

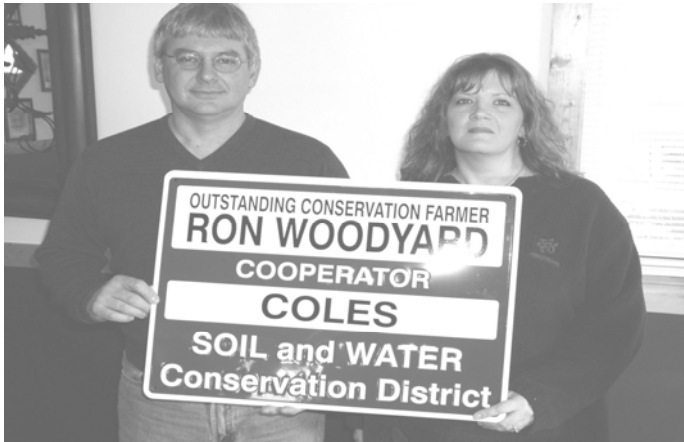
## Conservation News

### Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District



6021 Development Drive , Suite 2

Charleston, IL 61920



#### Conservation Farmer of the Year 2008

Congratulations to Ron and Chris Woodyard of Ashmore. Ron is the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation farming Woodyard Farms. Ron has been farming for 28 years. Conservation is a family trait, as Ron's late brother Kent was a past recipient of the award.

Ron farms traditional corn, soybeans and wheat with a rotation of no-till beans and mulch till corn. Ron is an firm believer of nutrient management and was one of the first farmers to participate in the state wide cost share program for reducing nutrients, and now uses VRT on all his farms. Ron has waterways, terraces and over 61 acres of CRP, consisting of tree plantings, wetlands, and prairie grass field borders.

Ron was one of the first full time grain farmers in Coles County to plant prairie grass and was the second farmer in the office in 2005 to sign up for the new field border program and is a staunch supporter of planting natives. He has also established prairie around his farm without program assistance, simply to improve wildlife habitat. Ron does his own controlled burns of the prairie and has come up with innovative ways to establish prairie.

Ron is a lifetime member of the local Pheasants Forever chapter and is an avid outdoorsman. Ron also enjoys earthwork and has built his own pond, transforming an old run down pasture into a habitat rich oasis in the midst of huge crop fields.

Ron credits his stewardship mentality to his father and late brother. Ron is married to Chris and resides on the family farm.

## New Education Liaison Hired

Kristin Yager has started work as the new SWCD Education Liaison as of February 9th. Kristin previously worked as the Environmental Education Specialist at the Douglas-Hart Nature Center in Mattoon, so she is no stranger to working with our local schools on the promotion of environmental education.

The Coles County SWCD has many wonderful programs to offer our school-aged children and Kristin is eager to build relationships with our local educators and is eager to increase the use of our educational resources. Kristin also has plans to match our educational kits to the Illinois State Learning Standards.

Kristin has an educational background in biological sciences. Kristin and her husband Ryan live in Mattoon. Please feel free to contact Kristin at [kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:kristin.yager@il.nacdnet.net) for information on the resources that we can offer your class!

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#### **COLE FARM DRAINAGE**

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## Director Election Results

The Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District election of directors was held on Tuesday, February 3, 2009 in the SWCD office . Two directors were elected to two year terms. Newly elected board member Gary Kuhns will be joining re-elected member Rollie Spaniol and sitting members Jim Bell, Larry Coutant and Don Mapes. The board wished to thank Eric Coon retiring board member for his valuable contributions as a board member. Eric has agrees to continue to serve as an associate member . The board will elect officers at the March Meeting.

All board meetings are held at the USDA Service Center on the first Tuesday of each month at 11 am unless otherwise noted. 2009 meeting dates are: 3/4/09; 4/7/09; 5/5/09–7 pm; 6/3/09; 7/7/09; 8/4/09; 9/1/09 at Spaniol's Farm, 5 pm; 10/6/09–7 pm; 11/3/09; 12/1/09 –TBD.

### LINCOLN HERITAGE RC&D E-SCRAP RECYCLING UPDATE

Fees: The disposal fees have increased. When the economy went into the downward spiral the recycling industry followed suit. The fees have increased a modest amount. The goal is to keep them as low as possible and still be able to pay the bills.

Microwaves Disposal Fee \$5

Monitors Disposal Fee \$5 \*\*

TVs Disposal Fee \$10 for up to 15" \*\*

TVs Disposal Fee \$20 for up to 27" \*\*

TVs Disposal Fee \$30 for larger than 27" \*\*

TVs Disposal Fee \$40 for consoles larger than 27" \*\*

\*\* - plus \$20 for broken tube

All other items are free.

#### Permanent Drop-Off Sites During Regular Business Hours

##### Charleston, IL

County Office Products, 110 Fifth St, 217-345-4944

Double-Hammer Computer Services, 16258 Madison Ave  
217-345-1111

Rennels TV & Appliance, 211 Lincoln Ave, 217-345-3401

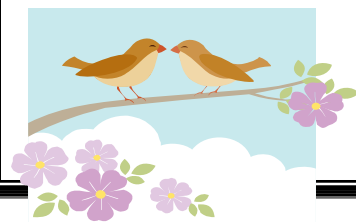
Lincoln Heritage RC&D NFP, 777 Windsor Dr

7:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m. Saturdays

7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Mondays

##### Casey, IL

Sky's The Limit, 1018 Airport Rd, 217-932-2078



#### Photo Contest

Are you an amateur photographer who would like a chance to enter your photos in a local, state and nationwide contest? The Coles County SWCD is sponsoring a conservation photo contest. Photos entered will be entered in the state wide Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation District Auxiliary Photo Contest. Winners at the state level will then be submitted to the National Association of Conservation Districts photo contest.



The purpose of the contest is to recognize individuals whose pictures are worth more than words. To be eligible for the contest, the nominee should be an amateur photographer (those who make less than 50% of their income from photography) and are Illinois residents. Guidelines for the contest include five categories:

- Conservation Practices covering photos of conservation practice that have been applied to the land to insure conservation of our natural resources, such as windbreaks, grass waterways, or stream bank stabilizations. A full list of practices is available at the Coles County SWCD office.
- Close up Conservation, photos of animals, plants, rain-drops, ice, etc.
- Conservation in Action, photos of youth programs, interaction on conservation planning and practices, exhibits, etc.
- Ag/Conservation Across America, barns, farm practices, fence rows, ponds, etc.
- Youth Only, for photos taken by youth up to age 18, photos must fit into one of the above categories.

Photos must be submitted in electronic format – jpeg or tiff files (300 dpi min) by email to the address listed below or burned to a CD and mailed with completed entry form to the SWCD office. Each participant may enter up to five photos. Participants must sign a release form.

Additional rules and entry forms are available by contacting the Coles County SWCD office at 217.345.3901, or by contacting the office via email at [emily.gilmore@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:emily.gilmore@il.nacdnet.net).

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## Why Use Crop Residue Management?

These photos were taken on June 6, 2008 in Lee County, Illinois. The SWCD staff was out and saw a wall of blowing dust reminiscent of the photos taken during the "Dust Bowl" in the 1930s. Districts today encourage local producers to utilize crop residue management... leaving last year's crop residue on the soil surface by limiting tillage. This includes no-till, mulch till and



ridge till. Leaving the crop residue (stalks, stubble, leaves, and seed pods) on the surface before and during planting operations provides cover for the soil at a critical time of year. Pieces of crop residue shield soil particles from rain and wind until plants can produce a protective canopy.

What was the Dust Bowl? The Dust Bowl refers to a series of dust storms that lasted for most of the 1930s on the American and Canadian prairies. The storms caused devastating agricultural damage and severe economic problems. On April 14, 1935 also known as "Black Sunday," twenty severe dust storms blew across the plains to literally block out the sun.



Photo by A. Rothstein April 1936 (Library of Congress)

What Caused the Dust Bowl? During the early 20th century, large numbers of settlers colonized the North American plains and set up farms. The native grasses, which held the soil together and helped to retain its moisture were removed to make room for crops. The native grasses naturally prevented erosion, but after they were removed, a period of drought turned the topsoil to dust, which was easily blown away by the strong prairie winds.

## DUST BOWL FACTS

- N Strong winds caused dust clouds called "Black Blizzards" or "Black Rollers"
- N Decade is nicknamed the "dirty thirties" due in part to dust bowl storms
- N 100 million acres were affected
- N Great volumes of soil were carried across the continent and deposited in the Atlantic Ocean
- N Approximately 300,000 people from Oklahoma migrated because of the storms
- N More than 500,000 people lost their homes in the storms

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**Conservation News  
Coles County Soil & Water  
Conservation District**

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**NOW IS THE TIME TO:**

**Order a Rain Barrel for spring and summer watering needs**

**Plan a windbreak or order trees for conservation plantings, tree orders due April 10, 2009**

**Order fish to restock your pond, fish orders due March 20, 2009**

**Plan a rain garden and order needed plants, we have a new brochure "Rain Gardens of Central Illinois" with all the information you'll need.**

**Sign up to rent drills available at SWCD office**

**Order seed for CP-33 field border contracts**

**Upcoming Events:**

**April 24, 2009 - Arbor Day**

**Land Uses Council Envirothon Competition Rockhome Gardens, April 1, 2009**

**State Envirothon Competition, May 14-15th,  
4-H Campground, Monticello, IL**



**Soil & Water Stewardship April 26-May 3, 2009**

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.

**Board of Directors**

Rollie Spaniol  
Jim Bell,  
Larry Coutant,  
Don Mapes  
Gary Kuhns

**Associate Directors**

Judy Biggs, Darla Chouinard,  
Craig Clendening, Eric Coon, Mike Gass,

**SWCD Employees**

Emily Gilmore, Administrative Coordinator  
Nancy Pals, Resource Conservationist  
Kristin Yager, Education Liaison

**NRCS Employees**

Andy Cerven, District Conservationist  
Matt Sullivan, Soil Conservation Technician  
Kenton Macy, Biologist

