

# CDEA News

The Monthly Newsletter of the NYS Conservation Districts Employees Association

## 2009 NYSCDEA Golf Tournament, Great Job!

This year's golf tournament was a huge success. I am sure that Dave Wick, Captain of the 2009 NYACDEA Golf Tournament winning team, was very humble in his acceptance of this year's championship. In fact I believe he even said that he deferred to Kevin Lewis and thanked everyone wholeheartedly on the day. Thankfully I know Dave and my spies have told me otherwise.

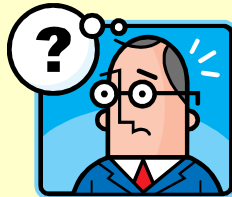
Sixteen teams made up the event and congratulations to the Warren County team of Dave Wick, Ron Montessi, Marc Usher and Marc Migliore for winning this year's event. The second place team was Sam Ly, Graydon Dutcher, Leon Brooks, and Jim Hilson (I have noticed that the Delaware County team is always dangerous). There was a three way tie for third. Brian Wohnsiedler's team of Brian, Gloria Peluso, Scott Burto and Jay Smith; the team of Don and Pat Lake, Ron Kaplewicz and Jean Swisher; and the team of Rhonda and Mark Redder, Jake Ambrose and Lacey Malbeuf. Winners of associated contests: Closest to the pin, men's: Russell Smith, Sam Ly, Shawn Murphy, Jay Smith and Don Lake; women's: Jean Swisher and Lacey Malbeuf. The 50/50 was \$369 and Becca Hare of Black River St. Lawrence RC&D won \$184.50. The other half is going to Jessica and Jerry Verrigni to put towards their expenses to go to her brother's funeral (in Louisiana). The participants voted for this, good thought. Overall the tournament made \$830 for the Association.

This was the eighth annual event and it seems to be a fixture for the Association. Much thanks goes to Rhonda Redder and Christine Watkins of Jefferson County SWCD for organizing this event. Rhonda asked me to recognize Vicki Hendrix as well, Vicki handles the financials and straightens people out as needed. From what I have heard, everyone loved Castlewood partly because of the course, partly because the allowed personal refreshments on the course, but mainly because the Pro was a great help and very laid back. If you are interested in assisting with next year's event, please contact Rhonda or Christine. *More pictures on page 3.....*



2009 Winning Team—Warren County  
M. Usher, D. Wick, M. Migliore and R. Montessi.

### Brain Basher ..faxed answers only (518-623-3519)



**This Month's Question:** Assuming that you can't steal an animal's sense of hearing, or use an electric device, what would you need in order to hear a pin drop from over 20 yards away?

**Last month's Question:** What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backward?

**Answer:** Niagara Falls. By just one hour.... congratulations goes to Mr. Ed Hoxsie of Dutchess County SWCD.

### Update On Ronny Raindrop

Everyone's favorite educational blue raindrop Ronny is getting back in good standing with the US Government. I will let Blanche Hurlbutt explain in her own words...

*"I received word yesterday from Alpa Patel (lawyer) that the U.S. Service Mark Application & design for Ronny has been accepted from the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. We have the Notice of Acceptance of Statement of Use & I'm waiting for the registration certificate.*

*YEA!! Four years and its finally here. It will be up to the NYSCDEA to make sure that the Ronny Raindrop trademark is renewed in the future. Glad to have served the NYSCDEA to complete this project. Thank you allowing me to serve you."*

Thank you Blanche for the work that you have put in on the CDEA and Ronny's behalf. Maybe he will be showing up at your office on your birthday with a present!

**Don't forget to visit your  
Association's website:  
[WWW.NYSCDEA.COM](http://WWW.NYSCDEA.COM).**

## CDEA Employee Profile

Always very pleasant to speak to on the phone, I decided to interview Melanie Saunders from Erie County SWCD. The first thing that I learned was that everything can be traced back to the Town of Hamburg. The Erie County Fair is there, Buffalo is only 20 minutes away, the Hamburg beach is 15 minutes away, the ski resort areas are just 1/2 hour, little Melanie grew up there, and of course Burgerfest is there!



Once we clarified that, I learned that Melanie Malke was born in Hamburg, NY in September of 1962. She grew up with an older sister, two older brothers and one younger brother. Her father was a material handler for an aerospace company and her mom was the head secretary for a candle manufacturing company until she decided to stay home and raise the five Malke children. Phrases such as "perfect child" were bandied about, but I found out that those could have been applied to all of the children. She did say that she was a good child and student and had no horrific embarrassing stories to share from her childhood. As a kid, she did enjoy fishing with her father and brothers, collecting coins and going to Crystal Beach (that's in Canada, eh). In fact she and her siblings didn't need to pay if they received a good report card, kids were let in for free.

Of course Melanie attended Hamburg Central HS and graduated in 1980. While a "Bulldog", Melanie ran some track, organized the yearbook, participated in choir/chorus, danced a lot and played racquetball after school. An interesting tidbit, she also modeled for JC Penny and Grants. I am still waiting for those pictures, as I am sure the plaid look was very popular.

Right after school, Melanie took data processing, typewriting and business courses. Her first employment that we talked about was at Power Drives, inc. She began with secretarial work, but thanks to her background, found herself in computer operations. I tell ya', initiative will get you every time! After Power Drives, she worked at Evans National Bank and the company that is now Realty USA. She took fifteen years off to raise the children, which provided her with many degrees.

In 2007, Melanie saw an ad for a position at an unknown government agency and was invited to an interview. After being offered the job, she really realized that Mr. Gaston was a big teddy bear. Her day may consist of answering the phones, accounting and conducting educational programs, which she really loves.

In July of 1989, Melanie Malke became Melanie Saunders. It seems that she had known a young man for a number of years. Rick had hung out with her younger brother and she was good friends with one of Rick's friends. One thing led to another, they dated for a short time, then "you just know". I enjoyed hearing about their first date—a pig roast and a live band. Why couldn't all dates be like that? Surprisingly it was not held in Hamburg, but in West Seneca, not too far away though. She describes Rick as very sensible and a gentleman, and of course good looking. He works as a tool and die supervisor at the Ford Motor Company.

Melanie and Rick have four children, whom she loves dearly. *Continued on page four....*

## NYS Fair and Empire Farm Days

Rapidly approaching is the NYS Fair. The CDEA maintains a booth at the fair to spread the word about who Districts are and what they can do. This year the booth is centering on rain gardens, rain barrels and rural communities. The drive behind this year's message is to reduce runoff and impacts to our resources and to develop simple solutions to the stormwater issue.

There will be information available about rain garden (how to develop, what plants to use, etc). In addition there will be a "wheel of fortune" quiz that will allow contestants to answer conservation questions and potentially win a re-usable shopping bag or a Ronny Raindrop soda koozie.

The committee this year has developed a book with all counties and their programs so that interested folks can take a look at and find out who to talk to in their local. I asked Kristin White (Seneca County) what the oddest question was that she ever received, she said it was when a woman was having a problem with a critter in her house. She wondered if she could get rid of the animal by dousing her house with gasoline and lighting it up. Kristen said that probably would work, but might have unintended consequences. Ahhhh, the NYS Fair!



Empire Farm Days has come and gone and, from my understanding were a bit rainy and muddy. However, since it deals with agriculture I think that everyone took it in stride. The EFD focuses on projects that have been done looking

at pre and post conditions. This allows people to see what Districts may be able to offer to them for services (both ag and non-ag).

This event brings together the ag community helps to cultivate an awareness to farms of what Districts can do and provide landowners such as AEM, technical assistance, soil erosion and other natural resource issues. It is a three day event. If you would like more information, contact Vicki Hendrix, she is the chair.

## CDEA Commercial Update

PJ Emerick asked if I could include an update in this newsletter about our CDEA commercial. The commercial should be airing now and will run till mid September from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on WIVT in Binghamton, WENY in Elmira, WUTR in Utica and WWTI in Watertown.

PJ stresses the importance that this is the last year for airing the commercial and if we want it to continue we will need to discuss that at the September CDEA Board meeting. Please send your comments and suggestions to PJ, as we will consider this as an agenda item.

# District Program Highlight - St. Lawrence County

Forestry and forest management is a particular favorite subject of mine, so let's learn about one of the programs out there. There are three Districts in NYS that have foresters on staff, Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence. I called Aaron Earl the other day to find out about his District's program.



In the beginning the County managed its parcels and had a forester on staff, that position was eliminated and the program transferred to the District. The District has been managing county owned forest parcels since 2004.

There are 38 parcels that total 4,300 acres, most of which is softwood which includes scotch pine and red pine. The red pine is generally harvested for poles and the scotch pine is pulp. The hardwoods found on the parcels don't grow well and are of a lower grade. The species include sugar maple and beach, yellow birch, red maple and black cherry. I asked Aaron if they ever did firewood sales and he said they currently do not, as it is a liability issue. He did say however that there is a lot of timber stand improvement that could be done to the parcels.

Aaron doesn't just ride the lonely roads, out of site all day, he actually makes it in once in a while to develop the management plans. In fact they have done or in the process of developing plans for a few private landowners as technical assistance, through the AEM program. This provides farmers with some background and ideas on how and what to manage on their lands and what to expect when dealing with loggers and foresters.

The program is regulated by the Board of Legislature. They set a goal that must be met for the program to be a success. This year the District needs to meet a harvest profit of \$48,000, or roughly one of Aaron's paychecks..... Actually Aaron believes that they are on track and will likely go over as a result of last year's storms that occurred.

Aaron sends out bid details (Timber Sale Agreement) to the county purchasing department and they list the date of the showing. The number of foresters in the county has dropped considerably, mainly due to the costs and the economy. However loggers and forester still show up to look at the property they may bid on.



Cont. page four

# 2009 Golf Tourney Highlights?



In the beginning....



Wayne will not be mistaken for Tiger or Phil.

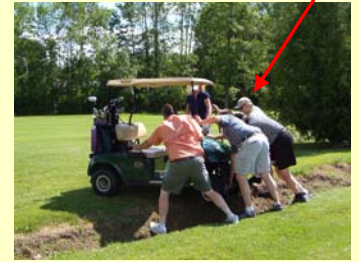


Jake and Mr. Rhonda Redder.

Hi Ron!



Mr. Kapleweiz's golf cart before District Assistance



This picture may not be appropriate for some viewers.

# DEA Views *Submit your photos [jim99@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jim99@nycap.rr.com)*

Aaron Earl in the Adirondacks on Top of Mt. Colden. *Technically the person with the camera is more on top.....*



This sign was spotted in Quebec by a vacationing Erica Shreiner. I like it!



Otsego County USDA Service Center's Adopt a Highway crew. Also, Blanche holding up the sign.

## Upcoming Events...

- Registrations for the 2009 Conservation Skills Workshop are going out ASAP. Contact mark Burger with any questions.
- The 2009 NYACD Annual Meeting and Conference registration has already gone out. If you have any questions, contact Judy Littrell at NYACD.
- The 2009 Administrative Conference registration form is going out this week. Contact Rhonda Jarvis with any questions.
- September 15th and 16th, is the next NYSCDEA Executive Board meeting and will be held in Binghamton. I invite any and all to stop by the meeting to see what your association does for the Soil and Water Districts of NY. Please contact me and I would be happy to send you an agenda as soon as it is set, [jim99@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jim99@nycap.rr.com).

## A little humor to brighten up the day

A research group on sea mammals captured a rather odd porpoise on one of its trips. Its peculiarity was that it had feet! After they had photographed and measured the poor thing, they prepared to set it free. "Wait a minute," said one of the researchers, "Wouldn't it be a kindness if our ship's doctor here were to amputate the feet so that it would be like other porpoises?" "Not on your life," exclaimed the doctor, "That would be *defeeting the porpoise*."

## Forestry cont....

All data is taken down on paper and calculations are done by hand. No ThinkPad and excel spreadsheets for Aaron (hint, hint, Dawn). When a bid is accepted, Aaron gets out to see how the job is going every two days. He made the point that he is there to make sure that everything is going to the management plan and it is his responsibility to voice his concerns if there is an issue.



Dawn is not too impressed with Aaron's adventure

Other activities that Aaron does for the parcels include clearing trails for the vehicles, which allows for public use, provides training for groups such as BOCES and St. Lawrence University. He has had several interns from SLU who are molded by

his knowledge and they have developed final reports on a forestry topic. I am sure that they are fascinating beyond words and that they would be easily PDF'd if you would like a copy.

This is a very interesting program and if you would like to know more, call Aaron or Dawn in St. Lawrence county. They may even let you volunteer with them for the day (or week).



"You haul a sixteen tons...."

## Saunders, continued ...

Ricky is the oldest born in 1990. He is a freshman studying Drama at NYU in New York City. Brittany born in 1992, is a senior in high school. She is in the Elite Swing Choir and is looking at colleges right now. She has not decided on what her future major is, but is leaning towards psychology and music. Tiara is thirteen and plays soccer. Her idol is Mia Hamm and just this year tried out and made a Premier Team. She is the secretary of her class and loves school. Stephanie, the youngest at 10, loves cooking and is already looking like she will be in the culinary field. She really enjoys time in the kitchen with mom (I'm hoping for samples at the next Ex. Board meeting). She was a premature baby and weighed 1# 13 oz, but is doing fine and enjoys everything. All the kids are musically inclined, maybe we should hire them as entertainment for the WQS (i.e. Partridge family)?

Melanie let me know that due to the kids she majored psychology, music, business management and developed skills as an arbitrator. Raising her family was the most important thing that she has every done, she is a very proud mother.

Outside of work, Melanie, likes to support the local community by "wagering and taking in games of chance", is that appropriately said? She enjoys gardening, biking, loves music and dancing. In her words, "I like so many different kinds of music but I think my favorite female artist is Celine Dion and my favorite male artist is Tim McGraw. And when I am bicycling up a mountain about as high as Mount Everest (really the dirt pile in my backyard), I like to listen to AC/DC."

The family goes to Fredonia to pick cherries (evidently they don't have an orchard in Hamburg or, ironically Orchard Park). They have one golden retriever named Austin. As far as travelling, this year the family may be heading to visit family in Texas.

Melanie, it was a pleasure talking to you. She was a real trooper as she had her foot propped up do to an unfortunate accident. She held tough through the "intense grilling" however.