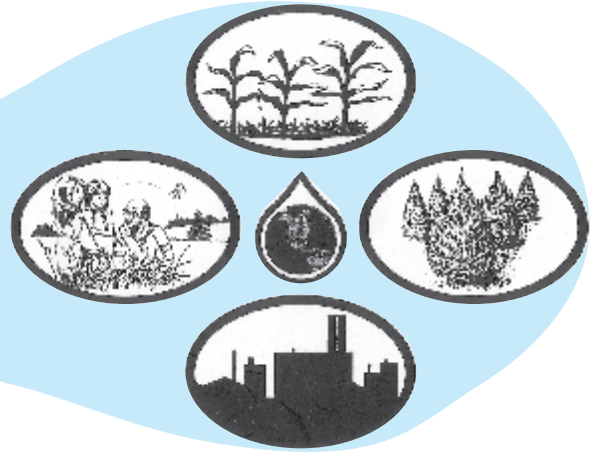




St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



**Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future**

July/August 2013  
Volume 15, Issue 4

2903 Gary Drive, Ste 1, Plymouth, IN 46563  
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Telephone (574) 936-2024  
e-mail: [info@stjosephswcd.org](mailto:info@stjosephswcd.org)

### What's Going On...

Events hosted by the St. Joseph County  
SWCD

& Our Partners in Conservation

#### JULY

3 - Frog jumping contest at the  
St Joseph County 4H Fair from  
12:00 pm - 3:30 pm!

4 - Independence Day (office  
closed)

5 - Office Closed

15 - (Mon) **SWCD Monthly  
Board Mtg.**, Centre Twp.  
Library, 7PM

#### AUGUST

8 - Pasture walk, 1:00 pm.  
Call us for details if interest-  
ed

19 - (Mon) **SWCD Monthly  
Board Mtg.**, Centre Twp.  
Library, 7PM

#### SEPTEMBER

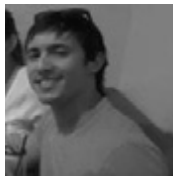
18 - Compost meeting, 6:00-  
7:30 pm, location TBA

### St Joseph County SWCD wel- comes two new faces to their office!



Hi, my name is Sarah Harville and I am the new administrative assistant here at the SWCD. I live in Plymouth with my husband-to-be, Adam and four daughters, Kathryn, Charlie, Christy, and Lauren. I enjoy cooking, working in my yard and garden, and am

an avid video game fan! I have worked in office administration dealing with agriculture/ specialty crops for several years. While my background has been more focused on bookkeeping and office procedures, I have picked up a lot of knowledge regarding growing practices and producer needs as well. I also have a great interest in environmental science and am enjoying learning more. I am excited to be a part of the SWCD and look forward to being able to serve St Joseph County and help improve our natural resource utilization in whatever way I can.



James Rodriguez comes to us as a new graduate of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus. He majored in Agricultural Sciences in Agronomy. He is a member of the Alpha Zeta honor agricultural fraternity. He enjoys spending his free time going to the beach, raising bonsai trees, training, outdoor activities, and practicing martial arts.

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### Soil Health Nuggets

Here are some things you may not know...

- \* There are more soil microorganisms in a teaspoon of healthy soil than there are people on the earth!
- \* The best soil on most farms is found in the fence row.
- \* Tillage (or plowing) destroys the soil's structure!
- \* Tilling the soil up does NOT allow more water to soak into it.
- \* OMG! Organic Matter (half) Gone!
- \* A farmer's favorite cocktail mix might not be what you think.
- \* If you want your soil to be healthy, you shouldn't see it very often.
- \* Roots of some plants can grow 3-feet deep in 60 days!
- \* What did President Thomas Jefferson know that we don't?
- \* Multiple "bennies" through multiple species.

Curious about any of these? Check out the full story at [www.in.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov)



*Thank You!*

**Ava Preacher & Coleen Hoover - General Donation - 2013 GOLD MEMBER**  
**George "Andy" Beutter, Indiana Farm Bureau - "General Donation" -**  
**2013 GOLD MEMBER**



## Cover Crops & Grazing

*Written on May 24, 2013*

Still fresh in the minds of many farmers & herdsman is the drought of 2012. It was the worst drought since the 1980's, or before depending on your location and view point. In many areas crops and pastures withered, feed prices went up and herds had to be reduced. Hay and forages had to be brought in from various other locations such as Wisconsin and Florida, just to keep the herds that were left from perishing. Now in 2013 producers' are left wondering, will drought strike again, and what will we do if it does?

So far this year we have almost had the opposite problem of 2012, in that we have almost been receiving too much rain. We know from last year's example that things can change quickly. One option that producers will want to consider as a possible source of protection against the effects of another possible drought is the use of cover crops. It is widely known that the use of cover crops to recycle nutrients, build organic matter, etc can be a very beneficial agronomic tool, but you may wonder in what ways they would provide protection against drought.



One of the biggest benefits that producers' can find by utilizing cover crops during drought situations is the reclaiming of nutrients, especially nitrogen, that were not made available to the cash crop because they were not taken into a solution. Cover crops such as annual rye grass and alsike turnips do a great job of absorbing these left over nutrients, holding them in place until the next cash crop. At the same time both of these species are great for forage, adding yet another great benefit to cover crops in drought situations when pastures and forage may be scarce. One more benefit would be that added cover to the soil helps keep it from baking in the hot summer sun, and losing even more soil moisture, while protecting soil organisms. One thing to note is that if you wish to graze your cover crops, and you are enrolled in a USDA Farm Bill program, you need to check with your local NRCS office for applicable rules and regulations.

You may be asking yourself though if we do have a drought situation again with the lack of water what is the best way to get a cover crop established? Yes, establishment can be tricky, and you may have to get creative. Utilizing planting methods such as slurry seeding with manure might be an option to provide an initial flush of moisture and nutrients. Selecting cover crops seeds that might have a more flexible growing season, such as cereal rye, that will allow you to wait for cooler (hopefully wetter) weather. If you are considering drilling/No-tilling in the cover crop you may want to consider planting a little deeper than normal to reach any possible source of moisture that might be left. Whichever method of establishment you choose, also keep in mind the other factors of your operation that may present issues later in later season.

If you would like to see the use of cover crop as a forage for yourself, you can join the SWCD at our upcoming Pasture Walk on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM on the Schroeder Farm located in southeastern St. Joseph County. This will be a follow up visit to the pasture walk held at this farm in the fall of 2011, at which Rod Schroeder showcased some experimental use of cool season forages (cover crops) and grazing corns. If you would like to RSVP for this even or if you have any questions about the ideas provided in this article please contact the St. Joseph County SWCD office at 574-936-2024 x 4!

*Thank You!*

**Keith Lineback - Land Auctions and Sales - Annual Meeting Donation- 2013 GOLD MEMBER**

**David Johnson - General Donation - 2013 PERSONAL AFFILIATE MEMBER**



# THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

## EDUCATION FOR ONE AND ALL

The St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District has long held the opinion that education is the key to the future. When the SWCD was first formed in 1959, educating the Producers of our county was at the top of the list and one of the main goals of the SWCD. Field days, farm visits, evening meetings were all used to spread the conservation message and programs that were available to the Producers to put conservation practices on their land. But as the SWCD grew and matured, we saw a need to begin the education a little earlier in the life of the Counties Residents. So in 1985 the SWCD hired its first Environmental Education Coordinator. This first EEC began work on an environmental curriculum that could be taught to the teachers, with the hope that they would take these activities back to the classrooms and they would then put an environmental spin on the lessons that they were already teaching. The second EEC continued to work with teachers and their curriculum but also began to visit the classroom and present environmental programs to the students. Of course during this whole time the SWCD continued to work with the Producers and continued with Field days, meetings



and farm visits. In 1990 the third EEC was hired and the work continued. In school programs and topics were expanded, national environmental curriculums, such a Project WILD and Project Learning Tree replaced the SWCD's curriculum for teachers and the work continues today. Today the EEC provides 28 different environmental programs to our local schools, each designed to help students better understand their relationship with our natural world and while some of them may seem a bit unrelated to our soil and water, that is the great thing about Planet Earth, everything is connected. Last school year the EEC presented approximately 400 programs for over 20,000 students.

The SWCD is committed to continue its work with the youth and adults of our county to help all residents better understand their relationship with our wonderful Planet.

If you are interested in an adult programs for your Lion Clubs, Garden Clubs, etc. just call the office (574) 936-2024 to find out the type of programs we offer.

**Teachers – The EEC's calendar will open for school program reservations on August 12, 2013.** Email Rick Glassman at [Richard.glassman@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:Richard.glassman@in.nacdnet.net) to reserve your days, this is the best way

or call 574-936-2024. Check out our web page [www.stjosephswcd.org](http://www.stjosephswcd.org) for the environmental newsletter to see a complete list of youth programs, as well as other programs of the St Joseph County SWCD

*Thank You!*

**Mr. & Mrs. Robin C. Vater - Newsletter Donation - 2013 PERSONAL AFFILIATE MEMBER**



ST JOSEPH COUNTY  
 SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
 2903 GARY DRIVE, SUITE 1  
 PLYMOUTH IN 46563

NON PROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 SOUTH BEND IN  
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## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

**Youth Education Programs Schedule**

As mentioned on page 3, Rick Glassman’s schedule officially opens for reservations on August 12. These are booked on a first come, first served basis and time slots fill up fast! Email Rick at [rick.glassman@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:rick.glassman@in.nacdnet.net) or call us at 574-936-2024 ext. 4.

**Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisors:**  
 John Dooms, Chair  
 Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair  
 Mike Burkholder, Member  
 Arlene Schuchman, Member  
 Stacey Silvers, Member

**SWCD Honorary Members:**  
 Bernard Byrd  
 Al Gostola  
 Jerry Knepp  
 Keith Lineback  
 William Millar  
 John Kulwicki

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 Randy Matthys  
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 Carole Riewe  
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 Dale Stoner  
 Dave Vandewalle  
 Paul Williams, III  
 Dru Wrasse

**St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:**  
 Debbie Knepp, NRCS  
 Rick Glassman, SWCD  
 Andrew Fox, SWCD

**Farm Service Agency Staff:**  
 Gideon Nobbe, CED  
 Linda Bentele  
 Abby Curtis  
 Kathie Kensinger  
 Aldona Martin  
 Cindy Slonaker

*Thank You!*

**Craft Orchard - Youth Education  
 2013 PARTNER AFFILIATE MEMBER**

**David and Renee Millar - Youth Education  
 2013 PARTNER AFFILIATE MEMBER**

**Are you ready to “GO GREEN” and help us save money and natural resources? We can deliver your “Conservation Kaleidoscope” newsletter by email ... Give us a call or send us an email and tell us you’d like to “GO GREEN” (: THANK YOU!!!!**

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