

Joe Hanna Honored For Years of Service

Joe Hanna, longtime Trustee for the Southfork of Blackwater River Watershed District, was honored at a breakfast Tuesday, December 10 at the USDA Service Center in Warrensburg. The event was hosted by the Johnson County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Southfork of Blackwater River Watershed Trustees in recognition of Joe's service and dedication to the watershed. Joe *officially* started on the Watershed board in 1971 as a member, and in 1993 became Chairman and remained so until his resignation earlier this year. However, Joe's service to the watershed started years prior as he was a pioneer in the development of the massive watershed project that would result in 38 structures being built and hundreds of miles of terraces and waterways installed. The construction of the projects began in 1953 with the last structure completed in 1982. Joe was a key member from the very beginning planning stages through the continuing maintenance and operation of these sites. The conservation of natural resources because of his efforts has had a grand effect on the lands of Johnson County.

Joe was recognized by several people and agencies at the breakfast; Tom Haun, Chairman of the Soil & Water Conservation District Board, thanked Joe for all he had done for the Watershed and his years of service to the board. Donnie Davidson, Joe's successor as Chairman, reminisced about how passionate Joe is in every aspect of his life, from being a former 4-H leader, to being an active member of the Knights of Columbus to his service for the Watershed. Donnie presented a plaque to Joe on behalf of the current Watershed Trustees and the Soil & Water Conservation District Board Supervisors. Buck Katt, former Executive Secretary for the Missouri Watershed Association, described Joe's efforts on getting the original tax passed to support the operation and maintenance of these structures. Buck stated, "Joe surely must have worn out a set of tires going door to door educating local landowners of the importance of the tax." Also honoring Joe, on behalf of NRCS, was Diane Bradley-Redden who presented him a plaque for his achievements. Harold Deckerd, NRCS Assistant State Engineer in Columbia, although unable to attend the breakfast, had recently stated, "Joe has been a true leader and supporter of the program." Gary Montgomery, current Executive Secretary for the Missouri Watershed Association, presented Joe with a sweatshirt and thanked him for his years of service.

It was obvious by the attendance at the breakfast that Joe's dedication and service has not gone unnoticed. His work will not be forgotten, his knowledge never replaced and his devotion always treasured.



Pictured: Joe Hanna and Donnie Davidson