



Garrison Diversion Loses Barnes County Director

By Kimberly Cook

The Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Garrison Diversion) board of directors recently lost a long-time member and friend when Barnes County Director Roger Bischoff passed away on Aug. 16.

Bischoff, who lived in Valley City, was elected to the Garrison Diversion board in 2008 and served as its Barnes County representative until his death in August. He was a dedicated supporter of Garrison Diversion's mission to provide a reliable, high quality, and affordable water supply to benefit the people of North Dakota.

Bischoff was a member of Garrison Diversion's Engineering and Operations Committee for several years before moving to the Red River Valley Committee. As an active participant of that committee, he kept abreast on details related to the Red River Valley Water Supply Project.

"I was shocked and saddened when I heard of Roger's passing," says Garrison Diversion Board Chairman Ken Vein. "I appreciated his common-sense approach and laid-

back style. Roger always gave sound advice and great representation of Barnes County's needs. He was also an excellent advisor on the Red River Valley Water Supply Project."

Throughout his life, Bischoff was involved in his community in many capacities, never letting the grass grow under his feet. He served as a Valley City commissioner for two terms from 1978-1986 and is a past president of multiple organizations, including his church council, Cass County Administrators, North Dakota Municipal Power Association, and the North Dakota Landowners Association. He was also the commander of the American Legion, chaplain of American Legion Post 60, and the affinity director of Star Ministries Alliance. He owned Allard Trophy Co. in Valley City up until his death.

He leaves behind his wife, Marlene, three children, and several grandchildren. His kind and gentle manner will be missed on the board.

Two Valuable Employees Retire

Dale Esser

Dale Esser of Carrington, Garrison Diversion's irrigation specialist, retired in August after nearly 30 years of service. He started his career in Oakes in 1988 as its irrigation advisor. After several years, he became the operations and maintenance (O&M) supervisor in Garrison Diversion's Oakes office, overseeing the daily operations of the Oakes Test Area.

After working in Oakes for most of his career, he moved to Garrison Diversion's headquarters office in Carrington in 2010 to work as its irrigation specialist. He spent countless hours working on the McClusky

Canal Irrigation Project, and recently the Master Irrigation Plan, which identifies further irrigation potential around the McClusky Canal.

Esser is looking forward to more hunting, fishing, and bike riding in his retirement.

"Dale's many years of service was greatly appreciated," says Kip Kovar, Garrison Diversion's district engineer. His irrigation expertise and longevity with Garrison Diversion has been an incredible asset to our team."



Dale Esser educating participants of a tour of the Mile Marker 7.5 McClusky Canal Irrigation Project.

e from Garrison Diversion

Marty Koepplin

Marty Koepplin of New Rockford retired in September after 21 years with Garrison Diversion. He began his service in 1995, when he was hired as an O&M employee for the New Rockford office. He retired as an O&M supervisor.

While the majority of the daily work in New Rockford is routine maintenance, Koepplin regularly assisted the McClusky O&M staff with various specialized projects, most often at the Jamestown Dam and Arrowwood National Wildlife Refuge. He also assisted with maintenance at the Devils Lake outlets. Though he can operate most any type of equipment, his favorite job was blading roads.

“I had a great time working with a bunch of nice people who were easy to get along with,” Koepplin says.

In his retirement, he plans to help his son farm and hopes to travel more. He and his wife, Janelle, have three grown children.

Garrison Diversion’s O&M staff works to keep the Principal Supply Works for the Garrison Diversion Unit (GDU) in good working condition. Through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, Garrison Diversion O&M staff performs maintenance of the GDU’s existing facilities, which include the McClusky Canal, New Rockford Canal, and Oakes Test Area. Additional facilities associated with the GDU, such as Snake Creek Pumping Plant, Jamestown Reservoir, and Arrowwood and Audubon National Wildlife refuges receive Garrison Diversion’s O&M assistance when requested.



Duane DeKrey, general manager of Garrison Diversion, presents Marty Koepplin with a clock in honor of his years of service to Garrison Diversion.