

ILICA



NEWS

Land Improvement Contractors Of America · Illinois Chapter

September - October 2012

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Upcoming Events:

Area Membership Meetings

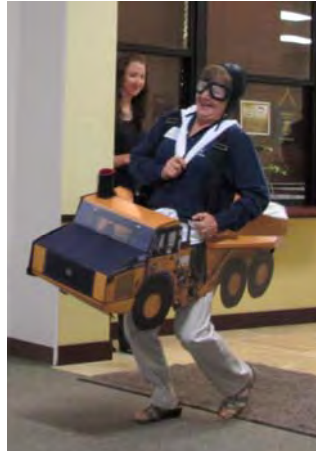
Area 2 - November 14, 2012

Area 6 - December 4, 2012

Area 8 (Olney) - December 5, 2012

Area 8 (Marion) December 6, 2012

WHAT A SUMMER!



Featured Inside:

Economic Survey Shows Farm Income Is Strong *(page 7)*

FSA Reminder Regarding HELC & WC Compliance *(page 10)*

No Movement On Farm Bill Until After Election *(page 14)*

Return To: Illinois LICA
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The *ILICA News* is the official publication of Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association, Inc. at 118 E. Knoxville St., Brimfield, IL 61517. (309) 446-3700.

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The LICA Creed



Land, the foundation of the Nation
 The basis of all wealth
 The heritage of the wise
 The thrifty and prudent
 The poor man's joy and comfort
 The producer of food, fiber and fuel
 The basis of factories
 The foundation of banks

All that man builds is from the land. We often take it for granted or even abuse it; And yet many, unthinkingly and unknowingly pass the land by. What man does with the land will be the deciding factor of his survival.



Meeting Notice

Board Meeting Notice

Regular Board Meeting
November 3, 2012 - 2 pm

Lincoln Land Community College - Menard Hall
Springfield, IL

Committee Meetings 10 am - 1 pm

(See map & directions on page 9)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings from McLean County

At the time of this writing, our fall work is in full swing. The effect of this summer's drought varies considerably over our trade area. We have heard of corn yields from single digits to near normal levels. Hopefully crop insurance will take care of the shortfall in many instances. In our own farm operation we have experienced corn yields in the 120-140 bu. per acre range which is considerably better than we had originally hoped. It is interesting that our workload has not yet been impacted; perhaps more operators are looking long-term.

Our Area 3 golf outing was again a success even with the rain and cooler temps. Some players were more dedicated than others playing through the rain and breezy conditions. We were even able to see first-hand how golf courses maintain the fertility levels on the course.

October 10th-12th the association will be working on a

project at the Illinois State fairgrounds for DNR. If you are able to help out, please contact myself or Brent Breedlove.

October 17 & 18 is the Build Chicago Expo which LICA will have a booth. Wayne Litwiller, Ron Masching, Steve Anderson, and Stuart Anderson will be assisting Jerry Biuso in manning the booth.

Area member meetings are scheduled to begin in November. Area 2 will be in the vicinity of Peru on November 14th. Areas 6 & 8 are set for the first week of December with exact locations to be determined.

Earlier in September, Lori was able to travel to Hungary to meet our new granddaughter, Kennedy Rose Martin. Son-in-law Daniel will report to Wright Patterson AFB November 1st in Dayton, Ohio which will be my first meeting with "K" and I am looking forward to it.

Have a safe fall and look forward to seeing you soon.

David Kennedy, President



NEW MEMBERS

Active Contractors

Eron Juhl
Juhl Excavation
R.R. 1, Box 7
Eldred, IL 62027
Ph: 217-248-1902

Evan Young
Young's Farm Drainage
12123 E. 20th Road
Fillmore, IL 62032
Ph: 217-594-7376

Paul Maierhofer
Maierhofer Farms
3301 East 29th Road
Seneca, IL 61360
Ph: 815-357-8017

Thank You!

Associates

Sievers Equipment
Scott Duewer
1351 W. Jackson Street
Auburn, IL 62615
Ph: 217-438-6111

Nicoud Insurance Services
Bobby Sims
4481 Ash Grove, Suite B
Springfield, IL 62711
Ph: 217-546-6900



4678 Weinmann Dr., Suite A
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FALL/WINTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE



Not only do the leaves turning color mark the beginning of fall, it also indicates that the fall membership meeting schedule is just around the corner. Since the membership committee has been doing these for a few years now, it has become apparent that Illinois is long enough, north to south, to impact when area contractors are available to take advantage of these local educational meetings. So, this year's meeting schedule has been set up according to what seemed to work best for our members this past year.

Area 2 has stepped up to host another meeting during November. We're tentatively looking at November 14th and working toward securing an exact location at this time. The educational program will be conducted by the local Illinois State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers.

And since December is obviously a better time for Southern Illinois contractors, ILICA has scheduled three more meetings for December 4 - 6, 2012 in Mattoon, Olney and Marion. Bill Dean is working on securing an exact location in Mattoon for December 4th; BM Truck Equipment has agreed to host another meeting at their facility in Olney on December 5th; and Erb Equipment is pulling contractors in from several of their locations to host our first meeting in Marion, a part of the state that ILICA hasn't visited in the past.

There will be more information on our website and in the next newsletter regarding these meetings but please, save the date and try to think of contractors you know that might benefit from membership with ILICA or who might be interested in a FREE meal and educational session on us!

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SUSTAINABLE LIVING EXPO RETURNS FOR 2012—DON'T MISS IT!

Contact: Stephanie Brown at 618/949-3698, (cell) 618/638-6954 or sbrown63@shawneelink.net



Good choices. Smart Living. *Help Yourself.* That's the theme of an event returning to the Dixon Springs Ag Center this fall. **The 2012 Sustainable Living Expo will be held on Saturday, October 27th at the Dixon Springs Ag Center. The program runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is offered free to the public.**

"Raising more of our own food, cutting down on utility bills, and taking care of the land we depend for our quality of life in Southern Illinois -- that's what the Expo is all about," explains Stephanie Brown, chair of the organizing committee and Ag, Energy, and Natural Resources Liaison with the Connect SI Foundation.

Three program areas – Energy, Local Foods, and Conservation will be spread across the area, offering demonstrations and informative presentations related to sustainable living. Based on the popularity of last fall's Expo, a large turnout is expected in the event's third year.

"Aside from the many added features, the most popular topics from previous years will be repeated. There will be

more things to see and do as you are strolling around the grounds," says Brown. "Come for the whole day, and bring your family and friends so you can compare notes later."

Sponsors of the Expo include the Shawnee RC&D Area, Connect SI, University of Illinois, Shawnee Communications, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Forest Service, USDA Sustainable Ag Research & Education, Southeastern Illinois College, Shawnee College, John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, and WSIU Public Broadcasting.

More information is available at www.SLEexpo.org, and those on Facebook are encouraged to check www.facebook.com/SLEexpo for event updates. If you can't find the answer online, call Stephanie at 618/638-6954, or send an e-mail to sbrown63@shawneelink.net.

The Dixon Springs Agricultural Center is located on Illinois Route 145 in Pope County, four miles north of the intersection with Route 146, or 25 miles south of Harrisburg.

National LICA Associate, Petrocon, unveils a NEW Benefit!



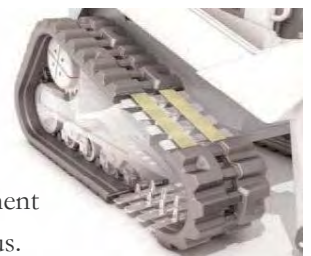
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ECONOMIC SURVEY SHOWS FARM INCOME IS STRONG

Prairie
FARMER

Published on: Sep 25, 2012



While farm income appears to be holding strong, businesses linked to agriculture continue to experience pullbacks in economic activity according to the latest survey of bank CEOs reporting for the Rural Mainstreet economy.

The Rural Mainstreet Index, which ranges between 0 and 100 with 50.0 representing growth neutral, was up slightly for September at 48.3, from 47.1 in August and 47.9 in July. However, it was the third straight month the index has been below growth neutral.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss said, "The drought continues to dampen economic activity for businesses linked to agriculture such as ethanol, and agriculture-equipment sellers. I expect food processors to take a hit later in the year as higher food prices work their way through the system."

Creighton University survey shows rural bankers in 10 states believe farm income is strong, ag businesses experiencing downward slope.

After declining for three straight months, the farmland-price index moved higher. The September reading climbed to 61.6, its highest level since May of this year, and up from 52.8 in August. "Bankers in some parts of the region are reporting farmland prices as high as \$20,000 per acre. Despite the drought, farmers continue to put more air into the farmland price bubble. This is the 32nd consecutive month that the farmland-price index has risen above growth neutral. The farm-equipment-sales index rose to growth neutral 50.0 from August's very weak 38.3," said Goss, the Jack A. MacAllister Chair in Regional Economics at Creighton.

This month, bank CEOs were asked to project farmland price growth for the next year. There was a great deal of variation across the 10-state region with an average gain of approximately 3% expected. Areas that suffered the most from the drought were expected to grow the least. Approximately 13% of the bankers expect price declines over the next year. This is up from 9% this time last when we asked the same question.

This year bankers expect harvesting to occur much earlier than normal. Only 9% anticipate a normal harvest time while 48% expect harvesting to occur one to two weeks early and the remaining 58% of bankers anticipating harvesting to take place three to four weeks ahead of schedule.

Pete Haddeland, CEO of First National Bank in Mahanomen, Minn., reported the harvest in his area is a month

early but yields are great. He expects a record sugar beet harvest. Likewise, Jon Schmaderer, president of Tri-County Bank in Stuart, Neb., indicated that initial yields on irrigated land look promising.

Farmers increased their demand for loans with the loan-volume index climbing to 70.2 from 67.6 in August. This marks the seventh consecutive month the index has risen. The checking-deposit index weakened to 48.3 from 49.1 in August, while the index for certificates of deposit and other savings instruments rose to an anemic 38.4 from 33.0 in August. "As in previous months, the drought appears to be increasing the cash needs of farmers in the region. We have been tracking a reduction in the % of farmland and farm-equipment cash sales and upturns in the degree of bank financing," said Goss.

September's hiring index declined to 50.9 from 51.9 in August. "Even though we tracked hiring growth for the month, the index is trending down. I expect job losses in the months ahead as the impacts of the drought spread to more and more Rural Mainstreet businesses," said Goss.

The confidence index, which reflects expectations for the economy six months out, increased to a frail 43.0 from August's 39.6 and well down from June's much stronger 58.5. "The drought along with a lethargic national economy are negatively affecting the business confidence of bank CEOs in the region," said Goss.

The September home-sales index slipped to a solid 58.8 from 60.2 in August. "As in the national economy, the Rural Mainstreet housing market is improving," said Goss.

Each month, community bank presidents and CEOs in nonurban, agriculturally and energy-dependent portions of a 10-state area are surveyed regarding current economic conditions in their communities and their projected economic outlooks six months down the road. Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming are included.

This survey represents an early snapshot of the economy of rural, agriculturally and energy-dependent portions of the nation. The Rural Mainstreet Index is a unique index covering 10 regional states, focusing on approximately 200 rural communities with an average population of 1,300. It gives the most current real-time analysis of the rural economy. Goss and Bill McQuillan, CEO of CNB Community Bank of Greeley, Neb., created the monthly economic survey in 2005.



LADIES' PAGE

The 8 Healthiest Fruits You Should Be Eating

By Emily Chau

<http://www.lhj.com/recipes/healthy/eating/>

Turns out an apple a day (and an orange, kiwi, and banana) can keep the doctor away. Your healthy bowl of fruit should look like this.



Blueberries, oranges, bananas, apples, kiwis, grapes, strawberries, and papayas -- take your pick and take a bite, because these fruits are superfoods for your health.

Blueberries

Blueberries are rich in antioxidants, which help fight cancer and prevent macular degeneration. Like cranberries, they contain compounds that can protect against urinary tract infections.

Oranges

A single orange gives you almost a full day's vitamin C, plus potassium. The opaque membrane around each wedge has hesperidin, which may lower cholesterol. Even the scent is calming, according to research.

Apples

Eat the skin for a high dose of fiber -- both soluble (the type that helps lower cholesterol) and insoluble (it keeps you regular). In addition to meeting 15 percent of your daily fiber needs, an apple is crammed with antioxidants.

Bananas

High in potassium and low in sodium, bananas help lower your risk of high blood pressure and stroke. Bonus: Protease inhibitors that can prevent stomach ulcers.

Kiwis

Ounce for ounce, kiwis contain more than twice as much vitamin C as oranges, plus they may lower the risk of cataracts and could even protect DNA from damage.

Red & Purple Grapes

Red wine isn't the only source of resveratrol, a powerful antioxidant that could help fight heart disease. You get nearly as much resveratrol in a cup of dark-colored grapes as you do in a five-ounce glass of merlot.

Strawberries

A daily handful helps control type 2 diabetes and stave off heart disease and inflammation. Strawberries are also an excellent source of vitamin C and other antioxidants.

Papayas

These contain papain, a substance that helps improve your digestion. Papayas also provide a lot of vitamin C and are a good source of folate.

Originally published in Ladies' Home Journal, May 2009

Here's an opportunity to put some of these health fruits to use in a delicious spring salad. This salad was served at Edgewood Country Club following the plant tour and saturated buffer site visits during the summer member meeting hosted by Springfield Plastics July 24th.

Edgewood Country Club Salad

Dressing: Pepper Mill Brand Poppy Seed Dressing with a zest of lemon

Greens: 1 part Spring Mix; 1 part Iceberg; 3 parts Spinach
Sliced fresh strawberries

Fresh sliced mushrooms

Glazed pecans

Choice of cheese: (Blu cheese, Ricotta, shredded Co-Jack)

Garnish: Carrots; red cabbage; small bacon bits; red onion

Toss with dressing right before serving as it will wilt!





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November 3rd Board Meeting Location

Lincoln Land Community College - 5250 Shepherd Road, Springfield, IL

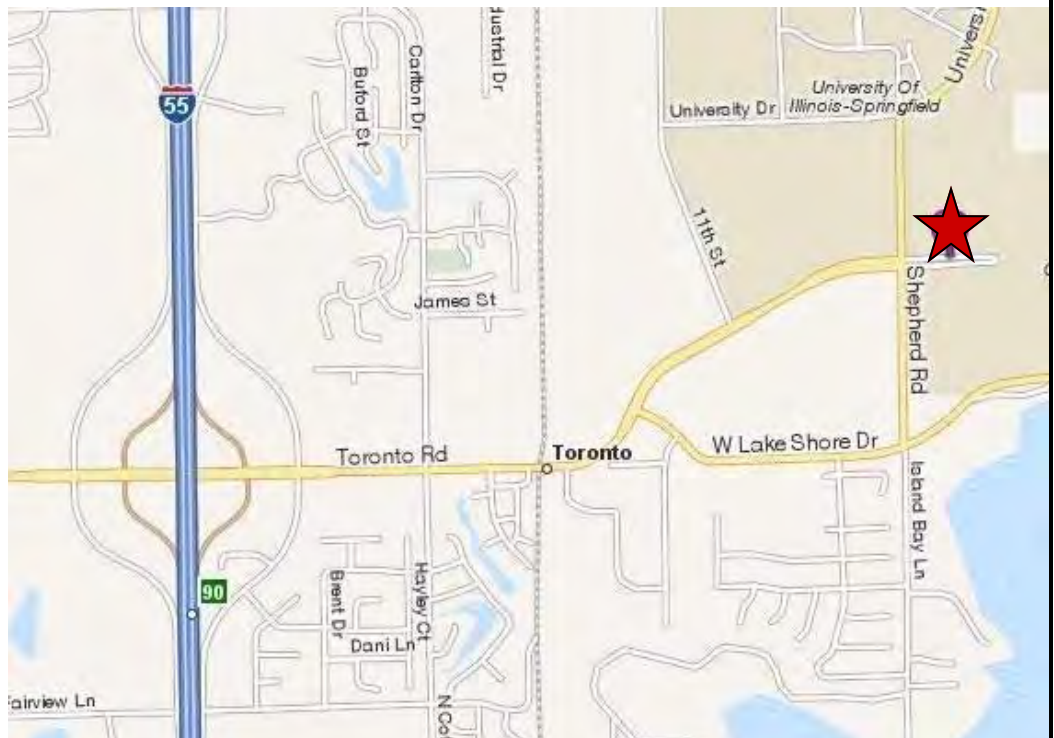
To get to Lincoln Land College from I-55, take exit 90 then head east on Toronto Road.

You will go over train tracks and continue on Toronto Road as it will take you directly into our campus.

The formal meeting notice will include a map of the campus and additional instructions to find our meeting room which is the Robert H. Stephens room in Menard Hall.

They recommend parking in lot 7 and no parking pass is required.

Nelson Catering, who also catered the August Drainage workshop will provide the noon meal.





FSA REMINDER REGARDING HELC & WC COMPLIANCE

Lynn Betts - NRCS photo gallery

Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) / Wetland Conservation (WC) Compliance - Also Known As 'Sodbuster/Swampbuster' Compliance



Compliance with HELC and WC provisions is required to receive most FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) program payments and benefits. For participants with HEL fields, they must be in compliance with tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in the conservation plan. This is nothing new and has been part of overall program policy since 1985. Contact your local FSA office prior to any land clearing or drainage projects to complete Form AD-1026, HELC and WC Certification.

This includes clearing trees or brush, bringing any acreage into agricultural production (even if it was in production at some point in the past, taken out of production for some reason, and now the desire is to bring it back into production). It is important to note that wetland compliance violations can occur in several situations including 1) draining, dredging, filling, leveling, etc. an area determined to be a wetland to the point where producing an agricultural commodity is possible (it is not the act of planting a crop but simply the action of doing the draining, clearing, etc.), 2) improving drainage on land that may be currently in production but is determined to be a farmed wetland (i.e. the acreage was being farmed before 1985 but meets certain criteria and is considered a 'farmed wetland'-these areas may be farmed and maintained in the same manner as long as they are not abandoned but drainage/tiling actions cannot be done that would improve or enhance the system), 3) other actions that result in wetlands being converted.

These above examples are different from acreage that is determined 'prior converted' that was cropped before 12/23/85, does not meet farmed wetland criteria, and, therefore, are generally not subject to WC provisions.

On any acreage already identified as being highly erodible land, contact NRCS before doing any tillage (or grazing livestock) if it is not currently written into the conservation plan. 6

These actions could reduce the amount of required residue needed to stay in compliance. In addition, a sodbusting compliance violation could occur if you convert native vegetation, pastureland, or any other area for which an HEL determination has not been made by NRCS.

Also, NRCS is required to conduct status reviews on a percentage of farms every year to see if conservation plans are being followed on HEL tracts. If there is not enough crop resi-

due because of tillage operations or livestock grazing, those tracts will likely be found out of compliance. This could result in losing all program payments on all farms in all counties for the affected participants.

Please follow the approved conservation plans and get written permission on anything that will result in a loss of adequate residue or result in sodbusting or swampbusting. Review conservation plans every year and know the rules. Areas you may think should be easily eligible to be cleared because they are flat and not subject to HELC provisions could be determined to be a wetland and any conversion would then make everyone associated with the area ineligible for benefits. It is your responsibility to notify FSA and NRCS of intentions to clear ground, improve drainage systems on what may be considered farmed wetlands, deviate from an approved conservation plan on HEL land, etc. BEFORE you do these actions so reviews can be done to ensure your eligibility is maintained.

Contact your local FSA or NRCS office for more details.

2011 CWG / ILICA INSURANCE PROGRAM DIVIDEND ANNOUNCED



The check for the 2011 LICA insurance program dividend should arrive at the ILICA office in the next couple of weeks. Reports are being finalized at this time but the ILICA office has received word that the 2011 insurance dividend will be distributed at 5.5% for participating members.

United Fire Group is the current carrier for the LICA insurance program and will distribute the 2012 dividend next summer, as long as the loss ratio remains under the required percentage.

LICA AWARD SUBMISSIONS REQUESTED



Each year, the awards committee asks for nominations for the various awards given at convention. Ballots are distributed during the November board meeting, but that only allows a small group of members the opportunity to make their thoughts known. ANYONE, even non-members, can submit suggestions for nominees, and the committee would welcome each and every one of them. These same submissions may be used for national LICA award nominees as well.

The basic criteria for possible candidates can be found below, but these should be considered as loose guidelines, not mandatory submission items. Submissions should contain the basic reasons why you feel the person deserves to be recognized and the awards committee can contact family members to get any personal information they need for the award presentation.

Mr. Contractor of the Year Nominee Criteria

1. Qualifications as a contractor

- How long in business
- Size of business in terms of employees & equipment owned
- Type of work done

2. Status in community

- How well is he regarded in his community
- Participation in civic affairs (local Chamber of Commerce, PTA, church and other service organizations, etc.)
- Has he been mentioned or featured or otherwise cited in local newspapers or in national or regional trade publications for his accomplishments?

3. Contributions to State LICA Chapter

- How long a member
- How active a member
- What level of participation in state LICA functions
- History of attendance at state conventions & workshops
- Committees served on & offices held in state chapter

4. Support of Conservation Groups

- Record of activities with SWCD, NRCS, IEPA etc.

Mrs. Contractor of the Year Nominee Criteria

- Understanding of conservation contracting
- Accomplishments or efforts in promoting conservation in her community.
- How does she contribute to her husband's work as a contractor and as a LICA member
- Contributions to state LICA chapter.
- Level of participation with LICA ladies group and in women's program at convention.
- What community or civic projects or activities make her outstanding?

Shiny Shovel Nominee Criteria

Can be any level of member or partner agency that has consistently supported Illinois LICA in every or almost every event of the year in any way.

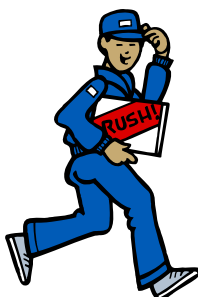
- Financial support
- Physical support on projects, meetings or activities
- Promotional support for any event, project or meeting

Merit Award Nominee Criteria

Any person or company that was instrumental in the success of an ILICA event during the year.

ILICA MEMBERSHIP DUES GOING OUT SOON!

The 2013 membership dues are being processed at this time and will go out in the mail in mid-October. You will find a sheet enclosed with your contact and service description information as currently listed in the directory. Please verify that there are no changes that need to be made prior to the 2013 directory publication next spring. Please



fax (309-446-3744) or email (janet@illica.net) all changes to the ILICA office or include corrected sheet with your dues payment.

ILICA Members who participated in the CWG / LICA insurance program for 2011 will also receive a dividend check as soon as payment arrives from CWG.

SPRINGFIELD PLASTICS HOSTS FIRST SUMMER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Illinois LICA membership meetings have always been scheduled around the industry’s busy season, making March, November and December the typical months when these area meetings are hosted around Illinois. However, as our membership grows, so have the number of active areas and associates volunteering to host these meetings.

This summer, Steve Baker, owner of Springfield Plastics and treasurer of the Agricultural Drainage Management Coalition (ADMC), saw an opportunity to incorporate an ILICA membership meeting with an open house and saturated buffer site visit which was part of the ADMC’s latest Conservation Innovation Grand (CIG). The drainage industry slows down a little during the farm growing season, making the August drainage workshop a success each year; which also gave those involved enough confidence to try this new time frame for a drainage centered meeting and open house.

And there was a lot to coordinate for this get together. Two of the sites selected for the CIG projects were within a very short distance of Springfield Plastics’ Auburn plant but the installations would have to be completed first. ILICA members Dave and Ryan Maltby of Maltby Excavating out of Pawnee volunteered to use their Hydramaxx and manpower to take care of the structure and pipe installation while new associate member Sievers Equipment Co., also of Auburn, donated the use of a JCB backhoe-loader for the project.

Instead of the traditional educational program from an outside source, the Bakers also coordinated and staffed a tour of their tile manufacturing plant during the afternoon open house, transporting visitors between the saturated buffer sites



and the plant, making sure no one spent too much time outside in the extreme heat of late July. Refreshments were provided in the air conditioned break room as small groups of visitors were guided through the plant tour, allowing everyone to get a first hand look at the daily operation of manufacturing drainage tile.

And in addition to all that, representatives from environmental agencies and agricultural industries were invited to attend the field day that morning, featuring visits to both field sites. The unique features of one of those sites was a Drainage Water Management (DWM) system and saturated buffer that had been retro-fit onto an existing tile system. DWM has gained a lot of attention from the NRCS and the environmental industry due to the added benefit of reduced nutrient values in tile output water.

By the time the day was done, there had been 150 guests at the installation sites and plant tour. And following this very busy day, guests were treated to a delicious meal at Edgewood Country Club, just a few miles from the plant ... and the food was EXCELLENT !! Everyone enjoyed the meal which concluded with a “make your own” sundae buffet, which was also quite popular!

A sincere “Thank you” goes out to the Bakers and all the folks at Springfield Plastics who worked so hard to make this a very successful July membership meeting.

(r to l) Cold refreshments for a very hot day; Crowded dining room at Edgewood; Ryan Maltby and Sievers Equipment Co backhoe prepare to install the control structure; Hydramaxx wheel trencher gets ready to lay one of the saturated buffer tile lines; Control box in place and plumbed for the next rain.



SUMMER LICA MEETING IN MAHATTAN, KANSAS

As you can see from the photo of the handsome group to the right, Illinois LICA had a pretty good turnout at the Kansas summer LICA meetings this July. Kansas LICA went all out as hosts of this year's summer convention and provided an outstanding location, excellent tours and entertainment.

Of course, there are always meetings and business to take care of since that is the main reason for these bi-annual meetings, but there is no reason guests can't have a good time too. The pre-tours consisted of CAT Works, Case and Landoll sites for the guys, although many of the ladies who also attended said the tours were very well done and that the hosts made certain everyone felt welcomed.

The ladies were treated to a tour of the Oz Museum and Winery, Kansas State University and Flint Hills Museum tours, being treated to a cooking demonstration and lunch followed by home-made ice cream from Kansas State. On Friday evening, Purple Wave opened their doors for everyone to enjoy dinner and dancing to a live band while



the youngsters (of all ages) were entertained by one of the biggest bounce house set ups I've ever seen! Only a few of the adults ended up with bumps and bruises out of the deal!

On Saturday evening everyone took a step back to a simpler time and enjoyed a cookout of Iowa Angus beef burgers and home-made ice cream at the Munson Angus Farm. After dinner, draft horses powered a leisurely ride around the farm, noting the pumpkin patch and corn field destined to be the fall corn maze which brings lots of school children and groups out to the farm each year. And anyone who dared could even ride Ben, the largest horse in Kansas. Just ask Jerry Biuso! A great big "Thanks" to Kansas LICA and Penny Hughes, ED for putting together an outstanding program for this year's summer conference.



Only a few of the adults ended up with bumps and bruises out of the deal!

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: NO MOVEMENT ON FARM BILL UNTIL AFTER ELECTION

September 21, 2012 - www.ilcorn.org/daily-update/533-no-movement-on-farm-bill-until-after-election

Thank you for your "Calls from the Combine," asking the Illinois Congressional Delegation to force action on the farm bill. The movement we hoped to see hasn't happened yet, but continued pressure from constituents is what will, eventually, move the bill forward.

The House did indeed decide to recess to allow members to return to their districts and campaign. Members will be allowed to sign the discharge petition (forcing the House Ag Committee's farm bill to the floor) until the end of the year, but with most members back in Illinois, signatures will be harder to acquire.

In fact, Speaker Boehner finally confirmed his intentions yesterday. He indicated that no iteration of the farm bill, not even a temporary extension, will come up for action before the Nov. 6 election. He said there aren't enough votes to pass

H.R. 6083, the bill approved by the House Agriculture Committee, or the three-month extension that Ag Chairman Frank Lucas of Oklahoma was whipping last week.

That gives you, the Illinois agricultural community, approximately six weeks to let your Congressman know that he or she must earn your vote. Your elected officials are asking you for your vote; ask them for their vote too. We must get a farm bill passed in the lame duck session of Congress or risk deep cuts to the farm programs that you rely on during times of natural disaster.

Please continue calling your Congressman in their district offices. Tell them how much you need a farm bill and ask for their vote for a farm bill if they want yours in November.

Call the following Congressmen to thank them for their support of the farm bill!

- Jerry Costello, (618) 233-8026 in Belleville, IL
- Danny Davis, (773) 533-7520 in Chicago, IL
- Tim Johnson, (309) 663-7049 in Bloomington, IL
- Dan Lipinski, (312) 886-0481 in Chicago, IL

Call the following Congressman to ask them for a **FARM BILL NOW!**

- Judy Biggert, (630) 655-2052 in Willowbrook, IL
- Bob Dold, (847) 272-0404 in Northbrook, IL
- Luis Gutierrez, (773) 342-0774 in Chicago, IL
- Randy Hultgren, (630) 232-7104 in Geneva, IL
- Jesse Jackson, (708) 798-6000 in Homewood, IL
- Adam Kinzinger, (815) 729-2308 in Joliet, IL
- Don Manzullo, (815) 394-1231 in Rockford, IL
- Mike Quigley, (773) 267-5926 in Chicago, IL
- Peter Roskam, (630) 893-9670 in Bloomingdale, IL
- Bobby Rush, (773) 224-6500 in Chicago, IL
- Jan Schakowsky, (847) 328-3409 in Evanston, IL
- Bobby Schilling, (309) 757-7630 in Moline, IL
- Aaron Schock, (309) 671-7027 in Peoria, IL
- John Shimkus, (618) 344-3065 in Collinsville, IL
- Joe Walsh, (847) 973-9341 in Fox Lake, IL



WASHINGTON, Sept. 22, 2012

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack made the following statement about Congress' failure to pass comprehensive, multi-year food, farm and jobs legislation before the current law expires on Sept. 30, 2012:

"In a year that has brought its share of challenges to America's farmers and ranchers, the House Republicans have added new uncertainty for rural America. Unfortunately, House Republicans left Washington without passing comprehensive, multi-year food, farm and jobs legislation, leaving thousands of farming families exposed. U.S. agriculture is fighting to maintain the tremendous momentum it has built over the past three years, but with natural disasters and other external forces threatening livelihoods of our farmers and ranchers, certainty is more important than ever. Americans deserve a food, farm and jobs bill that reforms the safety net for producers in times of need, promotes the bio-based economy, conserves our natural resources, strengthens rural communities, promotes job growth in rural America, and supports food assistance to low-income families. Without the certainty of a multi-year bill, rural communities are being asked to shoulder undue burdens."

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL DRAINAGE WORKSHOP

Richland Community College was the setting once again for this year's drainage workshop, facilitated by Richard Cooke with guest speaker, Dr. Ruth Book, Illinois NRCS State Engineer. The August scheduling continues to work well for our drainage contractors, especially during the off-year for the Illinois Farm Progress Show, which is only a problem if you happen to need a hotel room in or near Decatur!

Richard continues to modify his survey and design workshop session to incorporate new web-based applications and technology; bringing the latest information available to our attendees while maintaining his sense of humor and obvious wealth of knowledge on the subject of drainage.

Richland is a perfect facility for this kind of training, providing loaner laptops to anyone who needed one along with the kind of space required for the field sessions that are always a part of this workshop.



(top to bottom) Classroom sessions including website and drainage guide topics; 2 different field sessions were done, one on leveling and calibrating lasers and the second on surveying with lasers and receivers.



(l to r) Dr. Ruth Book, NRCS State Engineer, was a welcome addition as the facilitator of DWM sessions; Richard Cooke working with attendees on the surveying field session with each small group taking readings to plot back in the classroom.



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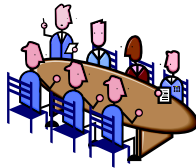
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Area 2 Member Meeting

Exact Location TBA

Wednesday, November 14, 2012 (tentatively)

Dinner - 6 pm / Education - 7 pm

IDOT Trucking Regulations for Contractors

Area 6 Member Meeting

Mattoon, IL - Exact Location TBA

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

Dinner - 6 pm / Education - 7 pm

Area 8 Member Meeting

BM Truck Equipment - Olney, IL

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

Dinner - 6 pm / Education - 7 pm

Area 8 Member Meeting

Marion, IL - Exact Location TBA

Thursday, December 6, 2012

Dinner - 6 pm / Education - 7 pm

IDOT Trucking Regulations for Contractors

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Winter Meeting & Conference

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(More Information Soon)

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LAWN RECOVERY AFTER A SUMMER DROUGHT

Source: Richard Hentschel, Extension Educator, Horticulture, hentscbe@illinois.edu

This year, most lawns are likely to need a serious tune-up, said a University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator.

"The lengthy drought over nearly the entire state coupled with high temperatures sent lawns into a dormant state," said Richard Hentschel. "This was expected. However, the intensity of the heat and the lack of water are making it particularly difficult to maintain lawns."

A mixture of green and fading straw-colored grass blades appear before the lawn goes totally dormant. Normally, the return of rain and cooler temperatures would be enough to make the lawn turn green again.

"This year, you will likely need more resources, time, and energy to bring the lawn back," he noted. "Before you get your hands dirty, put a plan together."

For starters, do not worry about the opportunistic weeds that form little islands of green in an otherwise brown sea of grass. The first priority is to get the grass back.

If the lawn has received as little as one-quarter to one-half an inch of water a month, the crowns are probably still alive and recovery will be easier. If the lawn has gone without any water, chances are that some areas are completely dead. A strong renovation plan is in order.

"A good beginning is to top-dress the lawn with a good-quality black dirt or compost to provide a base where the new hybrid seed can sprout and start the establishment process," Hentschel said. "Composts provide water-holding capacity and naturally contain a level of nutrition."

An alternative to top-dressing is to use a slit seeder, which places the grass seed directly below the soil surface. These machines can be rented; consider sharing the cost with a neighbor. If the lawn needs a total renovation, this is the time to be sure that areas that have held water get corrected with proper grading. Hentschel also recommends having the soil tested so that needed amendments can be added to the soil profile.

"It is much easier to get those amendments and nutrition into the yard before the sod is laid or the seed put down," he noted. Soil tests reveal the soil pH, levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and often, the percentage of organic matter. If possible, use a soil testing laboratory that can provide specific recommendations, or con-



tact the local extension office for help in interpreting the results.

The next step of the plan is to decide whether to use hybrid disease-resistant seed or to lay sod. Each has advantages. Sod has an immediate impact and may be appropriate for the front yard, the public side of the home, or even the entire yard. A seeded lawn provides the flexibility of matching the correct grass seed mix or blend to the site.

"A critical part of your lawn restoration will be the watering used to establish either the sod or seed," Hentschel said. "Grass seed takes several days to sprout and emerge. This could be as little as 5 to 7 days or up to 10 to 14 days, depending on the species of grass seed. During this entire germination process, the seed must be kept moist yet not overly wet."

Sod as delivered and laid is alive with a limited amount of roots, and it is very dependent on water to begin the process of growing new roots from the living crown. That energy comes from the green grass blades and the supplied water. If watered too much, the sod can grow mushrooms and be too soft to walk on when moving sprinklers. If it does not get enough water, the sod will shrink and cracks will open up between the rolls, with dead spots or streaks starting to appear.

"To encourage the sod to root into the soil profile within a couple of weeks, the sod will need to be watered so that the soil below the sod gets moist," Hentschel explained.

As the seed and sod become established, watering practices will need to change to accommodate changes in the sod and seed as it grows.

"The last part of the restoration to consider will be the first mowing," he said. "It is important that the seed or sod does not grow too high before that initial mowing. Water is often withheld for a day to firm up the soil and resumed after the mowing is complete."

"Many people overlook the condition of the mower blade. Young grass plants can literally be torn out of the soil if the mower blade is dull. You won't be able to tear up sod, yet you can brown the cut edges with that dull blade."



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AREA 3 GOLF OUTING PHOTOS



As these photos indicate, the weather was a little different than the past three Area 3 outings! But even with the little bit of rain that came half way through the outing, everyone made the best of it and, as these photo's also indicate, had a great time anyway.

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