



McHenry County
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



From the Board President—

I'd like to take this opportunity to tell you a little about myself. I am a Farmer and a Conservationist, continually searching for methods to be better at both. It is an exciting time to be involved in both of these pursuits as the agricultural industry and the environmentally minded thinkers are working together more than ever to find solutions to the challenges of providing food, while conserving the soil, water, and wildlife in our county.

I have served on the McHenry County Conservation District Board of Trustees for three years. My family and I enjoy hiking and cycling on trails through the Districts' various sites. We have farmed in the area for six generations. Having experienced farming with two previous generations, and now presently farming with my son, I certainly have a unique perspective into the dynamics between conservation and agriculture. From moldboard plowing and growing hay on hills to reduce erosion; to no-till fields, crop rotation, and grass waterways; to cover crops and variable rate and split application of nutrients; best management practices in agriculture have evolved and keep evolving.

This past August, McHenry County Conservation District, in a collaborative effort with McHenry County Farm Bureau and Illinois Farm Bureau, installed a bioreactor in one of its fields near Greenwood. A bioreactor is a pit where water from a field tile drains before it enters a ditch, stream, or river. The pit is filled with woodchips that filter out nitrogen, thus preventing nitrogen applied to a crop from entering the water system. Water flow and quality entering and exiting the bioreactor will be monitored and studied to discover the functionality of the bioreactor and its value to correlate farm practices and environmental health. This provides one more option to control the impact agriculture may have on the environment.

Much can be accomplished when research and innovation of the private sector, academia, non-profits, wastewater treatment agencies, the agricultural sector, and state and local government work together to utilize resources in the most efficient manner. I look forward to seeing the results of this project, and eagerly anticipate other programs in the future that will ensure the land I farm now, and the trails I enjoy hiking on, be preserved for generations to come.

Yours in Conservation,

John Henning— Board President

Our Mission

The McHenry County Conservation District exists to preserve, restore and manage natural areas and open spaces for their intrinsic value and for the benefits to present and future generations.

Our Vision

To fulfill our promise that McHenry County's public lands, water, wildlife and way of life will thrive in a rapidly changing world. Where people of all ages, cultures and abilities are engaged and empowered to learn about and contribute to conservation in diverse and impactful ways. Where wild and scenic places support thriving native plants and wildlife populations and public lands support diverse outdoor recreation, educational and immersive experiences.

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Upcoming Board Meetings

Public Session varies, check website.
Agendas posted at MCCDistrict.org.

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American with Disabilities Act

McHenry County Conservation District welcomes the participation of all individuals in our programs, including those with disabilities. We are fully committed to complying with the ADA and providing reasonable accommodations to facilitate participation in our programs.

It is the responsibility of participants, parents/guardians to contact the District to make arrangements for any accommodation at the time of registration; no later than two weeks prior to the start of a program or special event.

Safety is a Priority

Safety is a top priority to all who visit our sites and facilities. If, while on a Conservation District site, you see or witness something that appears to be unsafe, please call the Conservation District and let us know (815) 338-6223.

Photography

Participants in McHenry County Conservation District programs and visitors at our sites may be photographed, videotaped or filmed for use in District publications, promotions, and on the District web site or social media channels. All photos taken on District property are the sole property of the District.



Share Your Memories with Us!

We are collecting oral interviews, photos, movies, etc. of activities on properties now held by the Conservation District. Help us document our local history!

Have a story to tell? We'd love to hear your oral history via an informal interview. Please contact Bailey at archive@mccd.org, or leave a message at the Lost Valley Visitor Center (815) 678-4532.

Do you have memories of farms, day camps or other activities on properties the Conservation District now owns? The Conservation District is collecting the history (oral interviews including old pictures, movies, etc.) of what occurred on these lands through the past 100+ years and preserve it for future generations. This captured history helps tell the story of life in McHenry County. If you have photos to share, would like to set up an interview, or would like to request more information, we would love to talk to you!

In every community—families, neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools—there are people, “bearers of tradition” who have knowledge to share—that often come from years of experience and have been passed down across generations; these persons become primary sources of culture and history. Through documenting these memories and stories, the past comes to life in the present, filled with vivid images of people, places, and events. These stories anchor us in a larger whole, connecting us to the past, giving us a sense of identity and roots, and belonging.

Also consider joining our Facebook Group – “Sense of Place: The History of District Land.”

The group exists as a place to share our stories with one another about the history of District Lands before they became conservation areas. Whether you were a camp counselor at Camp Algonquin, Pleasant Valley, Fel-Pro RRR or another District site; you worked at Northern Pump Farm, or had a farm on or near District property; or you remember the events surrounding the creation of the District almost 50 years ago; we want to hear your story!



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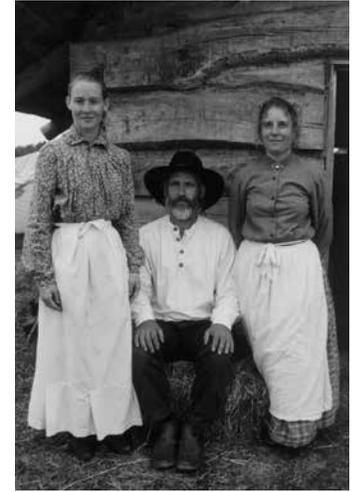
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Happy Retirement: Anne Basten

After 30-years of public service with McHenry County Conservation District, Anne Basten will enter the wonderful world of retirement!

“The Conservation District has been very fortunate to have a talented and dedicated employee who made the agency’s mission, conservation, and public service a priority. Anne’s work ethic is second to none and she dedicated her talents to make the Conservation District not only her vocation but advocacy,” said Executive Director Elizabeth Kessler.

Over the years, Anne has witnessed the agency grow from just nine open sites to 35 conservation areas, protect over 25,600 acres of open space, and become a regionally and nationally recognized agency.

Anne began with the District in 1990 as the Accounts Payable/ Payroll Clerk in the District’s Administrative Offices located at the former Research Field Station within Glacial Park. As the District began to expand from its humble beginnings to the need to add additional departments, Anne was there to help make it happen smoothly. Anne soon found herself working three-days a week in administration and two-days a week at the Agrevo Building in Glacial Park providing support to the Natural Resources Department, Land & Facilities Department and the Police Department. In 1997, Anne was promoted to her current position of Executive Assistant to the Executive Director.

Throughout her tenure Anne implemented improvements and efficiencies to all areas of the District including management and land acquisition records, development of a data-base, the District’s telephone communications systems and the standardization of board packets, including changing from printed to all electronic packets. She has effectively managed the executive office working for two Executive Directors and an accumulation of 50 different Trustees.

In addition, Anne served as the Freedom Information Officer, on the District’s Housing Committee, Sustainability Committee, Conservation Congress Steering Committee and McHenry County Conservation Foundation’s *Pedal Paddle Saddle* and *Tap Into Your Wild Side* planning committees. But wait, her involvement didn’t



Top, L-R: Assisting at a Fox Waterway cleanup day. Tree hugger at heart. Family cabin at *Trail of History*. Bottom, L-R: At IAPD conference. Recipient of Environmental Defender’s Volunteer of the Year Award.

stop there. In addition, she volunteered on numerous community committee’s including the Fox Waterway Agency, Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, Bioneers Committee, Green Expo, Green Drinks and the Illinois Environmental Council. Anne also educated constituents of two voter-approved referenda, and actively participated in advocacy efforts through participation at Parks Day at the State Capitol, Legal Symposium, Illinois Association of Conservation Districts, Illinois of Association of Conservation and Forest Preserve Districts and Illinois Association of Park Districts, National Recreation and Park Association, Park District Risk Management Association, and Chicago Wilderness.

Anne was also a main feature at the now retired, *Trail of History* event, interpreting the log cabin during what was once one of the most authentic reenactments in Illinois. In her free time, Anne also volunteers as a site steward at Bystricky Prairie, a privately held Illinois Nature Preserve, as well as assists as a bird monitor, participates in restoration work-days and seed collection forays, and attends the annual Big Sit migratory bird count.

“Anne Basten is recognized as a VIP – Very Indispensable Person who can always be counted on to roll up her sleeves and do whatever needed to be done. For the past 30 years, having obtained her dream job, Anne remained steadfast in her belief of the Conservation District’s mission, and gained immense satisfaction in providing the public exceptional customer service,” added Kessler.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of the McHenry County Conservation District, we convey our deep and sincere gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to Anne Basten for her continued dedication. We hereby celebrate her illustrious career and immense dedication to conservation. Knowing Anne as we do, we will mostly likely bump into her and see her around, as she plans to stay connected and remain engaged with conservation advocacy issues, be involved with the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, and attend McHenry County Green Drinks. We wish her the very best in her future endeavors and adventures!

News & Noteworthy:



Wilma Rosen Bequest

The District was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to get to know a remarkable woman from Des Plaines, IL, Wilma M. Rosen.

Wilma loved nature, enjoyed hugging oak trees, listening

to the sweet sounds of song birds and watching wildlife. In 2011 following the unexpected death of her son, Harvey J. Rosen, Wilma reached out to the Conservation District looking for a way to honor the passing of her son, who also enjoyed the outdoors and had a passion for preservation of the natural world.

After her visit to McHenry County, Mrs. Rosen contributed \$400,000 toward the acquisition of roughly 13 acres of oak and hickory woodland, adjacent the District's Wildlife Resource Center in Grundstrom Woods Conservation Area, Wonder Lake. The

property had been subdivided and slated for development.

Sadly, this past April, Wilma passed away, we believe at the age of 102. She too left a legacy gift as a bequest to McHenry County Conservation District and McHenry County Conservation Foundation for the permanent acquisition and preservation of land in McHenry County, Illinois.

The trustee of her estate explained of Wilma's desire to have \$100,000 go toward the preservation of land. The District received these funds and accordingly, placed them in the District's dedicated account for the acquisition of land to be preserved substantially in its natural condition in perpetuity.

McHenry County Conservation District and McHenry County Conservation Foundation are extremely appreciative of Wilma's meaningful gift and are humbled by her love of the natural world.

Planned giving makes it possible for everyone to help protect our lands and waters for future generations. To learn more about how you can leave a legacy gift, visit www.mchenryconservation.org or contact Shawna Flavell at (815) 354-1374



A Conservation Legacy – Chuck Dubsy

McHenry County Conservation District Board of Trustees named the late Chuck Dubsy as the first recipient of the Conservation Legacy Award which honors his passion for conservation, recognizes his work as a volunteer site steward, and his willingness to mentor others.

"In his role as volunteer, site steward, and citizen advisory committee member, Chuck truly left his mark. He touched many lives that will be forever changed due to his passion to conservation and the important work he did on behalf of the McHenry County Conservation District," stated Executive Director Elizabeth Kessler. "While we most certainly appreciate everyone's efforts, there are a special few citizens who keep giving long after passing.

McHenry County Conservation District is proud to recognize these individuals whose efforts have assisted our organization in preserving our County's beautiful and valuable natural landscapes for future generations."

Chuck Dubsy was a Conservation District volunteer for eleven years and a Site Steward at Grundstrom Woods in Wonder Lake for six of those years where he not only worked tirelessly to support his site, but also assisted several other site stewards as well. He was generous with his time and volunteered wholeheartedly. He believed deeply in healing the land and giving back through his restoration efforts. He also truly enjoyed working with young people and passing on his knowledge and love of the land. Over the years, he welcomed hundreds of high school and youth groups to restoration workdays to introduce them to the natural world. His interaction with teens was his specialty. By getting youth involved in restoring the land, he demonstrated to them the immediate impact they could have. He was a positive influence to all those students who participated. "My intent is to primarily preserve our heritage and open spaces, and pass it on," stated Chuck during his initial volunteer interview. In 2008, part of his homestead was placed into a conservation easement with the District.

Chuck also served on the District's Citizens Advisory Committee. In addition he found time to volunteer as a plant monitor, a seed collection volunteer, and a special event volunteer for the Festival of the Sugar Maples and Trail of History where his energy, thoughtfulness, and humor was welcomed by staff and visitors alike.

For those that had the opportunity to meet and work with Chuck knew his love for the natural world and to make the world a better place. **The Conservation Legacy Award was presented to Chuck's wife** Ann Dubsy at the September 22, 2020 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Do you know a Conservation Champion?

The Conservation District is seeking nominations of individuals who are or have been Conservation Champions for McHenry County Public Open Space.



The Conservation Legacy Award

recognizes contributions that transcend time. Whether the award winner dedicated ten or fifty years

towards the local environment, their work lives on well past their earthly lifetime. Their legacy is a gift to their community, as well as the plant and wildlife within it. Conservation Legacy Award winners have inspired others to become stewards of the land.



The Conservation Champion Award

recognizes individuals who have contributions of extraordinary significance or impact to the

conservation movement through their continued dedication and support of the mission of the Conservation District. Significant contributions can include leadership, innovation, environmental legislation, community building, restoration fieldwork, citizen science and volunteering, donations of money and land.

McHenry County Conservation District looks forward to celebrating the recipients who do so much to protect, preserve and promote the wide open spaces throughout McHenry County.

To nominate someone for a Conservation Legacy or Conservation Champion Award, submit an electronic nomination form from the District's website (MCCD.me/ConservationAwards). **Nominations deadline December 31, 2020.**