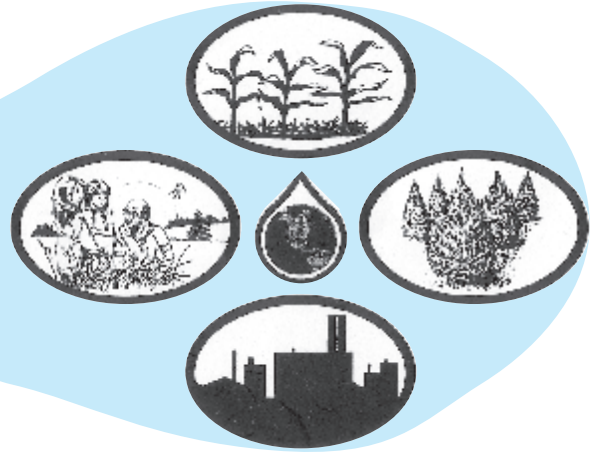




St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

March/April 2013  
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Alisa Wynn, Editor

### What's Going On...

Events hosted by the St. Joseph County SWCD  
& Our Partners in Conservation

#### MARCH

- 1 - Tree / Plant Sale PRE-ORDERS Due Today** - Call for a Flyer
- 8 - RSVPs for 3/14/13 Producers' Meeting DUE TODAY**
- 10 - Daylight Saving Time Begins**
- 14 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - Producers' Soil Health Breakfast Meeting**, Greene Twp. Comm. Bldg., 8AM
- 15 - Rain Barrel/Composter PRE-ORDERS Due Today**
- 17 - SAINT PATRICK'S DAY**
- 18 - (MON) SWCD Monthly Board Mtg.**, Centre Twp. Library, 7PM
- 20 - First Day of SPRING**
- 22 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - COMPOST 101 SEMINAR**, St. Joseph Co. Library (Downtown South Bend), 6PM - Call to RSVP
- 23 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - The Unity Gardens' 3rd Annual Growing Summit @ IUSB**, More Info: [www.theunitygardens.blogspot.com](http://www.theunitygardens.blogspot.com)
- 24 - PALM SUNDAY**
- 29 - GOOD FRIDAY**
- 31 - EASTER SUNDAY**

#### APRIL

- 9 - St. Joseph County SWCD formed 54 years ago on 4/9/59**
- 12-14 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - AgDays @ St. Jos. Co. 4H Fair Grounds**, More Info: [www.4hfair.com](http://www.4hfair.com)
- 13 - (SAT) AgDays & PICK-UP DAY** for Pre-Ordered Trees, Rain Barrels, Accessories, & Composters and "Extra Trees" for Sale, from **8-11AM @ St. Jos. Co. 4H Fair Grounds**
- 16 - (TUES) SWCD Monthly Board Mtg.**, Centre Twp. Library, 7PM
- 22 - EARTH DAY**
- 22 - FREE PUBLIC EVENT - Compost 101 Seminar**, Downtown South Bend SICPL Library, 6-7PM - RSVP Requested

## Have You Heard? ... St. Joseph County SWCD Holds 53rd Annual Meeting

### Annual Meeting Re-cap

The St. Joseph County SWCD held our 2012 Annual Meeting on January 18, 2013 at Holy Family Parish in South Bend. Approximately 140 guests, agency partners, and legislators throughout the community attended. The meeting was kicked off by a warm welcome from Ms. Meredith Perks, Regional Director for Senator Joe Donnelly. In addition to enjoying Holy Family's signature Polish Dinner, guests participated in the annual election, selecting North Liberty Ag Producer, Mr. Mike Burkholder, for a three-year term as our newest St. Joseph County SWCD Supervisor. St. Joseph County Councilman, Corey Noland, conducted the Oath of Office for elected Supervisor Mike Burkholder and our newest appointed Supervisor, Ms. Arlene Schuchman.

The following 2012 Award Nominees and Winners were also recognized for their achievements in natural resource conservation:

- **Tenure Awards for Board Member: Randy Matthys - 25 Years of Service**
- **For Serving 3-Year Terms as Supervisors (2010-2012): Paul Williams, III and Jim LaFree**
- **State-level Nominee, Supervisor of the Year: Jim LaFree**
- **State-level Nominee, Friend of Conservation: Charlotte Wolfe of Prairie Winds Nature Farm (Lakeville)**
- **State-Level 2012 IASWCD River Friendly Farmer Award Winners: William Lappin (North Liberty) and Dale & Dorothy Stoner (D&D Stoner Farms in Lakeville)**
- **St. Joseph County Conservation Farmer of the Year Award: The Randy Ehninger Farm (South Bend)**
- **St. Joseph County Wildlife Habitat Development**

**Award: Marc Eads (Walkerton-area property)**

- **St. Joseph County Environmental Educator Award: Chris Nemeth (3rd Grade Teacher, Christ the King School, South Bend)**

Mike Hoffman, WNDU Chief Meteorologist, gave a presentation on his experiences as a weather forecaster and answered several questions about the recent weather trends and future forecasts.

Guests were provided with our 2012 Annual Report / 2013 Calendar and our 2012 Annual Financial Report. Visit our website for pdf versions of these documents, or give us a call and we would be happy to send you a hard copy (limited quantities of our Annual Report / Calendar are still available).



Dale Stoner (left) and William Lappin (right) proudly hold their field signs identifying them as River Friendly Farmers of Indiana. To learn more about this state-wide program, visit [www.iaswcd.org/district\\_tools/RFF/rffpage](http://www.iaswcd.org/district_tools/RFF/rffpage) or simply Google the words Indiana river friendly farmer.

For the second year in a row, guests also participated in a Silent Auction Fundraiser, helping the SWCD to raise \$638.50. Thank you to all of the bidders and item donors!

Thank you to everyone involved in helping us to celebrate our 2012 milestones and for making our 53rd Annual Meeting a success!

*Thank You!*

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

## 27th Annual Tree Seedling & Plant Sale Fundraiser ... also Featuring Rain Barrels & Composters

### Thank you for supporting local conservation efforts!

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who pre-ordered tree seedlings, groundcover, rain barrels, rain barrel accessories, and tumbling composters during our 2012-2013 conservation tree sale fundraiser. Pre-ordered items will be available for pick up on **Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 8AM to 11AM EST** at the **St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds in the Swine Barn**. You might even plan on bringing the family and checking out the **St. Joseph County 4H Fair's AgDays FREE** event happening that same weekend in the Commercial Building (more info: [www.4hfair.com](http://www.4hfair.com)).

Many of the tree species offered in our annual fundraiser program are native to Indiana and are attractive to various types of wildlife. An easy and cost-effective way to conserve water and improve water quality is to install a rain barrel. (If you're asking yourself, "What's a rain barrel?" visit this shortcut to our website: [www.tinyurl.com/swcd-my-yard](http://www.tinyurl.com/swcd-my-yard)). Composting is nature's process of recycling decomposed organic materials into a rich healthy soil known as compost, and it reduces the amount of refuse that would otherwise end up in our landfills. The rain barrels and composters we sell are made by a local company in Minooka, Illinois called "Upcycle Products" ([www.upcycle-products.com](http://www.upcycle-products.com)), who specializes in making their rain barrels and composters from thoroughly cleaned, re-used USDA food-grade, high density polyethylene plastic (which inhibits algae & bacterial growth), which further helps the environment by diverting the barrels from landfills.

**The funds we raise through these conservation product sales enables the St. Joseph County SWCD to provide education and outreach programs to people of all ages in your community, in addition to a variety of technical and financial assistance programs to land-owners and land-users.**

**In other words, your purchase shows your support for local conservation efforts in St. Joseph County!**

### Missed the deadline to pre-order? That's OK!

**If you missed the deadlines for pre-ordering (see pg. 1), or if you would like to order additional items, the good news is that you still have a chance to purchase them during our April 13th "Pick-Up" Day.** We will have a limited number of extra items for sale at the same time as the Order Pick-Up. Come early for the best selection, as the extra items are sold on a **first-come, first-serve basis** (again, pick-up is from 8AM to 11AM). The prices (which include tax) for our "Saturday Sale" items are listed below for your convenience. **If you have ANY questions, give us a call at 574-936-2014 ext. 4.**

Type	Species / Item	Price w/Tax	Type	Species / Item	Price w/Tax
Evergreen	American Arborvitae	\$2.25/seedling	Deciduous	Tulip Poplar	\$1.95/seedling
Evergreen	Canadian Hemlock	\$2.25/seedling	Flowering	American Cranberry	\$2.15/seedling
Evergreen	Fraser Fir	\$2.20/seedling	Flowering	Butterfly Bush	\$1.95/seedling
Evergreen	Norway Spruce	\$2.20/seedling	Flowering	Common Lilac	\$1.85/seedling
Evergreen	White Pine	\$2.20/seedling	Flowering	Hazelnut	\$1.65/seedling
Evergreen	White Spruce	\$2.35/seedling	Flowering	Redbud	\$2.05/seedling
Deciduous	Black Walnut	\$1.35/seedling	Flowering	Shadblow Serviceberry	\$2.35/seedling
Deciduous	Common Persimmon	\$1.65/seedling	Flowering	White Flowering Dogwood	\$1.65/seedling
Deciduous	Large Tooth Aspen	\$2.35/seedling	Groundcover	Pachysandra (25 plants/12.5-25 ft <sup>2</sup> )	\$18.25/25-pack
Deciduous	Northern Red Oak	\$1.40/seedling	Wildflower	American Mix (1oz/250 ft <sup>2</sup> )	\$8.05/seed pack
Deciduous	River Birch	\$1.85/seedling	Wildflower	Bird & Butterfly Mix (1oz/250 ft <sup>2</sup> )	\$8.05/seed pack
Deciduous	Sweetgum	\$1.85/seedling	Rain Barrel	55 Gallon - Various Colors	\$80.00 each

*Thank You!*

**William O. Autry & Sarah E. Leach - General Donation - 2013 BRONZE MEMBER**

## 2013 Brings New Initiatives to NRCS's EQIP Program

To address natural resource concerns related to production of cash-crops on farmland and forestland, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is again offering financial assistance through the Farm Bill's **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) this year**. EQIP is a voluntary conservation program for farmers that promotes environmental quality and agricultural production as compatible goals. The general EQIP program provides an opportunity for interested individuals to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air, and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. **In addition to the general EQIP program, four special initiatives are also being offered this year**. With these initiatives, NRCS is offering farmers financial and technical assistance to implement new, energy efficient practices on their operations.

**The four 2013 EQIP special initiatives are:**

- *Air Quality Initiative*

NRCS provides eligible producers with program support **to address air quality concerns from agricultural operations** and helps them meet regulatory requirements. There are many conservation practices addressed under the Air Quality Initiative. **One notable example is that some applicants may be eligible for financial assistance toward upgrading combustion engines**. The program is designed to help producers meet air quality compliance requirements, as well as, support practices which address impacts associated with greenhouse gases. St. Joseph County is one of only 30 counties in Indiana to be offered this initiative.

- *Organic Initiative*

NRCS helps **organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification install conservation practices** to realize increased conservation benefits on their farms. These conservation practices can address many natural resource concerns. Some examples of practices are installing buffers along waterways, improving waste utilization, or improving irrigation efficiency. By doing this, NRCS can help those operations with an Organic System Plan to fulfill many of their requirements.

- *On-Farm Energy Initiative*

NRCS provides financial support to producers so they can work with a certified technical service provider to develop **Agricultural Energy Management Plans** or **farm energy audits** that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS then uses audit data to develop energy conservation recommendations. These recommendations can include changing to LED light bulbs and insulating farm buildings, among other improvements.

- *Seasonal High Tunnels Initiative*

NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels (also commonly called "hoop houses"), which are steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons of high value crops in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil health, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops.

- *Deadline to Apply for the Current Round of EQIP Funding*

There will be one more round of funding offered for EQIP, both for the general program and special initiatives, this year. **The application cutoff is March 15, 2013**. The EQIP program is competitive. Applications for EQIP contracts are ranked based on criteria developed by both the NRCS National Headquarters and NRCS State Conservationists. The ranking criteria vary from state to state, and even from county to county to some degree.

- *More Info*

> General EQIP program and Indiana's EQIP Initiatives: **Visit [www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html](http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html)**

> EQIP or other **Technical / Educational / Financial Assistance** relating to **natural resource concerns** of agricultural producers, landowners, homeowners, land-users, and St. Joseph County residents in general: **Call the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Office (home of NRCS and St. Joseph County SWCD) at 574-936-2014 ext. 4 or visit [www.stjosephswcd.org](http://www.stjosephswcd.org)**

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*Thank You!*

Lehman & Lehman, Inc., Landscape Architects - *General Donation* - 2013 BRONZE MEMBER

Matthys Farm Market - *General Donation* - 2013 BRONZE MEMBER



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



## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership



### Unlock the Secrets in the Soil

*Adapted from: USDA-NRCS Soil Health Portal  
(www.nrcs.usda.gov)*

Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish. As world population and food production demands rise, keeping our soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance.

So much so that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) believes improving the health of our Nation's soil is one of the most important endeavors of our time. By focusing more attention on soil health and by educating customers and the public about the positive impact healthy soils can have on productivity and conservation, NRCS and their Partners-in-Conservation can help our Nation's farmers and ranchers feed the world more profitably and sustainably – now and for generations to come.

The NRCS has developed their website to include a section where you can find resources to understand the basics and benefits of soil health – and to learn about Soil Health Management Systems from farmers who are using those systems. So whether you're a farmer, a researcher, a conservationist or an interested citizen, the information on this site will help you "Unlock the Secrets in the Soil." The simplest way to find the Soil Health section of NRCS's website is to Google the words *NRCS Unlock the Secrets in the Soil*.

#### Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chair  
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair  
Mike Burkholder, Member  
Arlene Schuchman, Member  
Stacey Silvers, Member

#### SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Dave Craft  
Jan Ivkovich  
John Kulwicki  
Melvin Kulwicki  
Jim LaFree  
Charles Lehman  
Joe Long  
Randy Matthys  
Eugene Myers  
Carole Riewe  
Richard Schmidt  
Dale Stoner  
Dave Vandewalle  
Paul Williams, III  
Dru Wrasse

#### SWCD Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd  
Al Gostola  
Jerry Knepp  
Keith Lineback  
William Millar

#### St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS  
Rick Glassman, SWCD  
Andrew Fox, SWCD  
Lisa Wynn, SWCD

#### Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED  
Linda Bentele  
Abby Curtis  
Kathie Kensinger  
Aldona Martin  
Cindy Slonaker

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!!!!