

## **Auxiliary of the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts**

From the 1969 publication:

In 1949, the district supervisors invited their wives to attend the State Association of Conservation Districts meeting at Box Elder. The following year they were their guests at Lake Poinsett. It was these two get-togethers that sparked the organization of the State Auxiliary.

After the Poinsett meeting, it was through the urging of Mr. Martens and the Beadle County Conservation District Board that their wives decided to set up a local auxiliary.

During the State meeting of the Soil Conservation Districts in November 1952 at Huron, a group of the wives met to discuss the possibilities of organizing an auxiliary.

Mr. Everett Barr, National Area Vice-President from Nebraska, presented information on the Nebraska Auxiliary. A temporary committee for organization was set up with Mrs. Harry Martens, Wessington, chairman, and Mrs. Maurice Babcock, Springfield, vice-chairman.

The following were appointed to serve in each area:

- Area 1: Mrs. Albert Mischke, Grover;
- Area 2: Mrs. Martin Slemp, Volin;
- Area 3: Mrs. Harry Martens, Wessington;
- Area 4: Mrs. Maurice Babcock, Springfield;
- Area 6: Mrs. Emanuel Bierwagen, Milesville;
- Area 7: Mrs. Tony Krebs, Quinn.

Mrs. Leo Ruppel, Alpena, was appointed secretary-treasurer. The State Association of Soil Conservation Districts gave the committee \$50 to help defray necessary expenses. It was through the efforts of this group that interest was created for a state organization.

During the Six State Area meeting held at the State Game Lodge in June 1953, a group of interested women met with Mrs. Harry Martens presiding. Plans were actually made for the organizing of the State Auxiliary at the fall meeting of the State Association. The chairman appointed the following to prepare and report on the proposed by-laws at this meeting: Mrs. Frank Feser, Claremont; Mrs. Emanuel Bierwagen, Milesville; and, Mrs. John Dawson, Hawarden, Iowa.

October 5, 1953, Auxiliary Organization: During the 13<sup>th</sup> State Convention of Soil Conservation Districts in Mitchell, South Dakota, on October 5, 1953, 32 wives of district supervisors and technicians met in the YWCA cottage to perfect the organization of a State Auxiliary. Mrs. Harry Martens presided.

Minutes of the 1952 meeting at Huron and the report of the committee held in June 1953 at the State Game Lodge were read and approved. Mrs. John Dawson, chairman of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee, read the proposed constitution.

This, with the changes accepted, was adopted.

The first officers elected at the October 5, 1953, meeting at Mitchell were: President Mrs. Harry Martens, Wessington; Secretary Mrs. Leo Ruppel, Alpena; Vice-President Mrs. Maurice Babcock, Springfield; Treasurer Mrs. Julius Bertsch, Fulton; Historian Mrs. L.J. Elsinger, Dell Rapids.

The following Area-Vice Presidents were elected: Area 1 - Mrs. Everett Baxter, Hazel; Area 2 - Mrs. L.J. Elsinger, Dell Rapids; Area 3 - Mrs. Frank Feser, Claremont; Area 4 - Mrs. J.A. Johnson, Mt. Vernon; Area 6 - Mrs. Thomas H. Pozarnsky, Mission.

Mrs. Martens appointed Mrs. John Dawson, Mrs. M.E. Bierwagen, and Mrs. Frank Feser to serve on the By-laws Committee and to act on suggested changes or amendments. The ladies of the Davison and Hanson District Auxiliaries were hostesses at a lovely coffee hour at the close of this historic meeting.

It is noteworthy that six local district auxiliaries were organized by this time – a good beginning for a new State Auxiliary.

The following is a list of the names of officers and the offices which they have held:

Presidents: Mrs. Harry H. Martens, Wessington; Mrs. J.A. Johnson, Mt. Vernon (later Mitchell); Mrs. Ervin Grenz, Artas; Mrs. Harold Strand, Ellendale, N.D.; and Mrs. Marvin Haag, Hoven.

Vice-Presidents: Mrs. Maurice Babcock, Springfield; Mrs. Walter Hellman, Hillboro; Mrs. Roland Leonhardt, Oldham; Mrs. Marvin Haag, Hoven; and Mrs. Kenneth Brchan, Kimball.

Secretaries: Mrs. Leo Ruppel, Alpena; Mrs. Kenneth Brchan, Kimball; and Mrs. John Muchow, Sioux Falls.

Treasurers: Mrs. Julius Bertsch, Fulton; Mrs. Tony Krebs, Quinn; Mrs. Ervin Grenz, Artas; Mrs. Harold Strand, Ellendale, N.D.; Mrs. Clifford Klein, Valentine, Nebr.; Mrs. Loren McMillan, Martin; Mrs. Roland Leonhardt, Oldham.

Historians: Mrs. L.J. Elsinger, Dell Rapids; Mrs. J.A. Johnson, Mt. Vernon (later Mitchell); Mrs. Harry Christopherson, Menno; Mrs. Harry Hoffman, Leola; Mrs. Roland Leonhardt, Oldham; Mrs. Tony Krebs, Quinn.

Area Vice-Presidents: Mrs. Everett Baxter, Hazel; Mrs. Frank Feser, Claremont; Mrs. Thomas Pozarnsky, Mission; Mrs. Howard Geers, Vale; Mrs. J.A. Johnson, Mt. Vernon (later Mitchell); Mrs. M.E. Bierwagen, Milesville; Mrs. Harry Christopherson, Menno; Mrs. August Grieben, Ferney; Mrs. Burton Ode, Brandon; Mrs. Herb Evans, White Lake; Mrs. W.H. Patmore, Colome; Mrs. Leonard Schultz, Batesland.

Something about those people and their families who were instrumental in starting the Auxiliary:

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Martens live on their farm north of Wessington and operate the farm in partnership with their older son, Frances. They also have a daughter who is Home Extension Agent in Hand County and another son who is Director of Computer Services for the State Highway Department at Pierre. Mrs. Martens was instrumental in organizing the Beadle County Ladies Auxiliary and has served two terms as State Auxiliary President. She has been active in the women's clubs and a 4-H Club leader. They have been active in farm organizations and the programs of their church.

Mrs. J.A. Johnson lived on the family farm near Mt. Vernon for many years. When her husband passed away, she moved to Mitchell. She was a charter member of the Auxiliary and served two terms as the second president. She has been active in state, county, and local farm organizations, as well as her Extension and other women's clubs. She is a forty year member of the AAUW. Her daughter lives in North Dakota where her husband practices dentistry.

Mrs. Harold Strand, whose address is Ellendale, North Dakota, but lives on their farm in the Brown-Marshall District which has been their home for thirty-four years. She has worked as a nurse's aide in the Ellendale Hospital for the past ten years. They have a son who spent most of his military service in Germany and is not farming with his father. Their daughter lives at Great Falls, Montana, where her husband is in the Air Force, and she teaches school. The Strands have been 4-H Club leaders for many years, and have been active in Extension clubs as well as leaders in their church.

Mrs. Marvin Haag, the 1969 president and former secretary of the Auxiliary, lives on a farm in Potter County with Mr. Haag and their two younger children. Their daughter is a senior at SDSU and their son is a sophomore. The children have been active 4-H Club members and the older one won a national award. They have been 4-H Club leaders and are active in the church.

Mrs. Ervin Grenz was a former Auxiliary treasurer and the third president. They live on their farm near Artas with their two sons and one daughter. She has been active in Extension work, the womens activities of her church, and the many school functions.

Updated information provided in 2012:

No information provided.