

Commission NEWS

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www.mswcc.ms.gov

Hill named MS Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

David Hill of Baldwin, MS, has been named the Mississippi 2020 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year by the Mississippi Forestry Association.

A lifelong farmer, Hill, 74, was surprised to learn that he won and will represent the state of Mississippi at the national competition. "I was north area winner last year, but didn't think about them submitting my name this quickly."

The tradition of tree farming began for the family when Hill's father, a World War II veteran, started planting pine



DAVID HILL

trees in 1976. The land, which Hill describes as consisting of "hills, hollers and gullies, with some pasture area," was originally a chicken farm operated by Hill's father and his uncle.

At one time the Hills had about 250 laying hens scattered in houses across three counties and used contract farmers. "We provided feed and picked up eggs, and processed the eggs in our plant in Booneville. After the chicken business kind of fizzled out for smaller farmers, my Daddy raised beef cattle and hogs before moving to tree farming." Some of Hill's grandfather's original acreage, which has been in the family for 100 years, is part of the more than 1,600-acre tree farm, which is predominantly covered in loblolly pines.

Planting pines not only helped the Hills transition their farm to a more viable crop, but also decreased erosion caused from hog and chicken farming. "Some of the land is too steep for pasture, but it's perfect for pine trees."

Hill commented that as an 11th generation Mayflower descendant, owning land is likely hardwired in his DNA. With the exception of a year-and-a-half at Mississippi State, followed by three tours in Vietnam with the U.S. Army, Hill lived and worked on the family farm his whole life. "It's just a passion for me," he said.

Active in his county and state through forestry and non-forestry groups, Hill is a 35-year board member and past chairman of the Prentiss County Soil and Water Conservation District. He currently serves as a board member of MACD, and has served as the president of the Prentiss County Forestry Association, or CFA, for 27 years.

"Mr. Hill has been the president of our CFA since its formation in the 1990's," Prentiss County Extension Agent Skip Glidewell said. "Mr. Hill continues to attend and represent Prentiss County at district and state meetings and continues to be instrumental in helping plan and organize meetings."

A member of several civic clubs over the past 50 years, Hill is active in his church, where he has been a choir member for more than 45 years.

In 2021, he will represent the state of Mississippi in the national competition sponsored by the American Tree Farm System.

For more information about the Mississippi Forestry Association, please visit www.msforestry.net.

MSWCC Field Reps create a How-to-Zoom video

BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

Less than three minutes of time is all it takes to learn how to use Zoom, courtesy of MSWCC's newly created How-to-Zoom video.

When COVID-19 prevented our Field Reps from making in-person visits to MACD districts, MSWCC Field Reps Colin Agostinelli, Carlee Goode and Chaz Ingram combined their skills to create a video to help districts and others to learn how to

use Zoom.

Goode wrote the script, and Agostinelli and Ingram created the video, which is concise and easy to understand.

Agostinelli explains the process for logging on to Zoom for the first time, and walks a user through signing up and joining a meeting.

In the video, Agostinelli accepts a Zoom meeting invitation from Ingram, clearly demonstrating each

step of the process.

The video is available by request from your area Field Rep.

Editor's Note: The How-to-Zoom video and much more will be available on MSWCC's new website, which we hope will be ready to launch by the end of the year.

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MSWCC welcomes Kristen Buie to staff

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission welcomes Kristen Buie, Accountant/Auditor I Professional to our staff effective November 9, 2020.

Buie comes to MSWCC with the skillset needed in the agency. “We are excited to have Kristen join the Commission staff. Her experience in the State’s accounting system (MAGIC) will make her a valuable asset to the agency,” MSWCC Executive Director Mark Gilbert said.

A graduate of Jackson State University in 2018 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting, Buie is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Business Administration and Management at Belhaven University.

“Finding applicants with the needed skillset for our Accountant/Auditor I Professional position has proven difficult in the past, so I am thankful that we were able to bring Kristen on board at the Commission, and am glad to have her on our team,” MSWCC Bureau Director Nick Ivy said.

A native and resident of Byram, Buie enjoys spending time with her Yorkie and her horses when she isn’t working, studying or attending classes.

She previously worked at the MS Library Commission.



KRISTEN BUIE



Sam E. Soil is now on youtube!
Please watch, listen and learn about Sam E. Soil by visiting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bm6acP_66NI&feature=youtu.be

Thanks to Lauren Wilson-Dettwiller, Chaz Ingram, Robin Tisdale as Sam E. Soil, Chelsey Gazaway, Narrator, and Colin Agostinelli, Video Editor.

DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR DRAWDOWN TICKETS FROM MACD

Although the MACD Annual Meeting will not be a face-to-face event in 2021, MACD is selling drawdown tickets to raise funds for the MACD Endowment Fund Scholarships.

MACD Secretary/Treasurer Hope Daley asks SWCDs to let



commissioners know about the availability of the tickets, which can be ordered via email from hope.daley@ms.nacdnet.net or hdaley@mswcc.ms.gov. Tickets will be mailed as soon as possible.

Daley reminds districts that the

money raised goes to allowing five students to be the recipients of \$5,000 scholarships for their education.

The MACD board continues to work on plans for the virtual online meeting. More details are forthcoming.

If you have any questions, please email Hope.Daley@ms.nacdnet.net.

Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

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