

Commission NEWS

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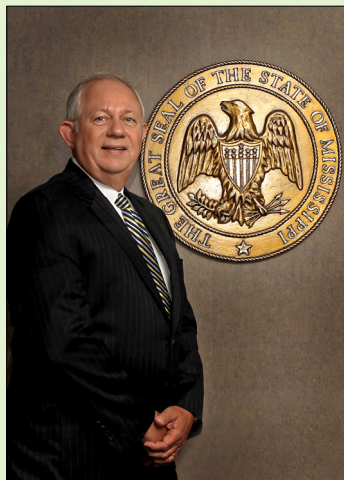
Executive Director Gilbert announces June 30 retirement

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

After serving 33 years with the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, MSWCC Executive Director Mark Gilbert has announced his retirement, effective June 30, 2021.

Gilbert was hired as a Soil Conservation Field Specialist for Northeast Area 4 by Gale Martin, who served as the first director of the commission.

Over the years, Gilbert's hard work and dedication to the commission has been recognized and resulted in his promotion to positions of increasing responsibility. He has served as a Senior Soil Con-



MSWCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARK GILBERT

servation Field Specialist, Division Director II, Environmental Administrator II, Environmental Administrator III, Deputy Administrator, and MSWCC Executive Director,

a position he has held for the past 6 years.

"Working for the commission has been a very rewarding career; a job I loved and looked forward to coming to each day," he said. "I've enjoyed working with the SWCDs and look forward to remaining active."

His immediate plans are to travel and enjoy his grandchildren.

Gilbert is the third executive director in the history of the commission. Gale Martin and Don Underwood preceded Gilbert as executive directors.

Please join us in wishing him a happy retirement.

Oxford A team headed to National Envirothon competition

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

RAYMOND – For the 12th time in the past 13 years of state-level competition, Oxford High School Team A placed first among 20 teams participating in the State Envirothon event, held Apr. 23 at the FFA Center in Raymond.

Oxford Team A won the competition with a score of 434.16 out of a possible 600 points. Oxford High School Team B placed second with a score of 389.67; Purvis FFA won third place with a score of 337.83; Delta Academy Team A placed fourth with 319.66; and Hillcrest Christian School Team C came in fifth with a score of 317.5.

High Scores in categories and points earned (out of a possible 100 points per category) were as follows:

Oxford High School Team A placed first in five categories: Aquatic Ecology (74); Current Issue (72); Forestry (67.5); Soils/Land Use (70); and Oral Presentation (88.66).

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2021 State Envirothon First Place Team A Oxford High School Team members, left to right: Anna Kang, Emma Teng, Claire Cizdziel, Le Numa Maryam and Anh Thu. PHOTO BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC.

Click here for Envirothon Photos: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aa_wnHXzaZm2MkPN5P9Q9T0RzaN2gg5-

School, FFA teams place 2nd-5th at Envirothon on April 23

Story and photos continued from page 1

Oxford High School Team B placed first in the Wildlife category (68).



Oxford High School Team B placed second overall in the competition, and placed first in the Wildlife category. Pictured left to right: Norah Bruce, Sneha Majumdar, Kaitlyn Urbanek, Hayden Walker and Yi Ping Wang. PHOTO BY K. DOUGAN, MSWCC



Purvis FFA placed third in the competition. Pictured left to right: Thomas Bush, Austin Knaak, Katelyn Brewer, Elizabeth Harriel and Kirkland Johnson. PHOTO BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

Oxford High School Team A next advances to the NCF-Envirothon Nebraska National Competition, to be held virtually over several days beginning Sunday, July 25.

This year because of the COVID-19 pandemic and inclement weather concerns, the four area competitions (North, Delta, Central and South) were cancelled, and all teams were invited to compete at the state-level event.

Teams competing at the 2021 State Competition on April 23 included:



Delta Academy Team A placed fourth in the competition. Pictured left to right: Thomas Cockrell, Sara Booth, Grant Wolfe, Wyatt Vance, Karsyn Brower and Logan Brooks. PHOTO DOUGAN, MSWCC

Byhalia High School Teams A and B; Houston FFA; Lafayette; Oxford High School Teams A and B; Southaven High School Teams A, B and C; Delta Academy Teams A and B; Copiah Educational Foundation; Hillcrest Christian School Teams A, B and C; Yazoo County High School; Pascagoula High School Teams A and B; Purvis High School FFA, and Purvis High School team.

Those participating in the event included 20 teams with 111 students and 17 team advisors, as well as testing experts in each category, personnel from Soil and Water

Conservation Districts, the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the Natural Resource Conservation Service/USDA, the Mississippi Forestry Association, Mississippi State University and volunteers.

Mississippi Envirothon, a program of the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission and supported by Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts, is a hands-on competition designed to challenge five-member student teams in grades 9 through 12 to explore nature.

Mississippi Envirothon is funded through grants from Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Chevron. Scholarships are funded by Georgia-Pacific Monticello Mill.



Hillcrest Christian School Team C placed fifth in the competition. Pictured left to right: Lorien Harvey, EK Quartey, Amya Bolden, Avery Mitchell and Brandon Allen PHOTO K. DOUGAN, MSWCC

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