# The Fence Post

# Winter 2008

180 Beasley Road
Versailles KY 40383

SOUTHEAST CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ASSOC.
*Dedicated Conservationists*

I'm very proud to have been elected Southeast Conservation District Associations President. I would like to thank all of you for your support in the election at Pigeon Forge. What an honor to be able to represent you. While serving each and everyone with SECDEA and becoming a board member of the National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA) I promise to do my very best.

I have almost completed my first thirty day's, I have been very busy with phone calls, e-mails, conference calls, planning the mid-year meeting, travel and other day to day conservation work. I don't do these things alone, I'm blessed to work with the wonderful people in my local office, SECDEA, SE NACD and NCDEA just naming a few. It's a great feeling to know others are striving for the good of our association and the well being of our natural resources.

Thank you again for all your support.

*Mendel Wade, SECDEA President, being installed to the NCDEA Board by NCDEA President Cindy Moon.*

# Scenes from NACD Annual Meeting

# ***WOW!*** What a fast history making year for SECDEA!

The SECDEA 2007 annual conference was held November 5-7, at the Music Road Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN. Guest speakers were Danny Sells, TACD Executive Director; John Finch, SE NACD Board Chair; Cindy Moon, NCDEA President; Krysta Hardin, NACD CEO; and Phylis Vandevere, NACD Representative.

It was so rewarding to have representation from Georgia for the first time. This just proves one thing, hard work and perseverance pays off in the long run. When you believe in something that is worthy of your dedication and passion you must never give up.

Concurrent training sessions were held for the first time, which were highly received by conference attendees. District employees were utilized as facilitators and trainers. Mike Doxey, Eddie Culberson, Pam Hawkins, Tommy Brooks, Jennifer Brooks, and Lisa Morochak did a great job. These training sessions could not have happened if it were not for Mamie Caison and her expertise in arranging concurrent sessions and getting speakers.

Our flag ceremony is always special, but this year it was extra special due to the dedication ceremony of the SECDEA flag, which was donated by SECDEA President, Ann Spake. You should feel very proud to be the only region to have their very own flag.

SECDEA made a donation to the NACD 509 Capitol Court Campaign. President Ann Spake presented a check to Krysta Harden, NACD CEO, at the annual banquet on Wednesday night. Awards were given to SECDEA Award Winners Mott Buff (North Carolina), District Employee of the Year and Grover McPherson (North Carolina) for Supervisor of the Year. Mott also won the National District Employee Award and she was recognized and presented a plaque in Reno.

An exit meeting was held Thursday morning to brain storm events of the 2007 conference. We started working on the 2008 conference. 2007's conference received the highest ratings ever from the survey sheets that were filled out by district employees. Cindy Moon, NCDEA President, is encouraging other regions to attend the SECDEA conference so they can start and /or improve on a training conference for their region. Once again this proves that the SE is the leading region.

Special Projects did a great job with the silent/live auctions and the Lap Top raffle. Proceeds were the highest ever. The new logo items were a tremendous hit and David Cash had to order more items, which is a good problem to have. Keep up the good work gang.

The 2007 conference was the product of hard work, long hours, dedication and a lot of phone calls. I want to especially thank Mamie Caison, VP and Barbara Gill, Conference Committee Chair, for their dedication and wonderful spirit because with out them we could not have achieved **ALL** that we did during the 2007 conference. Most of all I want to thank every district employee and supervisor/

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# *Greetings from Mamie!!*

Hello Everyone,

First of all I would like to say thank you for re-electing me as your Vice-President of the SECDEA. It is TRULY an honor to serve each of you. The past year has been filled with lots of excitement and hard work. I have communicated with lots of you on different projects and I would have to say I have enjoyed being one of your SE representatives.

Now it is time to get geared up for the New Year. Your representatives have just returned from the 2008 NACD Annual Meeting in Reno. We are looking forward to sharing information and skills we acquired to assist our Districts as well as the SECDEA. Martha Buff our 2007 SE District Employee Nominee received the National District Employee Award. Mott, we are so proud of you receiving this well deserved acknowledgement. She has done so much for district employees on the state, region as well as on the national level.

We have started planning for our SECDEA Mid-Year Board meeting which will be held in Versailles, Kentucky. The dates are May 13-14th. Please feel welcome to join us, as this is our planning meeting for not only the annual meeting in Pigeon Forge, but also a time we look at all of our projects for the upcoming year.

Start making your plans to attend our 2008 Southeast District Employees Association Annual Conference which will be held November 11-12, 2008 in Pigeon Forge. Those of you that have not attended, this is a great facility and I believe that if you can make it for the first time, you will be back.

I also would like to say a very special Thank You to Ann Spake. Ann has helped me so much over the past year by teaching me about commitment as well as the responsibilities that we have for your association. She was a great leader and I would like to say on behalf of all of you, thank you so much for the many hours you gave to our association. Your work will always be appreciated.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Vice-President. Always know that I am only an e-mail or phone call away to listen to your needs and concerns of our association.

*Mamie Caison*

# NCDEA Cookbooks

Over 1,000 recipes were contributed from all over the US from conservation district employees who enjoy good food.

These recipes won't be from just one region of the US - they will represent all regions. This book will be one that the favorite cook in your life would enjoy to have in their library.

Here are a few recipe titles to wet your appetite: Chelsea's Savory Smoked Salmon Dip, Lime Vodka Slush, Vegetarian Chili, and Aunt Melva's Pumpkin Roll.

Wouldn't you like to know what recipes the NCDEA officers chose to share with us? You can reserve your copy today by filling out the order form found elsewhere in this newsletter or going to the NCDEA website (www.ncdea.org). The cookbook is $25 which includes shipping.

What are you waiting for? The cookbook was released in Reno NV at the NACD Annual Meeting - mail your order today.

# Tennessee New President

The SECDEA Board would like to welcome Anna Moore to the Board. She took office the last of February during the TACD Convention in Jackson Tennessee.

*Ruan Jones, Past President, turns the gavel over to new President Anna Moore.*

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commissioner that supported and attended this past year's conference. *It is your conference!* I hope you will never forget that. Please give your new President, Mendel Wade, your support, because he will only be as good as the support you give him. Continuity in an organization is vital for success. I hope everyone will show professionalism and make this transition a smooth one.

It is with a sad heart that I say ***"Thank You"*** for letting me serve you and be a part of this great association for the past nine years. I represented SECDEA to the best of my ability and kept the best interest for SECDEA at the forefront at all times. A dear friend of mine once said when you are serving on a board or committee ***"Always remember you are treading on the shoulders of giants that are making history and paving the way for generations to come".*** Support your association by working together in unity!

Be humble and you will not stumble,

***Ann Spake***

# SECDEA Board

*Seated L-R: Ann Spake, Past President; Mendel Wade, President; Mamie Caison, Vice President; Martha Newby, Secretary; Deborah Widner, Treasurer; and Krysta Harden, NACD CEO. Standing L-R: Annette Davis, South Carolina; Megen Dalton, Virginia; Vickie Goggans, Alabama; Barb Gill, Florida; Pam Hawkins, North Carolina; Marianna Lea, Mississippi; Linda Smith, Kentucky; Ruan Jones, Tennessee; and Crista Carrell, Georgia.*

Mendel Wade, President
Mamie Caison, President-Elect
Martha Newby, Secretary
Deborah Widner, Treasurer
Ann Spake, Past President
David Cash, Chaplain
Bryan Evans, Web Editor
Vickie Goggans, Alabama President
Barbara Gill, Florida President
Linda Smith, Kentucky President
Marianna Lea, Mississippi President
Pam Hawkins, North Carolina President
Annette Davis, South Carolina President
Ruan Jones, Tennessee President
Cynthia Hancock, Virginia President

# Special Projects Committee Report

The Conservation Quilt is finished!! The workmanship on it is outstanding. My father-in-law who is 85 years old, hand quilted it. His name is Ed Young and he has been quilting for 25 years. The Ashland Daily Independent (newspaper) recently did an article on him that will be in the paper the last Sunday of this month. If anyone is interested, you can get the article at www.dailyindependent.com. The quilt has 825 pieces not including the border. Nancy Osborne a friend of mine pieced it for us.

I named the quilt a "Conservation Quilt" because of the colors in it. The blue represents the sky and the water, the brown represents the soil, the green represents the trees and the grass, and the red and yellow represents the flowers.

We need for everyone to do their best to sell a lot of tickets. This can be a wonderful fundraiser if everyone will work together.

We are planning to have the cookbook printed and back to us by the SECDEA conference in Pigeon Forge this November. We would like to have at least 100 recipes from each state. The deadline for entering recipes is June 30, 2008. State Presidents please contact Pam Hawkins, Cookbook Chair, for the login and password to input your recipes on line.

***Stephanie Young***
Special Projects Committee Chair

# Don Aron Scholarship

It's time to send in nominees for the Don Aron Scholarship Award. This Award is to provide financial support to a District Employee or member of their immediate family who is participation in a resource conservation curriculum while enrolled in a accredited college or university. The amount of this scholarship will not exceed $1,000.00. Applications for the scholarship must reach the NCDEA Scholarship Committee by May 1, 2008. Go to - http://ncdea.org/DonAronScholarshipApplication.pdf to get an application. Mail completed applications to: Rich Duesterhaus, NCDEA Executive Director, 509 Capital Court NE, Washington, DC 20002 - 202-547-6223 Ext. 230

# *News Across the SouthEast*

## Alabama

*Vickie Goggans, President*

The Alabama Conservation District Employee Association currently has 64 District Employee members, 47 SWCD Districts and 51 (NRCS) Associate members. The deadline for paying dues is January 31, 2008.

Once again we will be holding our annual workshop in conjunction with the Alabama Association's Districts Employees' Annual Workshop in Auburn, AL on April 27th – 30th, 2008. We were not able to hold a meeting at the AACD Annual meeting that was held November 18th-20th, due to time restraints. However, we were able to have our first ever Silent Auction. We had 42 items donated and raised $1592. We also sold $170 worth of ACDEA merchandise. Since we did so well and everyone seemed to really enjoy this event, we are going to make this an annual fund raiser.

Our Board Meeting/Christmas Party was a huge success. We had 31 members and 1 guest to attend. Everyone enjoyed the abundant supply of food and the Christmas ornament swap. We are hoping to make this an annual event also. Our next board meeting will be held in Clanton, AL on March 19th.

We approved to start a Benevolence Fund for our Association members. We set aside $1000 to get started and are taking donations to keep it funded. We have already had a tremendous outpouring of donations. We can always count on our members to step up whenever they're called on to do so.

Everyone is in the process of sending out our Scholarship information to their local Schools. Due to the continued success of our fund raisers, we are still able to award one $500 scholarship per our six Areas.

Each Area is busy collecting information for a District Administrative Coordinator from their Area to nominate for the Distinguished Service Award. It is difficult for the Areas to pick just one since we have so many deserving employees'.

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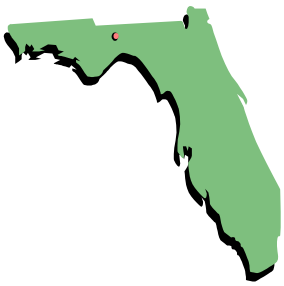
I would like to thank all of those who attended the SECDEA Conference from Alabama. We had 12 District Administrative Coordinator's, 2 state office staff, and 3 supervisors & their spouses. I received positive feedback on the meeting this year. Everyone seemed to really enjoy the breakout sessions. As always, ya'll did an excellent job planning the meeting, already looking forward to next year's.



# Florida

*Barbara Gill, President*

Plans for this year's annual meeting are being finalized. Florida District Employees will meet for one afternoon on Friday, August 15, 2008. The Association of Florida Conservation Districts will have its annual meeting August 15-16. This will take place at the Bay Pointe Marriott Resort & Spa in Panama City Beach, which is approximately 4 hrs east of Biloxi where the NACD Southeast meeting will take place the preceding weekend! For those of you coming to Biloxi, stay a few more days at the Emerald Coast!

Many of our Florida Districts are scheduling their speech and poster contests. Our speech contest theme this year is "What is the Future of Florida's Renewable Energies?" We are very pleased to have entries in the National Poster Contest for the second year.

Most of our Districts receive funding, especially cost share dollars, from our Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). The bulk of their funding comes from the Florida DOC stamps (a small percentage collected from each real estate transaction). Florida has had a tremendous growth in population and property values over the past years……but not 2006 & 2007! FDACS Office of Ag Water Policy stated recently that they have had to cancel the contracts for all of the districts except **for** technicians. They had to go from 100 contracts to 20. The news from Legislature is that they will meet and reduce the budget by 4% to 8% percent. We are all searching for creative ways to continue funding at the local level for landowners who have committed to our environmental programs.

As President Barbara Gill's 2nd term will end in August 2008 and our President Elect position is vacant – we are searching for someone to step forward and continue growing our association.

# Kentucky

*Linda Smith, President*

KACDE is running rapid. Stephanie Young, KACDE Vice President, and I have just returned from the NACD Convention in Reno. **Congratulations** to **Mott Buff** for winning this year's National Employee Choice Award; another well-deserving Southeast recipient! We want to send our **best wishes** to **John Redding**. Mr. Redding agreed to step up to the plate and was selected to fulfill the unexpired term for the late, Mr. Olin Sims. I know he will do a great job.

It's now time to gather our **team** and get busy with numerous projects: fundraisers, plans for the SECDEA Mid-Year Meeting, preparing for the KACD Convention, working on this year's DEA State Convention and various other new activities.

We are thrilled to host this year's SECDEA Mid-Year Meeting. We have started working on several initiatives to help insure it is an exciting and memorable adventure for our Southeast colleagues.

**May 12th** – Travel Day – As you arrive in Lexington, you will be staying at the Crowne Plaza-Campbell House. This is a fantastic hotel that provides wonderful customer service and touts their Tempur-Pedic Mattresses (that are locally made). The on-site restaurant serves delicious food and is a participant in the Kentucky Proud program. Your room will include a mini-fridge, coffee maker and other amnesties. A mall, hospital and pharmacy are all close by. The hotel is located about 15 minutes from Versailles, our meeting place. The staff has been a pleasure to work with and have generously discounted the rooms at a rate of only $88 a night (May 12 -14).

**May 13th** - Our plans are to rise early Tuesday morning, load onto a bus and visit several amazing sites of the Bluegrass area. This tour will include breakfast, followed by watching a workout/training session for some of the thoroughbred horses at **Keeneland (**a famous horse racing facility in Lexington). This racing arena is one of the oldest in the nation.

Later, we will visit **Kesmarc**, a state-of-the-art, equine rehabilitation facility for injured horses. The rehab center is equipped with: swimming pools, treadmills and a hyperbaric chamber. Then we're off to **WinStar,** a thoroughbred farm that will provide us with information concerning horse muck composting. Last, but not least, we plan to visit a horse farm that has been home to several Kentucky Derby winners!

Next, we will travel to Woodford County SWCD. I am sure Martha Newby will be glad to give you a quick tour of the office. The office building is owned by the Conservation District and several offices within are leased to sister government agencies. The district should be very proud of a job well done. KACDE will prepare and serve our Southeast guests a light lunch. The food served will be

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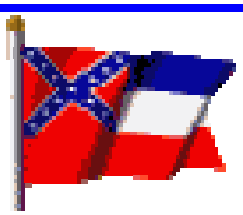
recipes taken from our very own KACDE cookbook!! After everyone's stomachs are satisfied, Mendel and Mamie will get to work with the mid-year meeting. I know they are very busy preparing for this upcoming event and I am sure many new and wonderful ideas will be presented for the annual meeting in November. If possible, we hope to visit Boyd's Orchard for dinner.

**May 14th** – Breakfast on your own and back to business early Wednesday morning. We hope to have enough time to tour the local Woodford Reserve Distillery around noon and have lunch. This is a historical landmark which was first constructed in 1838. It sits on a huge limestone quarry and is famous for producing one of the finest bourbons in America. Tickets for the tour are $5.00 and well worth the trip. The day will end with an afternoon session and finally decisions for the annual meeting in Pigeon Forge. We'll then send you on your way with best wishes for a safe trip home.

We would like to express our congratulations to **Mendel Wade** as the new SECDEA President. I am sure he would give 100% to continue SECDEA's success. Our warm wishes are extended to **Ann Spake**. We would like to "thank you" for everything that you accomplished during your term as SECDEA President.

See you soon!

Linda Smith



# Mississippi

## *Marianna Lea, President*

***Mississippi Officers:***

President – Marianna Lea; Vice-President – Sandy Mitchell; 2nd Vice-President – Beverly Newlin; Secretary – Edith Wallace; Treasurer – Hope Daley; Past President – Brenda Parker; Regional Representative – Marianna Lea

***NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:***

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the Southeast for the "get well" cards, thoughts, prayers and phone calls. I am humbled by all the love and support that you gave me while I was so sick with the West Nile Virus. My dad would bring me my mail every morning and say "Gee…you have got a lot of friends"! I received at least 75 get well cards in one week and it made me realize that my dad was right….**I do have a lot of friends!!**

I am feeling much better, but not completely well. I still have good days and bad, but I'm back at work full time. I get tired easily, but determined to press forward. They say it will take a year or longer to completely heal from the virus. Thank you all and God bless!!!

*Marianna Lea*

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***2007 MCDEA Membership:***

To date, Mississippi has **94** district employees working in 82 districts across the state. **48** district employees are members of the MCDEA. We have **79** affiliate member and 1 supporting member.

***MCDEA Annual Conference:***

We held our annual conference on **July 18-19, 2007 at Lake Tiak O' Khata in Louisville, MS.**

- We had a full schedule for all district employees needs. Some of the topics discussed were: How to dress professionally, the PDEP presentation, commissioner elections, annual budget report, a presentation for the Nursing Home, landscaping and the Watershed Harmony Puppet Show. We also had a scavenger hunt after-hours and the team that won received a large basket of goodies.
- **Brief bags** with our logo were given to all district employees who attended the conference.
- At the conference we introduced our district employees to the **"Professional District Employees Program".** We had a presentation explaining the program and encouraged all employees to participate. The MCDEA Board worked hard this year in making changes to the PDEP program to accommodate our state educational programs and activities. We're excited about getting this program up and running in our state. Thanks Pam for all your help in making this possible.

Forty-three district employees attended the conference along with other personnel from the state commission office and NRCS.

***Training & Meetings:***

- **Pigeon Forge** – attended the meeting in Pigeon Forge last November 2006.
- Attended the **Conservation Partnership Leadership Training** in Nashville, TN on November 28-30, 2006.
- Attended the **MACD Annual Winter Meeting** in January 2006. We held a District Employees breakfast and luncheon with guest speakers.
- Also attended the **SECDEA mid-year Board Meeting** held in Auburn, Alabama; along with the Alabama's District Employees Annual Meeting on April 28 – May 1, 2007. At the share fair, I did a presentation on "Presenting your district to your Board of Supervisors".

***Fund-raising Accomplishments:*** Selling more cookbooks; MCDEA shirts; Thank you Cards; Membership Drive; Car Tags; Gator Raffle.

***Communications:*** Board Meetings; Annual Newsletter; E-mails; Teleconferences

***Scholarships:*** The MCDEA and the MACD Auxiliary will give a $1,000.00 scholarship to a student of someone in our conservation family, who's interested in enrolling in college in a natural resource field.

***Upcoming events:*** Mississippi will be hosting the **Southeast Region NACD Meeting** for 2008 on the coast in Biloxi, MS. Date: August 10-12, 2008

Faye Burrell, Brenda Parker and Beverly Newlin

# North Carolina

*Pam Hawkins, President*

In January, the NCASWCDs gathered at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains for their 2008 Annual Conference at the beautiful Grove Park Inn. Between the grandeur and history of this hotel, when you stay there, it's almost as if you escape to another place and time. But, with a full agenda and a lot of business to attend to, we all had to remind ourselves why we were there!! On Sunday afternoon, NCCDEA held its Governing Board Meeting. Ann Spake, SECDEA President, updated the board on regional and national news, and encouraged everyone to be involved on these levels. She also thanked everyone for their support during her presidency. After about 3 hours, we all left tired but satisfied that we had taken care of important business.

Our membership and merchandise tables were busy throughout the conference. Our NCCDEA Cookbooks "Delighting Everyone's Appetite" were hot off the press and on sale for the first time. We also had some new merchandise with our logo on them, including umbrellas and garment bags.

On Monday, we held our NCCDEA Luncheon, which had great attendance from district employees and other conservation partners. Pat Harris, newly appointed Director of the Division of Soil & Water Conservation, introduced herself to the crowd and let us know that she supports NCCDEA and looks forward to working with us all. Our guest speaker, Heather Brannan, Special Events Manager, gave us a brief and very entertaining history of the Grove Park Inn. If time would have allowed we could have listened to her a lot longer.

We recognized 9 district employees for obtaining certification levels in the Professional District Employees Program. I also presented awards to Grover McPherson, 2007 NCCDEA District Official of the Year and Mott Buff, 2007 NCCDEA District Professional of the Year.

As President of NCCDEA, I am very proud to announce that both Grover and Mott were Southeast winners as well, and that Mott Buff is the National Conservation District Employees Association 2007 District Professional of the Year. Mott will be recognized at the NACD meeting in Reno this February. Congratulations to Mott and all our awardees!!!!!

# Dates to Remember

May 13-14 - SECDEA Mid Year Board Meeting, Versailles KY

August 10-12 - SE NACD Meeting, Biloxi, MS

November 10 - SECDEA Board Meeting

November 11-12 - SECDEA Conference

# South Carolina

*Annette Davis, President*

The South Carolina DEA has 39 active members for 2007. With 100 support members with a total of $1,585.00 coming from memberships.

Events:

- January 3-5 – **Annual Partnership Conference** – Myrtle Beach - 22 employees attended the annual conference. Approx. $1,800.00 was raised from the annual silent auction fundraiser.
- May 23 – **Network Training Session** (Columbia) – Accounting/Tort Liability Insurance Coverage
- June 23 – **Microsoft Publisher Training** – Columbia
- September 27-28 – **SCCDEA 3rd Annual Training Conference** - 27 members and 1 guest attend the annual event. The event was held in Florence, SC, at the Lynches River Park. Florence County Parks and Recreation and the Florence SWCD are building an exceptional and unique LEED Natural Resources Discovery Educational Center. The SCCDEA Annual Training Conference was a great opportunity for the DEA's across the state to learn how to accomplish their own objectives by working closer with the local legislature.
- November 5-8 – **SECDEA Conference** - 10 employees have registered to attend this year's conference.

Left: Sterling Sadler, Florence SWCD DEA explaining all the levels of the observation decks among the tree tops across the forest.

Below: Entrance to the new Natural Resources Discover Center in Florence, SC.

Left: Yes, South Carolina is involved in Agriculture, just look at our grazing table.

# Tennessee

*Ruan Jones, President*

TCDEA is getting ready for the TACD Annual Convention to be held in Jackson, Tennessee on Sunday, February 24th through Tuesday February 26th. TCDEA will have an Employees Luncheon, Employee Workshop and an Employee Business Session at the Convention. At the Business Session a new President will be installed. At the Awards Breakfast for the Convention and Employee of the Year Award will be presented. East Tennessee employees nominated are Joyce Green and Pat Evans. Middle Tennessee nominee is Sara Steelman and the West Tennessee nominee is Benton James.

The Middle Tennessee Area Coordinators are working on the TCDEA Spring Workshop.

# Virginia

*Megen Dalton, Past President*

## Membership & Officers

The Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees (VACDE) just began a new membership year. An e-mail was distributed to all District Employees encouraging them to join our state association. Membership dues are only $10/year. We are looking forward to topping last year's membership high of 122.

A new slate of Employee Association officers was elected at the 2007 Annual Meeting. The new officers of the Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees are:

President: Cynthia Hancock-Skyline SWCD (1-year term) (far right)

Vice-President: Marian Moody-Hanover-Caroline SWCD (1-year term- with plans to succeed to the office of President) (2nd from right)

Secretary- Gavin Sanderlin-Peaks of Otter SWCD (far left)

Treasurer- Ann Edmonds-Hanover-Caroline SWCD (not actually elected this year--she was elected last year and her term is for 4 years) (2nd from left)

Past-President: Megen Dalton- Shenandoah Valley SWCD (not pictured)

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## Annual Meeting- Awards and Training

The VACDE's Annual Meeting is held in conjunction with the VA's Soil & Water Conservation District's State Associations Annual Meeting. (December 3-5, 2007) Approximately 75 employees attended this year's Annual Meeting which was held in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The Employee's Association distributed a total of 8 Service Awards to employees who were members of the employees association and who had 5, 10, 15, or 20 years of service to a Conservation District.

The VACDE also presented Tara Outland-Williams, District Manager at the Peanut SWCD with the 2007 Outstanding Conservation District Professional Award along with a check for $250 and an engraved plaque.

The Employee's Association also recognized the State Association's Education Coordinator, Dana Roberts with the 2007 Outstanding VACDE Partner Award. This award was created to recognize the valuable service that our partners provide the VACDE. Dana has worked hard in the absence of an Executive Director for our State Association to assist the VACDE and provide the employees across the state with the information and resources needed. She strives for excellence and is always willing to help out whenever she is needed. This past year she helped facilitate a number of Area Educational Exchanges around the state. She regularly attends VACDE Board Meetings offering assistance, ideas and support to our organization. She maintains an excellent website that she keeps up to date and accurate. For these reasons and in appreciation of her continued hard work and dedication, the VACDE presented Ms. Dana Roberts with the Outstanding VACDE Partner Award and a check in her name for $150.

Also, during the VASWCD Annual Meeting the Employees Association conducted a Silent/Live Auction to benefit the State's Educational Foundation. $2,9000 was raised for the Foundation.

There were a number of training sessions offered at this year's meeting for the employees, trainings focused on the needs of technical, educational, and administrative staff across the state.

## Communications/Other

We have a link from our State's Conservation District Association's Web Page to our Employee's Association Information. Check out more about Virginia's Association of Conservation District Employees by visiting: http://www.vaswcd.org/vacde.htm

***The Virginia Association of Conservation District Employees***
***is looking forward to another productive year!***