an approved nine element plan. The sponsorship of an WRAPS grant for the upper MdC would required multi-year planning and development of EPA approved plan before WRAPS fund could be applied for. Sponsorship of the Upper MdC WRAPS grant was taken no further at the present time.
~ Supported Franklin County 4H with annual donation towards wildlife, forestry and other conservation related awards.

April:
~ 11th annual Earth Festival was held on Wednesday April 15. We had 400 Franklin County Middle School students attending in the event. Volunteers from KDHE; Douglas, Jefferson, Johnson, Wyandotte and Miami County Conservation Districts; Frontier Extension District, Osawatomie High School and NRCS helped to make the event a success.
~ Staff assisted with Miami County Conservation Districts EARTH Festival in Paola; 200 students participated.
~ Staff assisted with Regional Envirothon in Council Grove
~ Information on the 2015 Range Youth Camp was mailed to all four Franklin County high schools and posted on the Franklin County Conservation District Facebook page. Scholarships to cover registration fees were available to Franklin County students interested in attending the Range Camp; we unfortunately had no students express an interest in the event.
~ Staff assisted with Wyandotte County Conservation District SOIL Festival at Camp Naish by presenting The Earth Balloon to 200 students during the annual event.
~ Staff assisted with the Kansas Envirothon State Competition at Camp Wood in Elmdale KS.
~ Staff attended the KACEE Excellence in Conservation Annual Awards Celebration at Sunset Zoo in Manhattan.
~ Celebrated Earth Day at Appanoose Elementary by presenting Recycle Relay to 19 second graders.
~ Conservation District supervisors contacted NRCS State Conservationist Eric Banks regarding the vacant District Conservationist position in Ottawa, and their concerns for quality of customer service during the vacancy.
~ Published spring newsletter and mailed to nearly 800 landowners and partners.

May:
~ Staff participated in the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Employee Organizations bi-annual statewide meeting.
~ District Manager Keri Harris was notified of suggestion/nomination for her participation in Leadership Franklin County Program. She graciously declined the nomination to apply at this time.
~ Staff assisted with the Jefferson County Water Festival after Jefferson County staff assisted with our event in April. Staff presented Recycle Relay to 200 students during the event.
~ Staff participated in Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education Board Development Retreat.
~ The Board of Supervisors, together with staff spent time reviewing and updating local conservation district policies and procedures related to personnel. Most of these files had not been updated since 2001 and were out of date.
~ District Manager Keri Harris was selected as participant in the Kansas Solutioneers Cadre. Solutioneers is a grant funded leadership program, sponsored by the Pisces Foundation in California. The group will meet four times over the next year.

June:
~ Board of Supervisors completed the development of SFY16 cost share program.
~ Staff participated in KPERS webinar related to new KPERS reporting system.
~ Continued use of our website www.fccdks.org, for news and conservation information
~ Board and staff worked with Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Conservation to complete an administrative review of Conservation District files.
~ Staff presented The Earth Balloon at Kansas City Kansas Community College as part of Natural Resources day during summer camp program for 120 youth.

July:
~ Supervisors reviewed and finalized the 2016 Franklin County Conservation District Annual Work Plan.
~ Presented The Soil Tunnel Trailer at Camp Chippewa as part of summer camp programs to 40 campers.
~ Received $21,975.00 in funding through State Aid to Conservation Districts for 2015.
~ Demaranville and Associated, CPA, completed 2014 Agreed Upon Procedures of Conservation District accounting records.
~ Clifford Thornton, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations attended July Conservation District Board Meeting and updated the District on the vacant DC position.
July continued:
~ Supervisors reviewed and updated the Local Operating Agreement between NRCS and the Conservation District. The Local Operating Agreement is the agreement which outlines the partnership between NRCS and the Franklin County Conservation District, allowing for the Conservation District to be housed in the USDA Service Center in exchange for clerical and other conservation program implementation assistance.
~ Allocation in the amounts of $14,003.00 and $16,434.00 were received from the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation through the Kansas Water Plan funds for implementation of the Water Resources Cost Share Program and the NonPoint Source Pollution Controls Program, respectively, during SFY16. Without the Conservation District’s presence at the local level the State would not have a means to funnel funds for these conservation programs to local landowners.
~ Franklin County has taken a 55.5% reduction in state cost share funding over the last ten years. The board discussed how critical the rankings, based on soil and water quality improvement, continues to be with such little funding.
~ District Manager Keri Harris applied to serve on the Kansas Water Office Regional Advisory Committee; formerly Basin Advisory Council) for the Marais des Cygnes region as part of the Water Vision.

August:
~ Availability of scholarships for first time attendees to attend the 2016 No Till on the Plains Winter Conference was announced on the conservation District Website and Facebook page.
~ Supervisors reviewed and completed new Financial Management Checklist for Conservation District Supervisors and submitted completed form to the Kansas Department of Agriculture– Division of Conservation per new guidelines.
~ Staff participated in KACD/KDA–DOC Fall Workshop in Manhattan.
~ Malcolm Jones started August 24 with NRCS as the new District Conservationist; Malcolm came to Ottawa after four years of service with NRCS in Oklahoma.
~ Supported Day on the Farm by donating $50 towards the purchase of drawstring backpacks for students who attend the annual event.
~ Supported Power of the Past with annual donation.
~ Utilized NACD Marketplace to order printed educational materials for distribution at Day on the Farm.

September:
~ Conservation District received notification Keri Harris had been appointed to serve on the MdC RAC through 2017 to assist with regional goal planning as part of the Water Vision.
~ NRCS hosted a local work group meeting in which conservation district board members participated.
~ Staff presented water quality lessons to 240 students and adults at the Topeka Water Festival.
~ Staff presented The Soil Tunnel Trailer at Day on the Farm to 475 Franklin County third graders and parents.
~ Staff presented The Soil Tunnel Trailer at West Franklin Middle School and High School to 69 students and staff.
~ Conservation District staff and NRCS staff worked together to present incredible journey, and the Stream Trailer at Williamsburg Elementary as part of their ag enrichment time in their new project based learning curriculum to 105 students in grade K-5.
~ Conservation District board utilized availability of materials from the NRCS Distribution Center to order free materials for Day on the Farm giveaways and other handouts.
~ Provided educational materials to Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce Day on the Farm. Materials, to be given to the 400 students who attend Day on the Farm, were related to soil as part of The Soil Tunnel Trailer presentation.
~ Staff gave 31 presentations (repeating the same presentation multiple time per day) to 889 students and adults over a 4 day period in September alone.
~ The Franklin County Board of Commissioners approved a budget allocation of $44,630.00 from the County’s general funds for the Franklin County Conservation District operating budget for 2016.
~ District Manager Keri Harris attended the MdC RAC meeting in Osawatomie. Regional priority goals for the MdC region were established and will be forwarded on to the Kansas Water Office and Kansas Water Authority as part of the water Vision implementation.

October:
~ District Manager Keri Harris participated in the second of four Soulitizers meetings focusing on rethinking leadership.
~ A donation in the amount of $50 was made towards the purchase of back packs for student who attend Day on the Farm.
~ Staff assisted with Leawood Middle School Geology Festival by presenting The Rock Cycle.
~ Provided information to counselors/ag instructors at all four county high schools regarding scholarship opportunity for students to participate in the KACD Speech Contest.
~ Received notification that KDA-DOC Executive Director Greg Foley would be resigning effective October 16, 2015. Susan Metzger will serve as interim executive director.
October continued:
~ Hosted Annual Conservation Poster and Limerick Contest for local 3rd, 5th & 7th graders. Received 161 poster from nine classes at four schools and 57 limericks from three classes at two schools. One poster and two limericks were submitted to the KACD State Contest.
~ Supported Kansas Association of Conservation and Environmental Education with annual donation towards the Kansas Environmental Education Conference.

November:
~ Received certificate of appreciation from Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom for continued support and partnership when our staff attended the KFAC Annual Meeting at the Wheat Innovation Center in Manhattan.
~ Franklin County teacher, Audra McCurdy from Williamsburg was honored at KFAC/KFB teacher of the year. Conservation District staff has worked with Audra on the development and implementation of the project based learning program at Williamsburg.
~ Staff attended and participated in the Kansas Environmental Education Conference. District Manager Keri Harris assisted at the conference by presenting during two of the sessions conference attendees participated in.
~ Supported Lake Region RC&D Adopt a Bike program by connecting Don Stottlemire with 30 used bicycles for the program.
~ Supported KACEE with annual donation to their “Be the Change” Campaign.
~ Staff participated in the Governor’s Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas two day conference in Manhattan.
~ Staff attended 71st Annual KACD Convention in Wichita.
~ Staff presented to habitat lessons to third graders at Garfield Elementary; focus on adaptation and carrying capacity.
~ Staff presented The Soil Tunnel Trailer to 5th graders at Eugene Field; focus was on human impact of the soil ecosystem.
~ 70th Annual Bankers Awards selections were made. Awards will be given to Frank Austin, Ken Taylor and Donnie Johnson during the annual meeting in January 2016.

December:
~ Published a winter 2015 newsletter with conservation news and events; mailed to 770 Franklin County landowners and businesses.
~ District Manager Keri Harris attended the MdC RAC meeting in Osawatomie. Regional priority goals established at the last meeting were discussed in preparation for the upcoming presentation at the KWA meeting to be held in Ellsworth.
~ Received sponsorship from 20 local business’ through their purchase of 2016 advertising the 75th Annual Meeting Program

A few other items to note from throughout the year:
~ We continued to support maintenance and upkeep on The Soil Tunnel Trailer so it remains in good condition and available for use in Franklin County by making a $125 donation per day used.
~ Staff assisted NRCS and local landowners with implementation of federal conservation programs including CSP, EQIP, CRP and general conservation compliance.
~ Conservation district staff assisted many producers with information related to obtaining a DUNS number and registering through SAM.gov as part of EQIP contract requirements.
~ Conservation district ordered custom blends of seed, native grasses/wildflowers for producers throughout the year.
~ Conservation district staff assisted many landowners with the rental of our 6 foot no till drill. A total of 355 acres were seeded in 2015 with the drill; revenue from rent is deposited in the enterprise account.
~ The Franklin County Conservation District Board of Supervisors approved twenty one conservation compliance plans; one EQIP plans, and sixteen CRP contract renewals in 2015.
~ Conservation District staff facilitated 19 education/outreach events (classroom presentations, water festivals, and other environmental education programs) during 2015 and reached 2,322 students and adults during these events. Outreach numbers are not recorded at every event, so actual numbers reached in 2015 are somewhat higher than 2,322.
~ The Ottawa NRCS Office, thanks in cooperation with the Franklin, Johnson and Wyandotte County Conservation Districts logged 597 volunteer hours during FFY15 and received recognition from NRCS as having the third highest number of volunteer hours in the area made up of 24 counties in southeast Kansas.

The following projects were paid on during calendar year 2015 through the Water Resources Cost share program and the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control program: 32.6 acres of Range Seeding; 2,541 lf Fence; two on site waste water system upgrades; 3 abandoned water well plappings; 261 soil tests; and 7.5 acres of Brush Management; totaling $19,182.00 6,518 lf of terraces; 0.6 acres of waterways; 499 lf Pipeline; 2 water supply tanks; totaling $29,806.00. An additional $16,984 was allocated in 2015 to fund 4,000 lf terraces; 4.3 acres of waterways; 2640 lf fence; one well plugging and 39 soil tests.
The homestead acts of the 1860’s brought people to the Great Plains. It was their lack of knowledge of conservation farming that ultimately lead to the dust bowl.

Here is a poem from Dr. Larry Butler that tells the story:

To the west they thrust as they felt they must.
All their possessions draggin’
To the west or bust.
Through the rain and dust; oxen pullin’ their wagon.
Their dreams were true, they believed them too.
Each man, his children and wife.
The big sky was blue in the morning dew.
Twas the start of their new life.
With one milk cow and a team and a plow they settled in their new home.

But I’ll tell you now they just didn’t know how to protect their sandy loam.
The winter was long and its wind held a song.
The dug out was cozy and warm.
But the homestead is gone.
So what went wrong?

This land wasn’t meant to farm.
They plowed the ground, the sky turned brown, they moved on and left their shack.
Those walls melt down as adobe returns to ground.
It’s sad for us to look back.
The winter wind did it strong fury send, the soil blew away.
I’ll tell you friend it’s come to an end, the dream from their homestead day.
Conservation Awards Program

Congratulations to the 2015 Franklin County Bankers Award Winners for Soil Conservation:
Donald & Nancy Johnson
Ken & Susan Taylor

Congratulations to the 2015 Franklin County Bankers Award Winners for Water Quality:
Frank Austin

The Conservation Awards Program is sponsored by the Kansas Bankers Association (KBA). The KBA works with K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to sponsor six award categories including Energy Conservation, Water Quality, Water Conservation, Soil Conservation, Windbreaks and Wildlife Habitat. The Conservation Awards have been presented annually in Franklin County since 1945. The purpose of the Banker Award program is to stimulate a greater interest in the conservation of the agricultural and natural resources of Kansas by giving recognition to those farmers and landowners who have made outstanding progress in practicing conservation on their farms. “The continued work and dedication of our award winners each year provide the example of conservation practices that we all need to follow. The land is our long term asset and the proper maintenance of it will help determine our future success and the successful opportunities of the next generation”, said Mike Skidmore of GSSB, 2010 Franklin County Key Banker. In recognition of the 70th consecutive year of the Bankers Awards in Franklin County we have designed placemats for today’s luncheon which include the names of the annual award recipients from 1945 through 2015. Thank you to the Franklin County Banks who have supported this program over the last 70 years; we have a long standing tradition and one that will hopefully continue for many more years to come.

Each fall students from throughout Franklin County participate in the Annual Poster and Limerick contest. This year we had participants from Appanoose, Garfield, Sacred Heart, Wellsville, West Franklin Middle School and Williamsburg. The theme for 2015 was “Local Heroes - Hardworking Pollinators”

The 2015 Third Grade Poster Contest winners were:
1st place winners: Ali Dohle, Maddie Scott, Micheala Lacey, Avery Morin, Josie Vance, Ellen Coronado, Briley Stauffer, Bella Adams, and Carter Hepner

Briley Stauffer’s first place poster was selected to represent Franklin County at the Kansas Association of Conservation District’s state poster contest which was held November 22 in Wichita.

The 2015 Fifth Grade Limerick Contest winner were:
1st place winners: Samuel Burke and Cheyenne Loftus
2nd place winners: Koy Randel and Joclynn Johnson
3rd place winners: Willow Dubois and Kylee Stevenson
The 2015 Seventh Grade Limerick Contest winners were:
1st place Emily Goracke, 2nd place Jenna George, 3rd place Sean Stover

Cheyenne Loftus and Emily Goracke’s limericks were selected to represent Franklin County as the Kansas Association of Conservation District’s state limerick contest which was held November 22 in Wichita.

Thank you to the local teachers who took the time to have their students participate in the poster and limerick contest. This years teachers were: Mr. Driver, Mr. Unruh, Ms. Robinson, Mrs. Helget, Ms. Fisher, Mrs. Keim, Ms. Larson, Ms. Heath, Ms Hughes, Mrs. Weien, Mrs. Craig and Mr. Lilley. Winning posters and limericks are posted on the Franklin County Conservation District Facebook’s page. The theme for 2016 will be “We All Need Trees”
Governor Sam Brownback issued a call to action in October 2013 for a Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas. One of Kansas’ greatest challenges is to provide a reliable drinking water supply and support a growing economy. As the Governor stated if we take no action in the next 50 years the Ogallala will be 70% depleted and another roughly 40% of the area irrigated with the Ogallala water won’t support a 400 gallon per minute well. In eastern Kansas, our water supply reservoirs will be 40% filled with sediment and five of the seven major river basins in which reservoirs support our municipal and industrial use won’t be able to meet demand during a drought. For those reasons countless Kansans have been involved in the development of the Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas. The Vision has been the focus the last two years at the Governors Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas. During the 2015 Governors Conference, participants had the opportunity to view the documentary When the Well Runs Dry. This documentary tenderly portrays the vital connection that rural Kansans have with water, our most precious resource. Ranchers, farmers, and residents of small Kansas towns tell us their heartfelt, personal stories about water, including the ongoing threats they face to the availability of the water on which they depend. When the Well Runs Dry is directed by Lawrence, Kansas filmmaker Steve Lerner; and award winning Los Angeles documentary filmmaker Reuben Aaronson. Other members of the production team are Jim Jewell and Greg Allen. We are honored to include their documentary as part of our 75th Anniversary celebration.

Learn more about the Water Vision online at http://www.kwo.org/The-Vision.html
Thank You to all of our 2016 sponsors

Anderson Tire LLC
Ecotone Forestry
Feyh Farm Seed Company
Franklin County Farm Bureau
Goppert State Service Bank
Kansas State Bank
Lutz Enterprises
McConnell Machinery
Patriots Bank
Rockers Excavating
Shuck Implement Co, Inc
Dornes Insurance Agency
Edwards Excavating
Franklin County Commissioners
Frontier Farm Credit
Harris Construction
Lake Region RC&D
Lyle Rockers & Son Excavating
Mid-America Bank
Peoples Bank
Sharp Brothers Seed Company

We appreciate the support and sponsorship from these organizations and encourage you to thank them for supporting conservation when you call upon their services in the future.

Cost Share Funds Available
Landowners interested in applying for cost share must make application prior to February 29 at the Franklin County Conservation District Office. Funds will be for conservation work to be completed Summer 2016 through Spring 2017.

6-Ft Great Plains No-Till Drill for Rent
$10 per acre; $80.00 Minimum Call 242-1109 ext 3 to schedule. Not available for out of county use.

Stay Connected and Up-to-date on Conservation News
Find us on Facebook at “Franklin County Conservation District” Not on Social Media? You can still get the latest Conservation News via our website www.fccdks.org

FREE SOIL TESTING
Receive up to TEN free soil samples per year, per landowner. Take your samples to the Extension Office; 15th & Main

We have placed recycling boxes by the door if you do not wish to take your program with you, please allow us to recycle it. Thank you!
In celebration of 75 years of Conservation in Franklin County we recognize those who have served on the Conservation District Board

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<th>Edward Altic</th>
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<th>Leonard Sheldon</th>
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Albert Dunbar and Leslie Hunter both dedicated 35 years to the Conservation District.

Supervisors are elected officials, who serve three year terms and do not receive wages; they simply volunteer their time.