

STOKES SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO BOX 98 • DANBURY, NC 27016

PHONE 336.593.2846 ext. 3 • FAX 336.593.9232 • www.co.stokes.nc.us/soil/

LOCAL FARMER WINS COUNTY & AREA FARM FAMILY CONTEST



Pictured l to r: James Booth, Craig Boyles, Scott Boyles, Debbie Boyles, Brett Boyles & Leslie Boyles

As reported in our Spring 2006 newsletter, **Craig Boyles and his family** was named Stokes County's 2006 Conservation Farm Family of the Year for their outstanding application of conservation practices on their farm in Pinnacle. They were recognized and awarded at the Soil & Water Banquet on May 16, 2006. The farm then advanced onto the Area Farm Family Competition which includes 13 counties in northwest North Carolina. On June 5, judges from the Area visited the 140 acre cattle farm. Shortly thereafter, the Boyles' were named the Area winners. They will be recognized on October 12, 2006 in Wilkes County at Stone Mountain State Park as the 2006 Area Conservation Farm Family of the Year. Pictured below are several best management practices that have

been installed and an Oak Tree located on the farm which now holds ownership to the 2nd largest recorded in the State of North Carolina.



STOCK TRAIL



HEAVY USE AREA & WATERING FACILITY

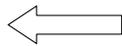


2nd LARGEST OAK TREE IN NORTH CAROLINA ON BOYLES FARM

PASTURE MANAGEMENT TIPS

1. To maintain a healthy stand of grass, stocking rate is one cow/calf pair per 2 acres.
2. Grazing heights are key to maintaining plant vigor. Grazing fescue below 2" severely damages the plant especially during the summer months. Begin grazing fescue at a minimum height of 6 inches. Move cows when fescue is 3" high.
3. Fescue needs 30 days of rest before re-grazing to maintain a good stand.
4. Take soil samples and check pH. Most cool season grasses need a pH range of 5.8 to 6.5.
5. Lime and fertilize cool season grasses in September according to soil test report.
6. Inter-seed legumes (red/white clover) into existing pasture. A 30-40% mix of legumes improve forage quality, animal performance and soil tilth.
7. Consider planting native warm season grasses for summer grazing.
8. Divide existing pastures in half, close some gates or put up temporary fencing to begin rotational grazing.

A smaller well managed herd is more profitable than a larger poorly managed herd.



Pictured to the left is a poorly managed pasture that has been extensively over-grazed.



Pictured to the left is a well managed pasture.

DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

James Booth, *Chairman*

Marvin Cavanaugh, *Vice Chairman*

Willis Overby, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Jack Nunn, *Member*

John East, *Member*

STAFF

Dede DeBruhl, *District Conservationist*

Tom Smith, *District Soil/Watershed Conservationist*

Jane Dobson, *NRCS Technician*

Sara Jo Durham, *District Technician*

Janice Pack, *Adm. Asst./Education Coordinator*



BLACKBERRIES PROVE TO BE SUCCESSFUL CROP – As tobacco prices continue to drop and the cost of labor and fuel continue to rise, some farmers are looking at alternative crops. Hunter Farms in King is one such farm. Three generations of farmers, Jackie Hunter, his son Michael and grandson Jason still grow tobacco (burley and flu-cured), but they also grow no-till double cropped grain/soybeans, sweet potatoes, squash, watermelons and blackberries. Jackie says that blackberries have been one of their most productive crops money-wise. The Hunter's currently have approximately 600 blackberry plants in 8 rows on a ½ acre field. They planted six different varieties on plastic, 3 feet apart, with trickle irrigation and they run along trellises designed to lean the plants so that the berries grow on one side.

Blackberries produce the best their second season and the life of the plant is unlimited. This year the Hunter's produced 800 gallons of berries and was able to market them to a local food chain. Blackberries are picked and packaged right in the field, then rushed to a cooler before shipping to the market. Jackie says that due to the success of the berries they will be adding 5 more rows to the ½ acre field in October. For more information on blackberries you can contact the Stokes Soil & Water office at 593-2846. ext. 3 ♦

Pictured below: Students at one of the stations during the Envirothon competition.



THE ENVIROTHON COMPETITION – On Thursday, April 6, 2006 students from Southeastern Middle School, Piney Grove Middle School and Chestnut Grove Middle School traveled to Wilkes County to compete against students from across northwest North Carolina in the annual Envirothon Competition. The Envirothon competition is an opportunity for middle & high school students to showcase their knowledge of natural resources and ecology. Students form teams in groups of five or less and are tested on resource subjects such as soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics and current environmental issues. Students from Stokes County did very well in the competition with one team from Southeastern Middle School placing high enough to advance onto the State Envirothon Competition in Burlington, NC on April 28 & 29. This team placed 35th out of 54 teams at the state level. Those students are **Kayla Grant**, **Bethany Washburn** and **DJ West**. Their team advisor was **Mrs. Luann Bridle** ♦



Pictured here - Hannah Fulk receiving her certificate from Marvin Cavanaugh for being named the 2006 RCW recipient from Stokes County.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP – **Hannah Fulk**, a Junior at West Stokes High School, was recently selected by the Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District to represent Stokes County at the 2006 Resource Conservation Workshop at NC State University held on June 25 – June 30, 2006. The workshop is a week of intensive study in a wide range of conservation topics such as: Wildlife & Fisheries Management, Forest Management, Nonagricultural & Agricultural Uses for Soils, Surveying, Air Quality, Water Quality and Watershed Management. During their training students toured the Cary Wastewater Treatment Plant, South Cary Water Reclamation Facility, NC State Soil Science Dept., NC State Research Facility, Clemmons Education State Forest, Falls Lake, a Wake County Dairy Farm and a local Fish Farm. Hannah's parents are Ricky & Beth Fulk of Pinnacle ♦

Pictured below – Mr. Rob Halpern receiving his award at the Soil & Water Banquet on May 16, 2006.



CONSERVATION TEACHER OF THE YEAR – Each year the Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District recognizes a conservation-minded teacher who deserves a reward for encouraging students to care for our natural resources. On May 16, 2006 this award went to **Mr. Rob Halpern** from Piney Grove Middle School. Mr. Halpern is a teacher whose dedication and enthusiasm has encouraged and motivated students in his 8th grade Science & Social Studies classes for the past 7 years. After viewing a powerpoint presentation of his teaching accomplishments, Mr. Halpern received a plaque, a \$100.00 check from the Soil & Water District and a standing ovation from the audience. Congratulations, Mr. Halpern for a job well done!



Remember Big Sweep Litter Pickup on October 7, 2006 – Call Stokes Co. Coordinator, Sara Jo Durham at 593-2846 ext. 3 for more details.

Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District
PO Box 98
Danbury, NC 27016