

(Continued from Page A26)
and lead in that movement, and of individuals such as Gov. Gifford Pinchot, a noted conservationist. Brosius also talked about his own experience.

"In 1946, my family purchased a farm that no one else wanted. I was 16," he said.

"I still remember the bitter cold day I helped the SCS man lay out the contours," he said, adding that

if he had known how much work it was going to take, and if he wasn't as young, he might not have decided to go along with the plan.

He said he went along with the SCS conservation plan and by

implementing all the contour strips, "... (the farm) was made beautiful. I still farm those same (contour) strips."

But Brosius also said that it must be remembered that conservation practices are done so that people

can look at a beautiful piece of land laid out in contour strips.

"You don't do it for beauty. You don't do it for ease of farming ... You do it for the long-term benefit to the soil and environment."

In this way, Brosius said he was proud to recognize the efforts of the Williams' family as "symbolic of farmers around the state."

Brosius also emphasized the uniqueness of the NRCS program in that it was designed to have government represented on a one-to-one basis working with individuals for the benefit of all.

In that fashion it serves as a model for many of the policy reforms undertaken by the Ridge administration, and Republican leaders within the state and federal government with pledges to work with people to achieve goals, rather than focusing on punishing people who don't achieve those goals on their own.

Brosius also gave a political message in his talk. He said that, as the U.S. Congress debates the federal budget and is on a political bent to cut funds from the USDA (most of USDA funds go toward social welfare programs), "we fear cuts" to the NRCS.

"We at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture are actively discouraging the reduction of funding to the NRCS," Brosius told the group.

Also speaking was Bernard Hoffnar, executive director of the Pa. Association of Conservation Districts, who said he was born and raised on a farm in southern Illinois that coincidentally had a small herd of Jersey cows.

Hoffnar talked about being partners working together and respecting each other to achieve individual business success and environmental success. "It's happening in Pennsylvania," he said.

He said that currently the conservation district

Other speakers included Richard VanNoy, chief of the Division of Conservation Districts; George Wolff, an agricultural/environmental lobbyist, who talked about what work still needs to be done; and Janet Oertly, state conservationist in charge of the Pennsylvania office of the NRCS.

Brad Hicks, a television newscaster, acted as master of ceremonies.

As a final tribute, participants in the event gathered around a birthday cake decorated in honor of the 60th anniversary of NRCS and sang "Happy Birthday."

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