

Conservation News

Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District
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May/June 2008

Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

Elgin Daily

We extend our sympathy to the family of former Coles County SWCD director, Elgin Daily, who passed away on March 4th. Elgin served as director from 1964 until 1972 and was always actively involved with conservation issues.

The Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District offers all programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

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Outstanding Conservation Farmer

Coles County SWCD selected Chris Miller as the Outstanding Conservation Farmer for the past year. Chris has been farming in the Oakland area for about 30 years.

He is now a dedicated conservation farmer but that came a little later in his farming program. He was finding that it was costing a lot to get the crop in and out and the price he was getting for the crop was not high enough to give a good profit margin. He had no control over the grain prices, but he thought he could cut a bit on the cost of putting in the crop. He has now been using no-till on beans for the past 15 years. He recently began using strip-till on the corn. In addition to conservation farming practices, Chris has set aside 40 acres in field border for wildlife habitat. He also planted 10 acres to trees along the river bottom.

Chris gives credit to his father, Max, and his uncle, Fred, who encouraged him to not be afraid of trying something new. He says he farms the way he does because he wants to do the right thing for the land.



Chris Miller is shown receiving the Coles County Outstanding Conservation Farmer of the Year award from SWCD Director, Eric Coon.

From our Partners

Lincoln Heritage RC&D:

Electronic recycling on May 10 at Coles County Fairgrounds (345-5650 for info) and on May 17 in Mattoon at 320 N Logan (258-7928 for info).

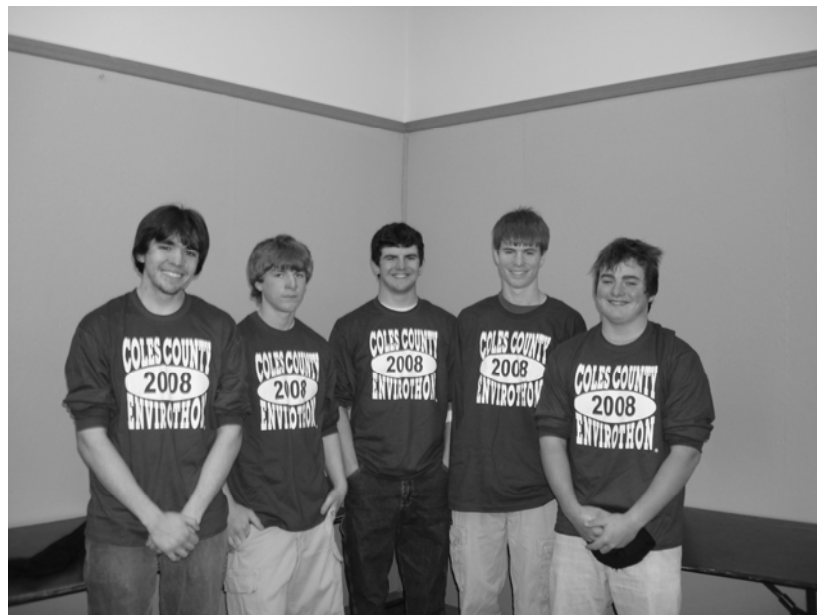
U of I Extension, Coles County:

They are partnering with Lake Land Summer College for Kids to present 3 gardening/science workshops this summer. At the Coles County 4-H Center, there will be "Insects—Friends or Foe?" on June 17 and "Trees our Green Friends" on June 26. On Lake Land's campus, there will be "Trees—Mother Nature's Giants" on June 24. All classes are for youth ages 8-11 and are held from 9 am—noon. Registration is handled by calling LLC at 234-5434.

Coles County Teams score well in six-county Envirothon competition.



Members of the first-place Charleston High School Envirothon team.



Members of the fourth-place Oakland High School Envirothon team.

Charleston High School posted the highest overall score among 22 teams at the six county Land Use Council 7 Envirothon competition. The winning team members were Karen Armstrong, Jared Switzer, Alethe Vassay, and Nathan Fritz. Their sponsor is Mrs. Jan Easter. The teams studied the areas of Aquatics, Soil, Forestry, Wildlife, and a current issue for the past several months and took exams on each of these areas on Wednesday, April 9. Charleston had the top scores on the Forestry, Aquatics, and Wildlife tests.

A team from Paris High School posted the second highest overall score and will advance to the state competition due to a requirement that the teams consist of 5 members. Congratulations to Charleston for obtaining such success with only 4 teammates. Special mention should go to the Oakland High School team of Robert Schrock, Ben McBurney, Jimmy Clifton, Ross Rhoades, and Austin Locke for obtaining the highest score of all teams (96 out of a possible 100!) on the current issue test. Mrs. Greta Henry is their sponsor.

The Envirothon is held each spring and is a natural resource education program sponsored by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts for high school students. The Envirothon emphasizes hands-on, team oriented problem-solving skills. The Envirothon experience helps to teach students to become environmentally aware, action-oriented adults. This year's contest was held at Rockhome Gardens in Arcola; they generously donated the use of their facility.

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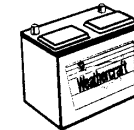
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