

Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission

EARTH DAY AWARDS



April 21, 2016

10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Thomas D. Clark
Center for Kentucky History
100 W. Broadway | Frankfort, KY

Stephen A. Coleman, Chair, Frankfort

Ron Brunty, Vice Chair, Letcher | Benjamin Peterson, Benton
Jeffery Eger, Erlanger | William D. Donan, Louisville

Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission

The Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission is a citizen advisory board created under state law in 1972. Its mission is to facilitate public dialog on issues, monitor trends and conditions, develop partnerships to improve and protect the environment for future generations. The EQC advises state officials on environmental matters and promotes public awareness, responsibility and positive action toward a healthy environment.



Annual EQC Earth Day Awards Recognizing Environmental Stewardship

The annual awards are presented to individuals and institutions who have demonstrated deep concern, activism and achievement in serving to improve the environment. Citizens and organizations statewide are encouraged to submit names of champions of clean air, clean water, pollution control and other elements vital to healthy ecosystems.



Honorable Matthew G. Bevin

Governor of Kentucky
(welcome video)

Elizabeth Schmitz

Executive Director, Kentucky Environmental Education Council

Charles G. Snavelly

Secretary, Energy and Environment Cabinet

Leslie Hale

2016 Capture the Earth Photography Contest Winner

Stephen A. Coleman

Chairman, Environmental Quality Commission

EQC Earth Day Awards

Dr. Stephen Pruitt

Kentucky Commissioner of Education

Dr. Jay Morgan

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success
Council on Post-Secondary Education

Gallery Exhibitions

EARTH DAY RECOGNITION AWARDS

Jon Bednarski

Sherwood Acres

LaGrange, KY

Jon Bednarski's commitment to the environment started over ten years ago when he began farming with no experience. His partnership with the Oldham County Conservation District and the Oldham County Cooperative Extension Service provided the foundation and roadmap to reclaim two farms and 150 acres that had become fallow after years of neglect.

Mr. Bednarski's efforts have been recognized by various awards including: 2011 Oldham County Master Conservationist; 2012 Kentucky State Master Conservationist; 2013 Inaugural Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award; 2014 National Cattleman's Beef Association, Region 1 (17 states) Environmental Stewardship Award.

Mr. Bednarski has made extensive environmental and civic contributions through his service in various organizations including: Oldham County (OC) Conservation District, chair; OC Cooperative Extension Council, president; KACD Public Affairs Committee; UK State Extension Advisory Council; KY Cattleman's Executive Committee; KY Beef Council, board member; OC Agricultural Development Board. Past president of the OC Cattleman's Association and past president of the US Belted Galloway Society.

Mr. Bednarski's dedication and commitment to land stewardship have been written about in over 20 local, state and national publications.



Shauna Buchert

District Program Coordinator

Oldham County Soil & Water Conservation District

Shauna Buchert began working with the Oldham County Conservation District in 2004. In a period of ten short years she has literally transformed the Conservation District's operation from one that basically provided a pipeline of services administered through another cooperating federal agency to an agency with its own identity and a plethora of community based programs and services.

Operating as a one-person office, Ms. Buchert has developed partnerships and formed coalitions with others as a means to shape the Conservation District's programs into the success they experience today. Shauna works tirelessly on behalf of the citizens of Oldham County to insure they have the opportunities and resources available to make continuous improvements in their soil, water and related natural resources. Going above and beyond is her norm, and the passion she brings to the workplace inspires others to bring that level of commitment to the table.

Ms. Buchert's projects include: Establishing Pollinator Habitat, Monarch Butterfly Program, Soil Testing Voucher Program, Annual Tree Give Away, Community Tree Planting, Big Tree Contest, Bluebird Trail, Senior Citizen Raised Beds, Earth Day Celebration at Wendell Moore Park in Buckner, KY.

Billie Hardin

Sustainability Project Manager

Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Billie Hardin, MPA, is the Sustainability Project Manager for KCTCS. Ms. Hardin directs and supports the 16 KCTCS Colleges and the KCTCS System Office in establishing sustainable development strategies, as well as the KCTCS Center for Environmental & Sustainability Education & Workforce Training.

Ms. Hardin's work with sustainability and energy efficiency correlates with her role as a liaison to the White House and the U.S. Department of Energy for the Better Buildings Challenge, an initiative of the Obama Administration to reduce energy consumption across the U.S. 20 percent by 2020.

Currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation at the University of Kentucky, Billie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from the University of Louisville, an MPA from the UK Martin School of Public Policy and Administration, and a Certificate from the UK College Business Management Institute.

In 2012, Ms. Hardin was appointed to the KY Energy Sector Partnership Board which explored Energy Sector workforce needs. Currently Ms. Hardin is President of the KY Association for Environmental Education; Secretary of the KY Chapter of the US Green Building Council Advocacy Committee; an appointed member of the KY Environmental Education Council Interagency Subcommittee on Environmental Education; an appointed member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Ed Advisory Council; and a liaison to the KY University Partnership for Environmental Education.

Cheryl Messenger

Environmental Education Coordinator
Mammoth Cave National Park



June 18, 1947 – February 26, 2016

Cheryl Messenger was the Environmental Education Coordinator at Mammoth Cave National Park. She served on the Kentucky Environmental Education Council from 2006 until her untimely passing earlier this year.

Ms. Messenger received a degree in Communications from the University of Kentucky and conducted post-graduate work in Journalism at the University of Maryland and Environmental Education at Western Kentucky University.

She enjoyed travelling and shared her love of the environment with her four grandchildren, park staff and visitors. She was a recipient of the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE) Individual Excellence in Environmental Education Award, as well as the National Park Service Regional Freeman Tilden Award for Excellence in Interpretation and Education.

We will always be grateful for Cheryl and her service.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Doug McLaren

Retired Forester

University of Kentucky

Doug McLaren retired in July 2015 from the University of Kentucky after 43 years of service. Mr. McLaren spent the past 21 years in the UK Department of Forestry as an Area Extension Forester. His major areas of responsibility were providing general forest management information to Kentucky's landowners and providing educational opportunities for county Extension agents, formal and non-formal educators, and students related to forests and ecosystem functions. He provided numerous educator workshops each year in these focus areas as well as national environmental education curricula (*Project Learning Tree, Project Water Education for Teachers, Project Food, Land and People*). Mr. McLaren believed that Kentuckians should possess a basic understanding of scientific concepts, and he was always eager to demystify seemingly complex topics for the novice user.

In addition to his Extension roles, Mr. McLaren has served in the formal classroom. He has taught GPS programs in multiple classes in the Forestry Department as well as classes in the Kinesiology and Health Promotion department. He took the lead role in teaching NRC 471, the capstone course for Natural Resources Conservation and Management Program, during the Spring 2006 semester.

Mr. McLaren continues to work even though he is officially retired. He has a gift for bringing people together over a common goal, and now hosts lunch meetings with former colleagues when he sees the potential for collaboration. All of this has no direct benefit to him personally; he simply sees value in cross-pollination of expertise and the benefit it will bring to individuals, communities, and the natural world.

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Steve Hohmann

Retired Commissioner

KY Department for Natural Resources

Steve Hohmann retired in December 2015 as Commissioner for the Kentucky Department for Natural Resources. Mr. Hohmann began working in state government in 1985 as a mine reclamation inspector. He went on to be a mining section supervisor, director of the Division of Field Services, and director of the Division of Abandoned Mine Lands.

In January 2012, Mr. Hohmann was appointed Commissioner of the Department for Natural Resources. The Department regulates all mining reclamation and safety operations, forestry, oil and gas development, and conservation efforts in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Hohmann holds a BA in Political Science from Morehead State University. He is highly regarded for his leadership efforts with the Kentucky Oil and Gas Workgroup. Mr. Hohmann has twice served as president of the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs and currently serves as the association's representative on the Federal Office of Service Mining Steering Committee for the National Technical Training Program. He is the recipient of the 2009 Stan Barnard Award given by the National Association of Abandoned Mine Lands programs for outstanding contributions and dedication to the reclamation of abandoned mine lands.

Kentucky U.S. Green Ribbon School Nominees

Eastern Elementary School, Scott County, Kentucky
Russell Cave Elementary, Fayette County, Kentucky
Berea College, Madison County, Kentucky

Kentucky Model Green and Healthy Schools (Top Tier)

Virginia Chance School, Jefferson County, Kentucky
Kit Carson Elementary School, Madison County, Kentucky
Morton Middle School, Fayette County, Kentucky
West Hardin Middle School, Hardin County, Kentucky
Pikeville High School, Pike County, Kentucky

SPECIAL THANKS

EQC wishes to thank **Horace Brown** of Shelbyville, Kentucky for providing the cardinal portrait for our *Public Service Award* winner each year. Mr. Brown is a former chair of the Commission and a devoted friend to the agency since its inception in 1972.



Energy &
Environment
Cabinet



Kentucky Earth Day Sponsors