

CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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RESEARCHERS UNLOCK ANCIENT MAYA SECRETS WITH MODERN SOIL SCIENCE

After emerging sometime before 1000 BC, the Maya rose to become the most advanced Pre-Columbian society in the Americas, thriving in jungle cities of tens of thousands of people, such as the one in Guatemala's Tikal National Park. But after reaching its peak between 250 and 900 AD, the Maya civilization began to wane and exactly why has been an enduring mystery to scientists.

Writing in the Nov.-Dec. issue of the Soil Science of America Journal (SSSA-J), an interdisciplinary team led by Richard Terry, a Brigham Young University soil scientist, now describes its analysis of maize agriculture in the soils of Tikal. Not surprisingly, the study uncovered evidence for major maize production in lowland areas, where erosion is less likely and agriculture was presumably more sustainable for this community of an estimated 60,000 people.

But the team also discovered evidence of erosion in upslope soils, suggesting that farming did spread to steeper, less suitable soils over time. And if Maya agriculture did cause substantial erosion, the soil loss could eventually have undercut the Maya's ability to grow food, say the researchers.

The findings are just the latest example of how invisible artifacts in soil -- something archeologists literally used to brush aside -- can inform studies of past civilizations. That's because artwork and buildings can crumble over time and jungles will eventually conceal ancient farm fields, but "the soil chemistry is still there," Terry says.

He explains, for example, that most forest vegetation native to Tikal uses a photosynthetic pathway called C3, while maize uses a pathway called C4. The soil organic matter derived from these two pathways also differs, allowing researchers to make conclusions about the types of plants that were growing in the soils they test.

Thus, by analyzing soils in different areas of Tikal as well as looking at the layers that had formed in the soils, Terry and his collaborators were able to map the areas where ancient maize production occurred, including lowland "bajo" areas and possibly steeper slopes, as more food was needed.

Questions like this about past farming practices have always interested archeologists, Terry notes. But the tools of modern soil science are now enabling these scientists to ask increasingly sophisticated questions about how ancient peoples tried to sustain themselves -- and whether their treatment of the land was a factor in cases where they failed.

"[These tools] open us up to thinking about the world in ways that we haven't before," Terry says. "We have changed the paradigm amongst the archaeologists."

The research appearing in SSSA-J was funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and Brigham Young University.

Editors Note: With these new tools to determine if lack of care of the soil may have led to the decline of the Maya and perhaps other civilizations, I wonder what we may find? Is it possible that lack of adequate care for our soil resources will eventually lead to our decline as a civilization? I hope not!

From [ScienceDaily](http://www.sciencedaily.com), Nov. 12, 2012



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - LONNIE WILSON

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I hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving! Here at the Wilson's, we had 3/5th of the kids home to celebrate. As normal we visited, laughed, ate way too much, played with grand kids and watched sports. And of course, they all went home leaving us with way too many left-overs! And I have now officially had my fill of Turkey and the mix of whatever creations for the year!

I was really impressed with the PBS show The Dust Bowl by Ken Burns! I really learned a lot that I was not aware of and have a new respect for the victims and their hardships and our mission. If you missed it, it is available online at PBS.com/kenburns/dustbowl under the video link at the top of the page if you're interested. I suggest at least looking through the photo gallery on their site. It is a real eye opener and should make a person feel really good about the programs we promote and how far we have come.

The election has changed things up in many districts throughout the state. The new General Assembly will have 26 new House and 11 new Senate members. We will need to introduce the majority of these new members to the mission and importance of the Soil and Water Conservation District and how we are funded. Rich Nichols has sent out a list of these new legislators, but feel free to contact us for a copy if you would like one.

The Gaming Bill is still being discussed and Rep. Lou Lang on November 19th stated that the votes are there in the house to override the Governor's veto, but there are not enough votes in the Senate right now, he says "But we're getting very close". The Governor's office has stated that they are committed to working with legislators to address his concerns about increasing the ethical safeguards like banning gambling interests from making campaign contributions. I understand that no meetings have taken place as of yet between the Governor's office and legislators, but hopefully, these meetings will start up now that legislators are back in Springfield. I get the feeling that this will be delayed till January in the lame duck session. Thank you to everyone that visited their legislators over the past couple of months to encourage them to support overriding the veto.

During the last month or so, we have been working to get some supplemental funds to make up for the cuts we experienced between last year and the current budget. This amount is \$300,000 which will make us level from last year. I feel like at this time we have pretty good support and we will continue to work toward getting support for supplemental appropriations. Of course, we are already working on the next budget and looking at new possible revenue streams. As we analyze possible new options and see if there is support to move forward, we will be looking for voices to show the support in the legislators districts. We will keep you advised as we move forward.

The OMA bill, HB5315 is still waiting on a vote in the Senate, but I feel we have worked to gain the support to get it passed once we can get it on the Senate floor. I am hopeful before the end of this General Assembly, we will have a bill in the Governor's office.

The Farm Bill is still waiting to be taken up by the US House of Representatives. Whether there is a new Farm Bill or an extension, we need action to be taken. I believe a new Farm Bill is the better option and really should be the easier route considering the political environment in Washington DC right now. Unless Congress acts quickly, much of the farm policy will revert back to the policies of the 1930s and 1940s. There are many questions as to how the current modern crops would be handled, risk associated with drought/floods/other natural disasters, market volatility, insurance and geopolitical strife. The bottom line to me is that the agriculture sector is currently performing well and is helping to keep a struggling economy afloat. What impact will having no Farm Bill have on consumers and taxpayers? Some say that it may cause economic impacts that will be impossible to overcome. Others say that both of the versions in Washington address the "Fiscal Cliff" and need to be passed with that legislation. All I know is there are some very important programs to help our Farmers and Ranchers continue to be proud stewards of the land and our vital natural resources, but Congress' failure to act is unacceptable. Please take a few minutes to voice your position and the reasons for your concerns to your US Congressperson. Please let us know with a quick email when you make contact with them so we may add it to our report to NACD.

Just a quick note on NACD, please keep in mind the hard work they do to represent us daily in DC and to support us with educational items and programs. Please do everything you can to include them in your budget with as much as you can to keep that support in place. One other NACD item. I just learned that Illinois will receive an award for Director Training for the second year in a row in January! Thank you to everyone involved in making our summer conference training programs one of the best in the country!

To finish up and in the spirit of Thanksgiving, I want to let you know how thankful I am for the support you have given the association and me over the past year. I am very thankful for the opportunity to represent this great association and all the wonderful folks out there! **Keep up the great work and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - *RICH NICHOLS*

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December has arrived and with it the close of another year. It has been quite a year too! We started out with the potential for SB0747 to help address the district's funding problems but it was never passed by the Senate. In its place, another bill, SB1849 addressed many of the issues the Governor had with SB0747. That bill did pass both the Senate and House by a very narrow margin. Unfortunately, the Governor was still not satisfied with the bill's provisions for greater oversight for ethics and campaign financing. He still wanted stronger controls and decided to veto the bill. So again, we approach the end of the calendar year with little hope of relief for district funding problems. This time however, the end of the year also marks the rundown to the end of the 97th General Assembly on January 8, 2013. If the General Assembly fails to override the Governor's veto of SB1849 before January 9th, it will be up to the new 98th General Assembly to begin fresh with a new gaming bill. Since both the House and Senate now have a "veto proof" Democratic majority, it is expected that a bill that is acceptable to the Democratic caucus will pass.

We do expect that any bill that passes either in the last days of the 97th General Assembly or in the new 98th General Assembly will contain funding for agricultural programs including soil and water conservation districts.

Except for the gaming bill it has been a rather mundane year in the legislature for the SWCDs. We had two bills that we followed very closely. One HB5315 would have allowed training for the Open Meeting Act to take place at a meeting instead of the current requirement to take the training on line. The bill passed the House and was scheduled for third reading in the Senate but was never called. It is our hope to get the bill called for a vote before the 97th General Assembly ends. A second bill would have exempted capital construction projects under \$20,000 from the requirements of the Prevailing Wage Act. We had hoped to get the bill through both chambers so the increase in labor costs would not have such a devastating impact on cost share funding. Unfortunately the bill was sent to a subcommittee of the Labor Committee where it essentially died.

We will seek similar legislation in the new 98th General Assembly.

As the year winds down and I look back, it seems we spent a lot of time on legislative issues with little to show for it. The biggest impediment to our success has been and will continue to be the financial condition of the state.

Illinois is suffering from a severe cash flow problem and any efforts aimed at improving the situation will be unpopular and painful. Discussions regarding the lack of adequate reserves in the state's five pension funds have, for the most part, been fruitless because of the hard decisions that will have to be made and the fact that the Illinois Constitution prohibits altering employee benefits for retirees and for currently employed workers. Where will the revenue come from if spending isn't reduced? Where can spending cuts be made that will generate the kind of revenue needed? I seem to recall a legislator stating that most of the state agency budgets could be completely eliminated and the money saved wouldn't equal a billion dollars. More cuts to agency budgets just aren't the answer. The idea that seems to be gaining some traction right now is shifting the cost of teacher and community college employee pensions to local sources. If that happens, local school districts will have no choice but to raise property taxes and some colleges and universities will have little choice but to raise tuition costs.

While all of this didn't just happen, this past year has brought it all to the forefront. Legislators and political leaders seem to have suddenly realized that the issue has grown to the point that they can't kick the can down the road any longer. To do so will only dig Illinois' financial hole deeper. The 67% income tax increase passed a year ago, onerous as it is, only generates about \$1.5 billion. That is no small sum but it's not anywhere near enough to bail the state out of the \$8 billion of past due bills owed to its vendors.

I don't have the answers but I do know that a gaming bill will help as will any means of generating new revenue. The people of Illinois are waking to the fact that the state can't survive at the current revenue level. Let's hope the members of the General Assembly and the Governor wake up to that fact too and pass a gaming bill.

Have a Merry Christmas and a hope filled, Happy New Year!



Rich



PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S PAGE - KELLY THOMPSON

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Greetings everyone!

It seems like just last week when I wrote my November article. Sorry to disappoint but this month will be very brief as there is very little new IUM information to report. See list below for upcoming urban & rural related events that you might find of interest.

December Urban & Rural Events:

Tuesday, December 4 – I will be presenting at Winter Training on *Social Media: Developing a Facebook Page 101* from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. Open to all who sign up for Winter Training.

Monday, December 10 & Tuesday, December 11 – AISWCD Quarterly Board Meeting. See updated Quarterly Board packet as it becomes available here: <http://aiswcd.org/EventsAndNews/boardmeetings.htm>

Tuesday, December 11 - *Improve your BMP's for Nutrient Management* conference at the Macon County Extension Office in Decatur, Illinois. Registration starts at 8:30 am and the meeting will adjourn at 3:00 pm.

To register: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/dmp>

Thursday, December 13 – Post Development Stormwater Runoff Standards (PDSWRS) Work Group meeting at IL EPA. Work group to discuss the two public meetings held in October and review the public comments. Meeting open to work group members only. Review meeting notes as soon as they become available here: http://aiswcd.org/PDSWRS_WorkGroup/PDSWRS_Table_Contents/Meeting_Notes.html

Friday, December 14 – Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant (IGIG) application is due to IL EPA by 5:00 pm. Good luck to all who applied!

Application here: <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/igig.html>

Tuesday, December 18 – IUM Steering Committee meeting will be held in Normal at the McLean County SWCD at 10:00 am. To sign-up for the IUM email listing click here: <http://aiswcd.org/IUM/index.html>

Thursday, December 20 – NACD is hosting a webinar at 10:00 am on *NPDES II Permitting*. Email Deb Bogar at Deb-Bogar@nacdn.net for more information and to sign-up. Open to all.



Have a wonderful month of December.

I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! See you all in 2013!

Kelly



Office Assistant's Information - Gina Bean

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Hi, I'm Gina Bean and I am the new Office Assistant at AISWCD.

Although I was born and raised in Springfield, IL, I recently spent some time living in Texas while my husband was in the US Air Force. He was recently transferred back to Illinois so I am once again an Illinois citizen.

One of the things I missed the most while I was in Texas, besides my family and friends, was having four seasons in a year. I really enjoyed the fall colors but now I am looking forward to some cold weather and snow. Of course that might change, I seem to remember some really cold winters when I was younger.

One of my loves in life are children. The enjoyment I receive from working and being with children has served me well in my past work experiences as I have worked for the YMCA both in Illinois and in Texas doing numerous tasks for the past 10 years. I also worked as a job coach with Sangamon Area Special Education District (SASED) for kids with special needs.

I have a degree in Communications from Benedictine University here in Springfield and I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with the newsletters and with other activities here at the AISWCD.

I am so excited to begin my journey at AISWCD where I will be able to grow more on a professional level. In addition to assisting with the newsletters I will be helping out at the quarterly board meetings and Envirothon. I will also be helping Sherry with paper work, and anything else that the AISWCD may need of me.

I hope to meet many of you in the coming months and I welcome your ideas, comments and suggestions at any time.

I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and that you are able to enjoy the New Year to its fullest!

Gina



Practical Strategies for Your Farm

January 29-30, 2013

Decatur Hotel & Conference Center
Decatur, Illinois

Registration for this meeting is just \$49 and includes two meals (one dinner and one lunch), a reception, refreshment breaks to meet with exhibitors, several general sessions, multiple concurrent sessions and luncheon roundtable sessions. To take advantage of the "early bird" registration, [register](#) by January 21st. Registration increases to \$125 after that date.



ISWCDEA CORNER - KARA DOWNIN, ISWCDEA RC VICE CO-CHAIR AND REGION ONE REPRESENTATIVE

website: <http://www.il.ncdea.org>

Winter Training plans are being finalized: presenters have been set, decorations are purchased, and Family Feud/Minute to Win It just needs players! So far, we have 129 registered for Tuesday, December 4th and 114 registered for Wednesday, December, 5th. Feel free to contact friends and family for donations to Toys for Tots, used eyeglasses, hearing aids and cell phones.

While registration forms were due November 19th, you can still submit yours if interested. We are looking forward to seeing everyone and hope the weather holds out for everyone's travels.

The Employee's Association has also been busy with Regional elections in Regions 2 and 4. Region 4 will retain the same reps, but Region 2 will have all new reps. 2013 Region 2 reps are: Vicki Heath, Thad Eshleman, Spring Duffy, and Sondra Baker. Region 1 will also have a new RC rep, Shannon Pence. WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS AND THANK YOU FOR CONTRIBUTING YOUR TIME!

Also, the Employee's Association scholarship will be available soon. Thanks to Betty Buckert our application is now fillable! We're hoping with this new format that more students will apply. Applications must be postmarked no later than June 30, 2013.



ILLINOIS CHAPTER - IAAP - SHARON MATSON, PRESIDENT

website: <http://iaap-swcd.tripod.com>

The time has come around again for the Illinois SWCD Winter Training/Conference. The training is to be held December 4th and 5th at the Northfield Inn and Conference Center in Springfield. This conference is provided annually by several conservation partnering agencies including the Illinois SWCD Employee's Association, Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Presenters are also on hand from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

A more recent contributor to the training is the Illinois SWCD Chapter of the IAAP. This year the Chapter will sponsor two individual workshops; one as a general session and one as a concurrent session.

The concurrent session being offered on Tuesday by the Chapter deals with using Power Point and is called "Focus on Your WorkmanShip". Amy Stolte, from Lincoln Land Community College will be giving this presentation. Amy is becoming a very familiar face with the SWCD crowd, having presented most of the Microsoft Office applications in recent years.

She will be teaching basic Power Point skills with the most current version, as well as answering any questions employees may have. She is a wealth of information and we look forward to her return.

The general session which is being offered on Wednesday, December 5, is titled "Improving SalesmanShip: Market Like a Pro". The speaker will be Ali Bloj, Branch Manager with Office Team. Ali will be giving tips and advice on marketing your product, be it a service or tangible item or your own skills.

Ali joined us during Summer Conference to discuss Business Etiquette as it pertains to social media. She did a great job and we are looking forward to having her back.

Finally, the SWCD Chapter is planning a meet and greet Open House reception on December 4 at 4:30 p.m. We hope to have members and potential new members join us for a brief reception with light refreshments and a chance to win a great door prize.

The SWCD Chapter works hard throughout the year to raise funds to be able to provide presenters for both conferences held for SWCD employees. We hope everyone gets a chance to attend one or more of these functions.

Submitted by Melissa Cauble, Montgomery County SWCD

~NAGS~

Natural Area Guardians - Debra Carey

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CHRISTMAS FERN

A vivid green and attractive plant, native Christmas fern *Polystichum acrostichoides* can be found in most of Illinois - but sparingly. If you are fortunate to spend time in the magnificent Shawnee area of southern Illinois, Christmas fern is a regular sight. And even in December, and even in more northern areas, Christmas fern offers a welcome splash of color against the snow. The Christmas fern is evergreen. Just like trees can be deciduous and lose their leaves like our oak trees, ferns can also be evergreen such as, well, evergreens! You might find Christmas fern at Franklin Creek State Natural Area in Lee County or at Castle Rock State Park in Ogle County during a brisk winter walk.

What exactly is a fern - compared with other plants? Well, a fern has a frond which includes both the stalk and the blade which is the leafy part of the plant. The individual parts of the frond are called pinna. The pinule is a subleaflet, a division of the pinna. Okay, let's not get too technical here because the most unusual difference is that a fern produces no seed but has instead sori and spore. The sori are spore-bearing structures restricted to the upper leaflets of fertile leaves and are round and reddish-brown. Spore develops in the sori in summer and early fall and is released into the surrounding air. Spore is almost dust-like.

Another unusual fern that you may very well notice during winter romps through the snow is *Asplenium rhizophyllum* or more commonly called "walking fern". For many of us, the word "fern" brings to mind a fragile frond with many leaflets. But walking fern has very un-fernlake fronds. In fact, if you glimpsed this plant, you might wonder what it is and "fern" most likely would not be on your list of possibilities.

The published 2002 *Conservation Assessment for Walking Fern* written by the US Forest Service, describes the habitat for walking fern in Illinois "as rocky woodlands, either on sandstone or limestone". "Walking fern is absent from the central portion of the state" (Mohlenbrock 1967) but is found along the Mississippi River. Within 40 miles of the Mississippi, in Lee County, the Lowell Forest Illinois Nature Preserve's moss-covered limestone outcroppings afford suitable habitat for walking fern. Rock overhangs offer protection from the drying wind, bitter weather, and excessive sunlight.

A walking fern frond consists of a single, narrow, veined leaf with a pronounced point at the tip. This tip is crucial - when the tip touches moist moss - voila! a new fern grows; thus the fern "walks" across a rock or moss-covered log. As with most ferns, sori (spore-bearing structures) are positioned under the leaf.



Greatly magnified sori and spore of Christmas Fern

Ever green, walking ferns are a delight to enjoy even in the winter season. And as with all native ferns, it's vital to leave them in their natural habitat. Disturbance means loss of the plant. Plus, as with many species, the growing medium and habitat are crucial - plants moved to another site often cannot survive.

Oh, back to the Christmas fern - just why is it called Christmas fern? If you take a close look at the pinna, you'll see that nearest to the stalk, the pinna has a toe shape and this looks somewhat like a Christmas stocking!



Christmas Fern pinna

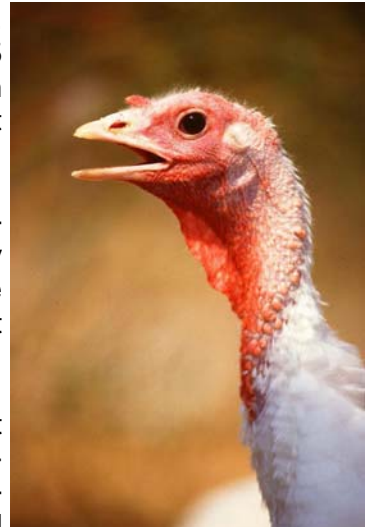
We hope your stocking is filled with good things this holiday season.

TODAY'S DOMESTIC TURKEYS ARE GENETICALLY DISTINCT FROM WILD ANCESTORS

No Thanksgiving dinner is complete without a succulent roasted turkey. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that consumers cook and eat more than 45 million turkeys every Thanksgiving. Very few Americans, however, know much about the difference between their gravy-smothered poultry and the poultry that earlier generations of Americans ate to celebrate the holiday.

"Ancient turkeys weren't your Butterball," said Rob Fleischer, head of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute's Center for Conservation and Evolutionary Genetics. "We set out to compare the genetic diversity of the domestic turkeys we eat today with that of the ancestral wild turkey from South Mexico. Some of what we found surprised us."

What an SCBI scientist and collaborators found was that the domestic turkey that ends up on the dinner table exhibits less genetic variation than not only its ancestral wild counterparts, which were first domesticated in 800 B.C., but also than other livestock breeds, such as domestic pigs or chickens. The genetic traits affected by the variation are body size and breast muscle development -- features that can help determine the likelihood of a consumer buying a turkey. The results of the study were recently published in *BMC Genomics*.



Farm raised commercial turkey



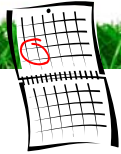
Wild turkey

"Few people know that the commercial turkeys served at Thanksgiving descended from Mexico, where they were discovered during the Spanish Conquest and transported to Europe," said Julie Long, senior author of the study and research physiologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Md. "During the next 100 years, Europeans created many different varieties of the domesticated turkey. It's important to assess the differences between ancient and modern domesticated turkeys in the event that some unforeseen problem might threaten the stability of the commercial turkey lines."

To obtain the results, the researchers sequenced the genomes, or full genetic make-up, of domestic turkeys from seven commercial lines and compared the genomes to those of three South Mexican turkeys collected in 1899 from Chihuahua, Mexico. The ancient turkey samples came from specimens at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. Their DNA was extracted in SCBI's ancient DNA lab at the Smithsonian's National Zoo. "It is often the case that selection in domestication

reduces the level of variation," Fleischer said. "What did surprise us, however, is how well the ancient DNA from the three museum specimens worked to generate the genome sequences needed to determine the genetic variation and structure. These data and this approach show great promise for determining what genes were involved in the process of turkey domestication."

Editor's note: Since we likely are still eating leftover turkey from the Thanksgiving Holiday, it is appropriate that we understand that agriculture has, since its early beginnings, used selective breeding techniques to increase the traits we find desirable in our plants and animals. The turkeys pictured on this page are an excellent example of selective breeding and are remarkably different in their appearance as well as in many other ways. Yet, both provide a tasty meal when properly prepared. Genetic modification is nothing new. We have just figured out a way to do it faster in the lab. Next time someone turns up their nose at a GMO product, show them this article.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Christmas - Tuesday December 25th - Office Closed
- New Year's Day - Tuesday January 1, 2013 - Office Closed
- NACD North Central Region Meeting - January 3 - 4, Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Schiller Park, IL
- ILICA Convention - January 10 - 12, 2013, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel - Springfield, IL
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Monday, January 21st - Office Closed
- Cover Crops in Illinois - January 29-30, Decatur Conference Center and Hotel, Decatur, IL [Register](#) before Jan. 1st
- 2013 Regional Tillage Seminar - January 31, 2013, Wise Guys 2205 N. Main St. Princeton, IL (This is the only one)

2012 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- December 2012 Quarterly Board Meeting - December 10th & 11th - Christmas Party - Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

2013 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- March 2013 Quarterly Board Meeting - March 12th - Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- June 2013 Quarterly Board Meeting - June 10th & 11th - Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- September 2013 Quarterly Board Meeting - September 10th - Teleconference (Only if Needed)
- December 2013 Quarterly Board Meeting - December 9th & 10th - Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

november dates of note:

- Red Planet Day - 28th
- Square Dance Day - 29th
- Stay At Home Because You Are Well Day - 30th

december is:

- AIDS Awareness Month
- International Calendar Awareness Month
- Noodle Ring Month
- Pants Awareness Month
- Read a New Book Month
- Universal Human Rights Month
- Write a Friend Month

december dates of note:

- Eat a Red Apple Day - 1st
- Wear Brown Shoes Day - 4th
- Repeal Day - 5th The 21st Amendment ends Prohibition.
- St. Nicholas Day - 6th
- Pearl Harbor Day - 7th
- International Children's Day - 9th - Second Sunday in December
- Human Rights Day - 10th
- Poinsettia Day - 12th
- Bake Cookies Day - 18th
- Go Caroling Day - 19th
- Mayan Calendar Ends - 21st - is it the end of Humanity!?
- National Chocolate Day - 24th
- New Year's Eve - 31st



AISWCD Mission: *To represent and empower Illinois' SWCDs*

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