



Soil & Water Conservation Society

Michigan Chapter

2009 Annual Meeting Soaring Eagle Hotel and Conference Center December 16, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m. by Rebekah Dewind – Chapter President-elect

Council Members Attend:

Rebekah Dewind	President-Elect
Kelly Goward	Immediate Past President
Jay Blair	Treasurer
Dan Kesselring	Secretary
Carrie Vollmer-Sanders	Region 4 Director

Other Members Attending: Tina Clemons, Larry Foote, Jean Gagliardo, Scott Hughey, Michael LaPointe, Sarah VanDelfzijl

Historic Note: This meeting was originally scheduled for 5:00 p.m. at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort after the afternoon technical workshop. However, the workshop was interrupted at about 4:15 p.m. with an evacuation order because of a bomb threat at the Casino. By the time a new meeting location was found and the workshop resumed, several Chapter members had departed for home.

Minutes of 12/10/2008: Moved by Sarah, seconded by Jay, to approve the 2008 Annual Meeting minutes as printed. Motion passed.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer Jay Blair presented the Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2009. Jay reported that the Total Income for 2009 was \$10,627.26; Total Expenses was \$2701.99; \$4251.00 from the International Conference Silent Auction was transferred to the Scholarship Fund; leaving a **General Fund** Balance of \$3674.27. The **Scholarship Fund** currently stands at \$15,586.73. Moved by Dan, supported by Sarah, to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Old Business:

SWCS 64th International Annual Conference Committee Report: Sarah VanDelfzijl presented the following report.

“In July of 2009, the Michigan Chapter hosted the SWCS international conference.

Thank you to everyone who attended, presented, organized, volunteered, exhibited, sponsored, or spoke at the 64th International SWCS Annual Conference. More than 500 registered attendees participated in oral and poster presentations, symposia, workshops and tours.



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We received \$4051.00 from the silent auction. We received \$3939.30 as the Chapter allotment for hosting the conference. Less conference related expenses (Michigan pins = \$697.06; Ash Pens = \$180.00; Student attending the conference = \$300.00) net income was \$2812.24 for hosting.

Our Chapter also welcomed 30 new members during 2009. This was due in large part to the conference. We welcome our new members and hope that we continue to see them in attendance at future SWCS events.”

Past President's Awards: Kelly Goward, 2009 Past President, presented Certificates of Appreciation to:

Gaylynn Kinter – for her efforts in managing of the International Conference Silent Auction.

Karen Blair – for efforts in managing the media equipment for the International Conference.

Rebekah Dewind – for her efforts in managing the recruitment and assignments of volunteers for the International Conference.

Sarah VanDelfzijl – for her efforts in assisting with many Chapter functions during the conference.

Scholarship Committee Report: Rebekah Dewind gave the following report.

“For the 2009 year, we did not award a scholarship. A recommendation from the Scholarship committee to the Executive Council was given to not award a scholarship due to a consideration of the scholarship principle and a decision to support a scholarship for the SWCS International Conference. A meeting held by the scholarship committee, came up with revisions to the current scholarship policy. Approval of the changes is awaiting membership vote.”

Awards Committee Report: Sarah VanDelfzijl presented the following report.

“Each year, the Chapter calls for nominations for awards in four categories.

Commendation – Awarded to the **Michigan SWCS Chapter member** who has made exceptional contributions to the science and art of wise land use in Michigan. Recipient will be automatically nominated for the Commendation Award presented by the national Society.

Merit – Awarded to a **SWCS member or non-member** group, agency, business, product, etc. for accomplishments or contributions to the natural resource field.

News/Media – Awarded to a **SWCS member or non-member** for the dedication and promotion of the natural resource issues in the news/media.



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Education - Awarded to a **SWCS member or non-member** individual, group, agency, etc. for their contribution to the conservation education of adults and/or youth.

This year, the Michigan Chapter is presenting awards in two of these categories.

Mr. Max Benne, Michigan SWCS Chapter Member, is receiving the **Commendation Award**. Mr. Benne is an advocate for conservation and agriculture and is deserving of the Michigan Chapter SWCS Commendation Award. Mr. Benne owns two farms: Windy Knoll Farm which is in partnership with his wife, Beverley; and Benne Farms which is in partnership with his brother, Richard, and neighbor, Douglas. His farm management serves as an example for others. Benne Farm has a completed CNMP and is verified in the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) in the Livestock, Farmstead, and Cropping systems. NRCS has also completed a whole farm conservation plan for the Farm. Over the years, the farm has fenced off a river, implemented irrigation scheduling, updated the irrigation pivots, and installed barn roof gutters, buffer zones, a wildlife refuge, manure management and windbreaks. Windy Knoll Farm has completed a CNMP and is MAEAP verified in all three systems as well. The farm was accepted in the Conservation Security Program (CSP) and is now at the highest tier. Windy Knoll Farm has implemented rotational grazing practices, sound watering facilities, and worked with plans for both pasture and timberland improvement. The land owned by Windy Knoll Farm in St. Joseph County is in the Michigan Farmland Preservation Program and the State of Michigan has been deeded the development rights.

Mr. Benne was a member of the St. Joseph County Conservation District Board of Directors for 12 years and chairman for four. He is a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and of the Nature Conservancy. He was also chairman of a St. Joseph County committee that developed the Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance which was approved by the County Commission.

Max Benne has also won several awards for his efforts in conservation and land use. Benne Farms was named Conservation Farm of the Year for 1995 by the St. Joseph County Conservation District. Windy Knoll Farm was named Cooperator of the Year for 2008 by the Chippewa-Mackinac Conservation District. Benne Farms was named the Michigan Farm Bureau's 2009 Ecology Leadership Award winner.

Mr. Benne's leadership by example has provided a significant contribution to the science and art of soil and water conservation. The Michigan Chapter SWCS is proud to recognize Mr. Benne for his continued commitment to soil and water conservation.

Dr. Kirk Heinze is receiving the **News/Media Award**. In the fall of 2008, Michigan State University and News/Talk 760 WJR partnered on a weekly radio program called "Greening of the Great Lakes" hosted by Dr. Kirk Heinze. Dr. Heinze covers all angles of sustainability relating to economics, environment and community. He has had Michiganders on talking about everything from solar energy, the MSU student organic



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farm and how to save money on your own home's energy bill. Michigan Chapter SWCS is proud to recognize Dr. Heinze as a voice for Soil & Water Conservation.

These awards will be formally presented to the recipients at the Ag & Natural Resources Week SWCS program on March 10, 2010.

Sarah then presented a special Certificate of Appreciation to Kelly Goward with the following description:

For excellence in tour, fellows forum, and all-around event coordination for the 2009 International Annual Conference. Kelly volunteered to take on the lion's share of the Michigan Chapter's onsite organizational responsibilities and her efforts resulted in the delivery of outstanding tours and programs. Her support and dedication to the Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is highly recognized and greatly appreciated.

New Business:

Elections Committee Report: Tina Clemons, Chair of the Elections Committee, reported the following results from the election.

- Jean Gagliardo was elected President-elect
- Jason Kimbrough was elected Vice President
- Michael LaPoint was elected Region 1 Director
- Kelly Goward was elected Region 3 Director
- The Michigan Scholarships in Conservation Program proposed amendments were adopted unanimously.

President's Report: Rebekah DeWind, 2009 President-elect, gave the President's Report for Aaron Lauster, President, who was unable to attend the Annual Meeting. The report is [attached](#).

Transfer to new Officers: Since President Lauster was unable to attend, Past President Kelly Goward officiated to welcome Rebekah Dewind as the 2010 President of the Chapter.

President's Goals for 2010: Rebekah Dewind presented a brief report on proposed Chapter activities for the coming year. The report is [attached](#).

Meeting adjourned by President Dewind at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Daniel F. Kesselring, Secretary