

Members and Friends of the Indiana Water Resources Association,

The Indiana Water Resources Association (IWRA) is pleased to announce the following 2015 award winners that were recognized during the 36th Annual Water-Resources Symposium held at the Ball State University Alumni Center on June 22-24, 2015:

Charles H. Bechert Award

Greg A. Olyphant, Ph.D.; professor (retired), Indiana University at Bloomington – For his lifelong work to advance the understanding of water resources in the State of Indiana

Outstanding Achievement Awards

*Academic Sector* – Manchester University Environmental Studies Program – For leadership in water quality and habitat improvement in the Eel River Watershed in Northern Indiana.

*Private Sector* – ACRES Land Trust – For encouraging the use of their properties as outdoor educational classrooms for the understanding of the complex geologic, hydrogeologic and meteorological processes at work within them.

*Public Sector* – Jane E. Hardisty; Indiana State Conservationist – for her continued efforts to promote conservation practices to protect Indiana's soil and water resources.

The IWRA congratulates these deserving award winners and is proud to honor their achievements. The following are nominations submitted for the award winners and past recipients of each award:

Charles H. Bechert Award

**Dr. Greg A. Olyphant;** Greg received his B.A. from the California State University at Fullerton in 1974 and his Ph.D. from Iowa in 1979. He taught briefly at the University of Maryland after receiving his degree. In 1980, Greg began teaching at Indiana University. Initially, Greg taught courses from the Geography Department, but early in his tenure Greg moved to the Department of Geological Sciences and taught courses in Quaternary geology, numerical methods, groundwater- and surface-water hydrology. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Greg developed classes at the Indiana Geologic Field Station in Montana, worked closely with colleagues in the Indiana Geological Survey, and was a Principal Researcher with the Indiana University Center for Geospatial Data Analysis.

Greg's publication list covers a wide spectrum of topics in physical hydrology and geomorphology, including the application of field and numerical modeling techniques to a diverse list of field settings. Unlike many academicians that work out of the State or Country, Greg's work focused on issues in Indiana. Some of these topics included: E. coli concentrations near the Lake Michigan beaches, dune migration along the Lake rim, nitrate contamination related to confined feedlots in central Indiana, reclamation of abandoned coal fields in southwestern Indiana, and the transience of wetland hydroperiods in eastern Indiana. Of no less importance, Greg's research often explored the theoretical nuances and underpinnings of hydrology, providing a basis for greater understanding that appealed to a much larger audience.

From his earliest days at IU, Greg preached that the greatest thing a professor can do is to turn out graduate students that will go on to bigger and better things than he himself could accomplish. Former students now teach at universities, and work for State, Local, Federal environmental agencies, private and non-profit organizations, many within Indiana. Former students have presented or led field trips at IWRA meetings.

To speak to Greg about science is to sense the total enthusiasm of someone that has never lost interest in their life's passion. For Greg, it wasn't enough to complete the job; Greg wanted to know why the things we observe in the field are happening. That meant no short cuts - lots of field work, lots of library time, lots of adjustments to the models, and eventually an understanding of the scientific processes responsible for his observations. One of Greg's famous sayings - 'All we need is more time and more money' – captures his unrelenting pursuit for answers, a quality instilled in all of his students.

Greg recently celebrated his retirement from classroom teaching at IU but will continue to be actively involved with graduate-student research and the CGDA for the foreseeable future. During his career, Greg served as the principle advisor for fifty-two graduate students including 16 Ph.Ds.

#### Outstanding Achievement Awards

**Manchester University Environmental Studies Program** (*Academic Sector*): I would like to nominate Dr. Jerry Sweeten and Terri Michaelis for their leadership in water quality and habitat improvement in the Eel River Watershed in Northern Indiana. Over the past six and a half years, they have developed a watershed management plan (WMP) using Section 319 NPS grant dollars, and implemented the WMP by leveraging different sources of funding and creating unique partnerships. They have successfully partnered with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, local county Soil and Water Districts (SWCDs), IDEM, local municipalities, IDNR, the Indiana Smallmouth Bass Alliance, USGS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, local landowners and others. Dr. Sweeten is a professor at Manchester University, leading the Environmental Studies program by providing student interns with real-world experience, delving into field work each summer, and year-round in the Eel River. Terri Michaelis is the watershed coordinator for their efforts to improve water quality through the Middle Eel River Watershed Initiative (<http://www.manchester.edu/eelriverinitiative/index.htm>). The passion that both of these individuals bring to their work and the program is inspiring and they have paved the way for other local organizations, specifically county SWCDs and NRCS staff to work with local landowners to improve the water quality. They have brought over \$5 million (yes million) for conservation practices into the watershed through their partnerships. They are not resting on their laurels; they have received funding to move beyond their current project area in the middle portion of the Eel River Watershed, and develop a WMP in the next two, upstream 10-digit HUC watersheds. Their accomplishments to date include:

- Developed an IDEM approved WMP for the middle portion of the Eel River watershed, and successfully completed one implementation cost-share program, and currently are implementing another cost-share program in the project area, with all funds allocated for Best Management Practices. They have cost-shared on BMPs impacting 6,908 acres of land in the watershed.
- Removed two dangerous low head dams from the Eel River restoring and improving wildlife habitat and providing safe recreational opportunities for the public. The dams were located in North Manchester and Liberty Mills, IN. Dr. Sweeten has been studying the impact of these removals through before-and-after, upstream-and-downstream sampling of the fish community.
- Participated in a pilot project testing the Fieldprint Calculator, a new tool developed by Field to Market to evaluate the usefulness for farmers in the watershed.
- A fish passageway project is underway at the Stockdale Mill dam which will allow fish and freshwater mussel migration from Mexico, IN all the way to Collamer, IN (572 stream miles).
- A proposal has been submitted for a degraded dam removal in Mexico, IN. Assuming a successful project at the Stockdale Mill, this project would open the Eel River for freshwater fish and mussel migration from Logansport all the way to Collamer, IN (728 stream miles).
- Stream bank stabilization Feasibility Study almost complete for a degraded stream bank in downtown North Manchester on the Eel River. The town of North Manchester has taken the lead on this project and will be pursuing a new IDNR LARE grant proposal for an engineering design to continue working toward the goal of stream bank restoration.
- Paired watershed study in the upper reaches of Beargrass and Paw Paw Creek subwatersheds examining the impact of concentrated best management practices on water quality. Two years of intensive water quality monitoring has been completed and focused cost-share funds continue to be directed to this project.
- A new partnership has developed with the Wabash County Soil and Water Conservation District, Environmental Defense Fund, and Manchester University focusing on the Beargrass Creek subwatershed. The goal of this project is to develop an integrated watershed management plan that will address nutrient reductions contributing to the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone. Through the Section 319 program of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the Initiative will provide cost-share funds for implementing the integrated watershed management plan beginning in 2016.
- The University has completed a black bass survey for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) on both the Eel, and the Tippecanoe Rivers. The purpose of this project is to

determine how the new size limit for black bass will impact the population of black bass in these rivers.

- Miami County and Wabash County will both be applying for INDR LARE grants for upland best management practices, such as cover crops, in the Middle Eel River Watershed.
- Held 6 Annual Eel River Clean-Ups, in North Manchester, where volunteers have removed: 4.5 Highway dump trucks full of trash, 238 Tires, and 16,540 pounds of metal (recycled).
- Held 6 Annual Canoe Floats with over 400 participants of all ages (from 2 to 93 years of age) on the beautiful Eel River.

Through these projects, Manchester University students gain valuable field and research experiences that enhance their academic experience. These real world experiences are invaluable for their students. Over 40 Manchester University students have worked on these, and other various projects, examining the chemical, biological, and habitat conditions on the Eel River!

***Although the nomination recognized the work of Dr. Sweeten and Terri Michaelis, it was requested that the Outstanding Achievement Award be presented to the Manchester University Environmental Studies Program.***

**ACRES Land Trust (Private Sector):** The ACRES Land Trust is located in northeastern Indiana, and since 1960, the Trust has acquired over 5,000 acres of significant natural areas. In recent years, properties with springs and wetland ecosystems have been acquired and are now protected. ACRES is an active organization, encouraging use of many of the properties by their members and the public, and they use the properties as outdoor educational schoolrooms. They recruit and train volunteers to maintain the properties and educate the public about the need to protect the natural environment, and they pro

The Trust has a mission, in part, to:

- Impartially to educate communities as to the value to them of the preservation of natural areas.
- To promote the knowledge and appreciation of natural areas as living museums.
- To develop such scientific, educational and public recreational uses of natural areas as are consistent with their preservation as living museums.
- To cooperate with and to encourage other organizations and individuals in carrying out the foregoing activities.

The last two items are of particular in the water-resources community, as they have provided access to their properties for geologic, hydrogeologic, and micrometeorological observations to be made and instrumentation to be installed and maintained. In their Preserve Guide, they note, "It is [the land's] beauty that often leads us to seek a better understanding of the interplay of the complex processes at work in them. Scientific research has led to a richer understanding of these processes and to a growing public awareness of their potential benefits for us." They live their mission, and the scientists and citizens with whom they interact have received great benefit from their generosity.

**Jane E. Hardisty (Public Sector):** Jane Hardisty has served as the State Conservationist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Indiana for the past 14 years. In this position, she oversees the agency's technical assistance and programs available to agricultural landowners and urban residents that help protect the environment and conserve our natural resources through voluntary, private lands conservation.

Jane's career with NRCS began at the field level where she served in various conservation positions. She now leads the agency in Indiana. From 1997 to 2000, she left Indiana to serve as the State Conservationist in Michigan. Because of her experience and expertise, Jane is often sought by national leaders to lead a special taskforce or take on national assignment.

Being a farm girl with experiences in 4-H and FFA gave Jane a solid foundation as the first female soil conservationist in Indiana. In fact, Jane was the "first female" in all the jobs she had early on with the agency and she is proud to have paved the way for other women seeking a career in conservation.

Jane is a graduate of Ball State University where she studied natural resources, geography and biology. She lives on the family farm in Hancock county Indiana. She says she has the greatest job in the agency working everyday with Hoosier farmers, partners, and a dedicated workforce. No one has a greater passion for Indiana agriculture and conservation than Jane.

**Past Award Recipients:**

Charles H. Bechert Award:

1981 Oral Hert  
1982 Dan Weirisma  
1984 Bill Andrews  
1986 Bill Steen  
1990 Dennis Stewart  
1992 Jacque Delleur  
1996 Jim Barnett  
1998 John Simpson  
2002 Tom Bruns  
2004 Mark Reshkin  
2006 Charlie Crawford  
2007 Judith Beaty  
2008 Jim Stewart  
2009 Dennis Clark  
2010 Jim Gammon  
2011 John Craddock  
2012 Dick Powell, Noel Krothe  
2013 Henk Haitjema  
2014 Les Arihood

Outstanding Achievement Awards:

*Academic Sector:*

2009 Lenore Tedesco  
2010 Bill Jones  
2011 Ron Turco  
2012 Alan Johnson  
2013 Sara Pryor  
2014 Jane Frankenberger

*Private Sector:*

2009 Siavash Beik  
2010 The Nature Conservancy  
2011 Jill Hoffmann & Lyn Crighton  
2012 Robert Armstrong  
2013 Jack Wittman  
2014 Sara Peel

*Public Sector:*

2009 Dave Knipe  
2010 Rod Renkenberger  
2011 IDNR, Division of Water  
2012 Johnson Co. WHP/LPT  
2013 Sally Letsinger  
2014 Bill Guertal

Thanks to all who submitted nominations and congratulations to the 2015 recipients.

Sincerely,

Mark Basch  
IWRA Awards Committee