

# CDEA News

The Monthly Newsletter of the NYS Conservation Districts Employees Association



## 2008 Administrative Conference

The 2008 Administrative Conference was again, a success. Turnout was good with 40 folks, who represented approximately 33 District's. Overall the event went well and reviews have been positive. The event will be held again next year, but nothing has been set yet.

The Hotel Utica was very helpful with the conference and from what I have heard provided excellent food. The team building event this year was a "Know Your Counties and Divisions". The attendees were broken into groups and they competed against one another with questions from Mr. Les Travis. The questions hinted at what Districts did and what Division they were in. Rhonda Jarvis wants a rematch next year!

Rhonda would like to recognize and thank the committee members for all of their hard work: Rhonda Redder, Carla Luther, Jane Robinson, Deb Michael and Les Travis. Rhonda also wanted me to point out that anything which was purchased for the event supported breast cancer awareness. If you have any questions about the event or have suggestions for next years training, please contact Rhonda Jarvis.

## AEM In the News Awards

Congratulations to the following Districts on their AEM Agriculture in the News Awards:

### Gold Award Winners:

**Clinton County** - *AEM on the Airwaves Award*

**Cayuga County** - *Overall AEM & District Program Print Coverage Award*

**Wyoming County** - *Photo Award*

### Silver Award Winners:

**Jefferson County** - *Overall AEM & District Program Print Coverage Award*

**Onondaga County** - *AEM on TV Award*

**Warren County** - *Photo Award for their AEM Sign Award photo*

### Bronze Award Winners:

**Cortland County** - *Overall Program Coverage Award*

**Allegany County** - *Media Source Award*

**Schuyler County** - *Integrating AEM into the News Award*

**Steuben County** - *AEM Print Coverage Award*

**Herkimer County** - *AEM on TV Award*

**Fulton County** - *AEM Farm Tour Photo Award*

### Platinum Recognition:

**Madison County** - Continued & Unprecedented Commitment to Having the Farmer's Voice Heard

Many articles were submitted this year for consideration and these are awards which Districts should be proud of, due to New York's rich agricultural heritage.

Remember if you or your District is the news due to the AEM program, take a minute to send a copy or link to Barb Silvestri at the NYSSWCC. You may be recognized and receive a nice prize!

Visit: [WWW.NYSCDEA.COM](http://WWW.NYSCDEA.COM)

## From El Presidente.....

I spoke to Jeff Carmichael the other day about several newsletter items. First off the 2009 WQS will be held at the ....Holiday Inn in Auburn NY. I can hear a collective moan from some folks, but as we all know money is tight and there will be no reimbursement from the state this year. The proposals came in and the Holiday Inn once again provided the lowest cost with the most benefits. I think that most of us would like a change, but remember that we are there to learn. The WQS will be held from March 10-13. The committee is looking for course suggestions, so if you have any, please contact Steve Loraine with those ideas. If you have any suggestions for the evening entertainment contact John Persch or Jessica Verrigni, the entertainment coordinators.

Jeff also discussed the 2008 NYACD Annual Meeting. Congratulations to NYACD for a successful event. Thirty five districts were at roll call, which was up from last year and Jeff felt that the course offerings were a key component to that increase. Jeff handed out his 2008 Presidential Award. This award is generally handed out at the WQS, however the recipient, Keith Kobland, was not available this past March. Keith has been a tremendous resource to the Districts for the AEM in the News programs. Keith is CBS News anchor in Syracuse and has been assisting the AEM program for the past several years.

The NYSCDEA received the 2008 Diversity Award for the NYS Envirothon. This award recognizes the dedication in promoting of the Envirothon, that the CDEA has had, which in turn brings together a diverse mix of students from across the state.

At the meeting it was announced that Ron Alvarado was leaving NY to become the State Conservationist in Oregon, where he originally came from. At this time there has not been any announcement of a replacement.

Finally we discussed the proposed employee handbook. Jeff said that he has received numerous responses in regards to participation; in general they have been favorable. This project was to professionally develop an employee's handbook. It would cost each District approximately \$1,000. While this may seem high, if you were to do this by yourself, the cost would be around \$4,000. If you have questions regarding this, please contact Jeff and we would be glad to answer any questions or concerns.

To wrap this up Jeff said to say Happy Thanksgiving to all and safe travels to all.

## Brain Basher (faxed answers please—518.623.3519)

### This Month's: We'll double this month's fun!

(1) Carla has ten songs that she likes, but they are all on different CDs. It takes her 15 seconds to switch between CDs and each song is exactly 2 minutes and 48 seconds long. How many seconds will it take for Karla to finish listening to all of her favorite songs if she started with a CD in her player, and didn't take the last one out?

(2) Jake walked up to a woman behind a counter and handed her a book. She looked at it and said, "That'll be five dollars." He paid the woman and walked out without the book. She saw him leave without it but did not call him back. How come?

## Remembering Veterans Day

I take for granted my day off for Veterans Day and how many of you do too? I know that it is set from the conclusion of WWI, the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month. We have Veterans in the District family, whether they are employees or related to employees, so I wanted to thank them for all that they have given and in many cases sacrificed in the name of our freedom. The following is a poem, that some of you know, and helps to explain why Veterans organizations sell the paper flowers as fundraisers. It was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McRae, who was a Canadian Medic during WWI. Thousands of allied soldiers are buried in Flanders, an area in France and Belgium. McRae died in 1918 of pneumonia in a French Hospital, but his words, have been heard. This has been called an anti-war as well as a pro war. I think it is more for remembering.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amidst the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders Fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

## 2008 Conservation Skills Workshop

This was a great success this year with 108 folks in attendance, up approx 45 from 2007. The committee worked hard this year and I wanted to recognize them: Greg Albrecht, Mark Burger, Tom DeRue, Tom Eskildsen, Jeff Ten Eyck, Becky Foltasz, Cliff Frasier, Rich Lewis, John Persch, Darrel Sturges, Christene Watkins and Pete Wright. If I forgot someone, I apologize and didn't see you on my email addresses.

As always, thank you to Cortland County for hosting the event, without the effort that they put into this, this event wouldn't be as good. I have reviewed many of the evaluations and most are positive. We can always do better and I do appreciate suggestions.

A comment that I received from an individual was "As I had a lot of time to think on the way home today I thought that I would send you an e-mail when I got back to the office to thank you for everything that you did for the conservation skills workshop and for making it such a great time. I have learned a lot of information and look forward to the next training with everyone". I will accept the thanks on behalf of the committee, as they do the majority of the work.

I was fortunate to have class, hang out or go to dinner with some new employees during the week. It has always been my firm belief that as established District employees we need to reach out to the new ones and make them feel welcome and part of the crowds. This will benefit you as much as them and will help out our association. So next time you meet someone you don't know, make an effort to say hi.

If you have any questions or comments about the event or if you are interested on being on the committee please let me know. So who is going to chair this next year?

## CDEA Employee Profile

Caroline Myers  
Executive Director  
Monroe County SWCD

Born in the "City of Broad Shoulders" a.k.a. Chicago, in July of 1975, Caroline came to NY in 1980. Caroline's father work for ITECH in sales and when he was transferred to Rochester, the rest of the family decided that they should go as well. They relocated to Pittsford and Lil' Caroline spent many hours outdoors climbing trees, running around and in general, causing havoc. She and her two younger sisters kept their mother busy, but when Caroline hit high school, her mother went back to work as a Kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher.

Besides being a "pretty good student" at Pittsford Southerland HS, she spent two years on the swim team, which kept her out of some trouble. No stories were forthcoming from high school, although I believe that there are a few (keep an eye out in future newsletters). She graduated in 1993 and headed to Oswego State.

At Oswego, Caroline majored in Biology with a concentration in plant sciences. I asked her what her favorite course was, which turns out to be a plant ecology course. The course provided real life outdoors learning, including hiking to identify and learn about the plants. Another college favorite was her study abroad program, where she spent time in Liverpool, England studying biology. She commented that because there were many exchange students there at the time she got to mingle with people from across the world. When at Oswego, she was on the equestrian team with those big goofy dogs that people refer to as horses. Caroline did admit that Oswego was a good party school and although she helped to keep the local mini-marts in business, she graduated in 1997.

She started her career as a technician in research and development at Xerox in Rochester, and although it was exhilarating job, Caroline headed to graduate school at Illinois State. She had received a teaching assistant position that provided her the opportunity to research in the ecology of invasive plants, specifically garlic mustard and how it can out compete native species. I learned that garlic mustard photosynthetic rates are about a month ahead of other plants, and since most of the over story leaves are not on the trees yet (early April) garlic mustard gets a great growth jump.

In January of 2001, Caroline moved back to Rochester and spent the next six months looking for a position in conservation. She did find one, albeit in Maryland. She relocated and worked for the Department of the Environment conducting water quality studies on the Chesapeake Bay. In 2003, Caroline became the Executive Director at Monroe County SWCD. She enjoys her job quite a bit, but admits that there are some days....

Outside of work she loves to sailboat race and crews on a 33' sailboat a few times a week. In the winter she spends time downhill skiing, and during the non snowy times enjoys road biking, hiking and playing both tennis and paddle tennis. On July 27<sup>th</sup> of this year, Caroline married Derek, who she met skiing one day. He is an engineer for GM working on hydrogen fuel cell technology. They have one cat named Angel and are planning on having their honeymoon this February in either Hawaii or the Caribbean. They enjoy traveling and have gone to Europe to explore Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Caroline said that she is close with her family as they all live in the Rochester area, but are heading to Derek's hometown in California for Christmas. I guess they won't be hitting both family celebrations that day!