

STOKES SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

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FARMER APPRECIATION EVENT – THURSDAY, MARCH 26 at NORTH STOKES HIGH SCHOOL

Mark your calendars – The 2020 FARMER APPRECIATION EVENT will be held at **North Stokes High School** on **Thursday, March 26 from 6-9 PM**; FREE FOOD (BBQ or Chicken Tenders and all the fixins'), ENTERTAINMENT from the Good Fellers Bluegrass Band, RAFFLE & DOOR PRIZES. Please call 336-593-8179 or 336-593-2490 by March 24 if you plan to attend...we need a count for food preparation. ♦

WELCOME LEIGH CALLOWAY – NEW DISTRICT SOIL/WATERSHED CONSERVATIONIST

The Stokes Soil & Water Conservation District would like to introduce our new District Soil/Watershed Conservationist, Leigh Calloway. Although Leigh is new to Stokes County she isn't new to Soil & Water; she has worked at the Yadkin County Soil & Water office for the past 8 years writing conservation farm plans and developing cost share contracts for local landowners. Leigh's field and program experience will greatly benefit Stokes County since she already has job approval authority and can work with new or existing contracts without delay. She graduated from North Carolina State University and Surry Community College where she earned a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Technology & Management and an Associates Degree in Science. Leigh is excited to be a member of the Stokes County team so please join us in welcoming her. ♦



STOKES COUNTY RECEIVES DAN RIVER 319 GRANT FUNDS

Stokes County, along with Rockingham and Caswell counties, have recently been awarded another round of Dan River 319 grant funds to cost share with landowners interested in implementing best management practices (BMPs) on agriculture land within the Dan River Watershed. These BMP's directly reduce sediment delivery and fecal coliform bacteria from impaired waters. Approved practices include, but are not limited to: fencing livestock from streams and providing wells and water tanks, cropland conversion to grass/trees, critical area seeding, and no-till to name a few. Applications must be approved prior to work beginning so for more information or to obtain an application contact the Stokes Soil & Water office today at 336-593-2490. ♦

VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT PROGRAM - Membership UPDATES



The Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) Ag. Advisory Board is in the process of updating their membership database. If you are a current member and would like to verify your participation in this program or have sold, split or changed your property boundaries please contact the Stokes Soil & Water office at 336-593-2490 so we can update our records. VAD eligibility requirements are as follows: property must consist of 5 acres for horticulture use, or 10 acres for general agriculture use, or 20 acres for forestry use. The VAD program is a great way to promote agricultural values and general welfare of the county by increasing identity and pride in the agricultural community and its way of life; encourage the economic and financial health of agriculture; and increase protection from non-farm development and other negative impacts on properly managed farms. ♦

DISTRICT BOARD

James Booth, *Chairman*

Marvin Cavanaugh, *Vice Chairman*

Johnny East, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Dowell Lester, *Member*

Michael Booth, *Member*

STAFF

Janice Pack, *Soil & Water Conservation Director*

Leigh Calloway, *District Soil/Watershed Conservationist*

Vacant, *NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist*

James Rodriguez, *NRCS Soil Conservationist*

STUDENTS WIN LOCAL CONTESTS, ADVANCE TO REGIONAL COMPETITION

On October 25 the Stokes SWCD held its annual county-wide poster contest (for students in grades 3-6), essay contest (for students in 6th grade), the 6th grade slideshow contest, and the 9th grade computerized poster contest. The contest theme was "Wetlands Are Wonderful". Congratulations to the following students who placed; their entries will advance to the regional competition being held on March 19 in Alexander Co.:

3rd GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Eva Bullins – 1st Place (Lawsonville Elem.)

Carley Bennett – 2nd Place (Lawsonville Elem.)



3rd GRADE



4th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Finley Hayes – 1st Place (London Elem.)

Emily Moore – 2nd Place (London Springs Elem.)



4th GRADE



5th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Abbey Landreth – 1st Place (Sandy Ridge Elem.)

Maddy Fine – 2nd Place (Mt. Olive Elem.)



5th GRADE



6th GRADE POSTER CONTEST

Brooke Burroughs – 1st Place (SEMS)

Brooke Moon – 2nd Place (SEMS)



6th GRADE



6th GRADE ESSAY CONTEST

Abigail Eaton – 1st Place (SEMS)

Lilly Begley – 2nd Place (SEMS)

6th GRADE SLIDESHOW CONTEST

Ava Smith – 1st Place (SEMS)

Jesse Harrold – 2nd Place (SEMS)

These students will be recognized and given awards at the Stokes Soil & Water Banquet on May 12th.

Pictured to the right (left-hand column) – 1st place posters for each grade level; (right-hand column) – 2nd place posters for each grade level. ♦

NCFSWCD OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR SCHOOLS

The Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation (NCFSWCD) has secured an EPA Region 4 Environmental Education Grant to support their Soil Health Initiative. The grant will fund five Community Garden Outdoor Environmental Learning Centers in NC at \$2,500 each! **An application survey will open in early March and close mid-May for 2021 Community Garden Projects. The following links provide detailed information about the program...**

Access a PDF at: http://ncsoilwater.org/media/16823/EPA19_SH_EE_-OELC_Announce_02062020.pdf

Access the program page at: <http://ncsoilwater.org/active-programs/outdoor-environmental-learning-centers/>

COST SHARE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

If you have erosion problems or water quality issues on your farm, you may be eligible to receive cost share assistance through the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program, the NC Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program, the Dan River 319 Grant Program, or the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. These voluntary programs have proven successful in addressing agricultural non-point source pollution problems. Eligible participants may receive up to 50-75% cost assistance on practices such as riparian buffer restoration, excluding livestock from streams or ponds, installing alternative watering systems for livestock, heavy use area protection, converting cropland to grass or trees, and long term no-till planting to name a few. Funding for these practices are allocated to our office once a year, so start planning now if you have a need for approved best management practices on your farm. If you are interested in applying for either of these programs, please call the Stokes SWCD office at 336-593-2490 for an application and program information. Approval of applicants are based on highest need of water quality improvement. Contracts must receive final approval before practices are installed. ♦