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*Treat the earth well.
Remember that it was not given to us by our parents...
but was lent to us by our children.*



Hall County Soil & Water Conservation News

Volume 1, Issue 2

Winter 2000

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

Rudolph Clark,
Chairman

Mike Haynes,
Vice-Chairman

T. Larry Nix,
Secretary/Treasurer

Sewell Blackstock

Jane Hemmer

Willard Baxter,
Chaplain



1999 Farm Family of the Year
Ray Haynes and Sons, Mike and Jim

* Ray Haynes & Sons, Mike and Jim-Conservation Family of the Year

* Wachovia-Supporter of the District

* William T. Russell-25 years of dedicated service to the District

District Supervisor Sewell Blackstock gave the District Report, highlighting the programs and accomplishments of the past year. Shirley H. Merritt, Deputy State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) gave the NRCS Report emphasizing the importance of the conservation programs available. David Bennett,

Deputy Executive Director of the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission gave the State Conservation Report. Bennett commended the District on how Hall County has always been a "leader" in setting an example on the importance of soil and water conservation practices. Commissioner Tommy Irvin gave the State Agriculture Report emphasizing what a hard year it has been for the farmers due to the drought situation.

This year's entertainment was "Daniel P's Olde Tyme Magic Shows" from Tampa, Florida. Daniel P creates a magic character of the early 1900's and combines magic with storytelling.

Johnny's Barbecue catered the meal and at the conclusion of the meeting numerous door prizes were awarded to the ladies in attendance.

17th Annual Affiliate Member Banquet

The Hall County Soil and Water Conservation District held their Seventeenth Annual Ladies' Night Affiliate Member Banquet at the Chicopee Woods Agricultural Center on Monday, October 4, 1999. The District is fortunate to have many dedicated supporters of the conservation program, which was evidenced by over 250 in attendance.

District Supervisor Jane Hemmer presided over the program. Hall County Commissioner Stephen Black welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation for the conservation accomplishments in Hall County. District Chaplain, Rev. Willard Baxter gave the invocation.

District Secretary/Treasurer T. Larry Nix and Chairman Rudolph Clark presented the following awards:

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Starting Small

If you are not sure how to make your backyard a haven for wildlife, you may want to start small. Some simple steps can be taken immediately to encourage wildlife into your yard and to determine if this is the hobby for you.

Adding bird feeders is one of the simplest things a homeowner or apartment dweller can do to attract birds. Numerous types of feeders are available. Some are designed to hold a variety of birdseed that most birds like, while others are adapted for specific seeds favored by certain species. If you are unsure of what birds are common visitors in your area, start with a simple feeder and see what shows up for dinner. Some feeders hold suet, or animal fat, that is appealing to many woodpecker species. Still other feeders are designed to hold fruits that may be the desired food of certain birds in your community.

Feeders vary not only in what they hold, but also in how they are mounted. Some feeders fit in your window sill, providing a close up view of your visitors. Other feeders can be hung from poles stuck in the ground or from brackets attached to your house. If you are concerned about the cleanliness of your deck or porch, you may want to place feeders away from your home so the droppings from both the birds and the

seeds will fall in your yard.

If you have always wanted a pond, but worried about how much work it would be or the amount of space it would take, consider a barrel or tub water garden. Constructed from a whiskey barrel or plastic tub, these small ponds can be placed on a patio and planted with a variety of small water plants. In winter, either empty the tub and restart in the spring, or move it indoors during the winter if you have a sunny spot or supplemental lighting in your house. These small water gardens provide water for wildlife in the summer and, if fitted with a small pump, provide you with the pleasing sound of running water.

If you do not have a yard, or are not sure gardening is for you, try planting some large flower pots or hanging baskets on your porch or deck. You can plant these with a variety of flowers, vegetables, and herbs that will be attractive to birds and butterflies. Herbs such as parsley and dill will provide the caterpillars of the Swallowtail Butterfly with a necessary food source. Annual flowers—those that bloom and die in one growing season—can easily be grown in pots and are attractive to birds. Pots of petunias and hanging baskets of fuchsia attract hummingbirds.

Even if this is all you do, it will help improve the wildlife habitat in your neighborhood.

For more information on Backyard Conservation practices, contact the Hall County Soil and Water Conservation District at 770-531-6827.



Poultry Nutrient Management

by: Gene Anderson
County Extension Coordinator, Hall County Extension

Livestock and poultry operators are receiving increased attention as potential sources of nutrient pollution for our state's water resources. Proper utilization of dry and liquid animal manure's as well as the safe disposal of mortalities are critical to the future of agriculture in Georgia. The implementation of comprehensive nutrient management plans by poultry and livestock producers can reduce the potential for adverse impacts on the environment, can increase the value of manure's, and can have the added benefit of improving public perceptions of farmers commitments to best management practices.

A nutrient management plan is a method of matching the nutrients in a given amount of litter or manure to the needs of crop or pasture land. A nutrient management plan is like a budget, the nutrients in the litter or manure need to be balanced with the needs of the crop or pasture. An effective nutrient management plan will require soil and litter/manure analysis, computation of the appropriate application rates, and documentation of the litter/manure utilization on the farm. These plans do not have to be complicated or difficult, but like other management activities will require some time and effort.

Nutrient management plans in Georgia are currently voluntary. It is likely that at some point in the future nutrient management plans for livestock operations will be required either through federal or state mandates. The implementation of voluntary nutrient management plans prior to any federal or state mandates should make the transition easier and may result in regulations that are consistent with continued profitability and productivity for growers and

integrators. The primary nutrients of concern in poultry and livestock manure application for environmental issues are nitrogen and phosphorus.

The nutrients in poultry and livestock manure's are an excellent soil conditioner and fertilizer. Farmers can maximize the benefits of these nutrients while minimizing adverse impacts to ground and surface waters through the proper storage, handling, and application of these materials. The implementation of nutrient management plans provides producers a means to manage their nutrients to meet plant needs, protect water quality, and obtain the maximum economic benefit of the nutrients available in the litter or manure.

A nutrient management plan needs to account for all locations that litter or manure is being applied. This does not mean that all of the litter or manure must be applied on the poultry growers property. The litter can be spread on other land not owned by the poultry producer. Poultry litter/manure removed from the farm should be documented by

Upcoming Events

March 16

NE Georgia Farm Expo
Habersham Central High School
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

March 21

Farmer's Market Annual Meeting
Hall County Ag Service's Building
7:00 p.m.

March 24

Agribusiness Award Breakfast
Farm Bureau

April 30 – May 7

Soil and Water Stewardship Week
"Community Waters"

June 18 – 23

NRCS Youth Workshop
Abraham Baldwin College
Tifton, Georgia