WSWS Officer and Committee Report
2017 Coeur d'Alene, ID
March 13, 8am to 5pm

Office or Committee Name: Necrology
Officer or Chairperson Name: Judit Barroso
Date of Preparation (include year): February 23, 2017

Committee Activities during the Year:

Recommendations for Board Action:

Budget Needs:

Suggestions for the Future:

Current Committee Members: Judit Barroso, John Frihauf, and Kyle Roerig

Name of Person Preparing This Report: Judit Barroso

Obituary for DENNIS J. TONKS – 1960-2016

Denni J. Tonks, 55, of Kearney, MO, passed away, August 16, 2016, at his home, surrounded by his family. Dennis was born Oct. 7, 1960 in Driggs, ID. He grew up near the Tetons in Victor, ID and loved the outdoors, the mountains, cars, snowmobiling, and helping on friends' farms. He married Shirlene Miller Tonks on 1985 in the Idaho Falls, ID.

Dennis experienced job opportunities in several different areas through the years along with being a very involved father to four boys. They started their marriage in Provo, UT where Dennis finished his bachelor degree in Agronomy at Brigham Young University. He continued on to complete his masters and they had their first son, Jacob. Dennis embarked on more education, getting his PHD from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Co in Weed Science and adding another son, Derek. From there they moved to American Falls, ID while Dennis completed his Post Doc work with both University of Idaho extension and Sandoz, where they had their 3rd son, Cameron. They lived in Sterling, Co for a few years and Davenport, WA for 7 years working in an extension position with Washington State University. Their 4th child didn't come for some time and then, surprise, a 4th son, Braden! Dennis' later years were spent in Iowa and for the last 5 years he has enjoyed working for ISK Biosciences in Kearney, MO as a field development representative.

Dennis enjoyed camping, fishing, shooting, cars and just hanging out with his boys, all along teaching them many skills in his quiet, yet strong manner. He's been their Hero by his example

to them and his wife of diligence, perseverance, commitment and love that will be in their minds forever. He has been a lifelong member of the LDS church. He served an LDS mission to Houston Texas in 1980-1982. Dennis also served in many church positions as a teacher, leader and often involved with the youth. He fought his colon cancer battle like everything else; quietly, enduring much as he kept going at his job and continually providing for his family until just recently when his decline came quickly.

He was preceded in death by his father, Elmo Tonks. He is survived by his mother, Verna Hansen Tonks; his wife, Shirlene Miller Tonks; 4 boys: Jacob, Derek, Cameron, and Braden Tonks; 4 siblings: Jeanine Tonks Sagers (Brent); Marie Tonks Hone (Robert); Brian Tonks (Nancy); Shauna Tonks Burke (Blaire); 34 nieces and nephews.

Tribute to RITA BEARD who passed away in 2016

From the website of the NPS: Exotic Plant Management Teams and the Integrated Pest Management Program, posted by Kristy Burnett.

Rita Beard, a luminary in the federal and private sector of the invasive species world, passed away in October at her home in Fort Collins, CO. Throughout her career, Rita advanced her vision of coordinating invasive species management on a national scope. By encouraging collaboration from the field to congressional levels, she effectively changed the way invasive species are managed in this country. In addition, she worked to make sure that all invasive species management decisions were based on the latest and best available research and technology, thus ensuring that management decisions were supported by science. Towards that end, Rita spearheaded the development of the original mapping standards for the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA), which unified management practices to help ensure consistent data collection.

Rita's academic background served her well: she received her bachelor's degree in Ecology and Biosystematics from the University of California at Berkeley, followed by two Master of Science degrees; in Range and Wildlife Science from Montana State University, and in Forest and Public Policy from Oregon State University. She began her career in the late 1970s as the Range Conservationist and Invasive Plant Specialist, with the U.S. Forest Service on the Townsend Ranger District in western Montana. During this time, Rita made history by preparing the first Environmental Impact Statement on invasive plants in the United States, pioneering the use of herbicides to control invasive plants in wilderness areas.

In April 2005, she joined the National Park Service (NPS) as the National Invasive Plant Management Program Coordinator. At NPS she supervised 18 Exotic Plant Management Teams (EPMTs) and guided the development of policies related to invasive plant management and prevention. She professionalized this program by raising the level of technical expertise through training for her staff, communicating the importance of invasive plant management to NPS leadership, and increased the amount of funding available for weed management.

Rita's depth of knowledge and experience made her an invaluable partner of the NPS Integrated Pest Management Program.

On the national level, Rita was an effective liaison for local weed management partners, federal and nonfederal agencies, Congress, and others in Washington, D.C., ensuring that management decisions were based on science and core natural resource values. She served on several Departmental committees, including the National Invasive Species Council and the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds promoting the practical application of weed science principles and practices for invasive plant management.

Rita retired from the NPS in 2013 and continued to provide training and technical expertise to her partners. In 2014, Rita received the Western Society of Weed Science's Distinguished Achievement Award in the category of "Weed Manager" for her tireless efforts in advancing the cause of invasive plant management across the entire country.

We honor Rita Beard, who exemplified the qualities of a rare colleague and complete person: grace, kindness, composure, intelligence, fearlessness, poise, and to be deliberate, unassuming, truthful, and loving.

Obituary for RICHARD S. NIELSEN – 1924 - 2016

Richard S. Nielsen, passed on to eternal life on Friday, November 25, 2016, at age 92. Richard, or "Dick" as he was called, grew up in Denver, CO. After being discharged from the military in 1950, he married Clare, the love of his life. The couple lived in the bay area, Colorado, Arizona, and finally settled in Fresno, CA for 52 of their 66 years together.

Dick was educated at the University of Arizona, and became a respected agricultural researcher with American Cyanamid Company for most of his career. He enjoyed the outdoors in his work and play, and was an avid cyclist and skier.

In his retirement years, he enjoyed volunteering at Hope Lutheran Church and working in the woodshop at their retirement community at San Joaquin Gardens. He is survived by his wife Clare; daughter, Kristine Adams and family; son, David Nielsen and family; as well as his brother-in-law, James Canterbury; and sister-in-law, Inez Losness, and their families.

AMY PETERS – 1966 – 2017

Amy was born on March 27, 1966 and passed away on Friday, March 3, 2017 at the age of 50. Amy was a resident of Myrtle Point, Oregon. Amy was an Emeritus Professor in Animal and Rangeland Sciences and served as an outstanding Rangeland/Livestock Extension faculty member in the Coos County area, Oregon. Amy passed away peacefully this morning, at home with loved ones after a brave eight year struggle with cancer. Amy truly embraced life and many of us were blessed by sharing time with her.