

# the Watershed

## Becoming An RCD Board Member

by Marty Portner, President

Many of you are probably aware that that RCD Trustees are appointed by the **Ogle County Board** as part of the important function of the **Ogle County Board's Nominating Committee**. Whenever a vacancy occurs in the 5-person **RCD** board, notices are posted and applications are collected. Applicants are contacted to set up an interview with the **Nominating Committee**. The interview lasts about 15 minutes. It is held in a relaxed, informal atmosphere. Applicants do not need to pass an exam or answer any personal questions. Then the Committee makes its recommendation. The recommendation will then be brought before the **Ogle County Board** for formal approval.

Once the newly-appointed board member recovers from the euphoria of being appointed to a 5-year term on the **RCD** board, a process of education and training begins. Usually, a departing member will leave a gap in the responsibility structure of the District and the new member will first need to be evaluated and interviewed to find out where his/her interests lie. Either the new member takes on responsibilities of the vacating member, or

positions and responsibilities are rearranged to suit.

Of course, Trustees are not career politicians. We receive a small stipend for attending monthly meetings and special meetings. All other committee work, organizing work, complaint investigation, employee management and participation in **RCD** volunteer programs is unpaid.

There is no formal job description for the Trustee positions, but we always look to find a few good people to fill vacancies. Not everyone is "cut out" to be part of a public body, but serving on the Board gives one a sense of community involvement and is an overall satisfying experience. One is also struck with the realization that, at a time when most of your fellow District members are *non-chalant* about the future of the Lake and surrounding watershed, you have chosen to get involved in a very important and powerful way to make a difference. Look for postings about open board position(s) in the near future. Please consider applying. We would love to have you!

## RCD Taxes And You

by Marty Portner, President

It has always been our mission as Trustees and as fiduciaries of the District to use your tax dollars to their utmost in pursuing our charter as custodians of the District's properties and amenities. Historically, we have attempted to do the most with a reasonable budget based on the District's needs on a year-over-year basis.

As a reasonable alternative to raising

taxes, the RCD has pursued a policy of involving District members (as volunteers) in lieu of spending tax dollars to "hire out" necessary and important work.

We are clearly blessed to have a core of dedicated volunteers who apply their talents to the District's needs. While we are grateful to these selfless men and women,

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*the Watershed* is a periodic publication that contains information relevant to our District's constituents.

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### Did You Know...

- You can report suspicious activity on RCD property by calling 284.8030 ?
- The RCD welcomes audience participation at its monthly meetings?
- You must have permission to use POA private roads to access the lake?
- All complaints must be presented to the RCD in writing before serious consideration can be applied?

### RCD Board

Marty Portner, Pres.  
Dan Dummett, V.P.  
Tina Trevino, Treasurer  
Herb Hill, Secretary  
Betty Lou Finn, POA Liaison

Becky Breckenfelder  
Administrative Manager &  
Webmaster

[www.rcdinfo.com](http://www.rcdinfo.com)

## Lake Management Update

by Jerry Sellers, LMC Chairperson

We have met with **Bill Kleiman** of the **Nature Conservancy** and have collaborated on submitting a **C-2000** grant request for 2008. The grant will help with expenses involved in taking 40 acres of land, previously used for row crops and pasturing of cattle and returning it to native prairie. The effect of this will be to enhance the **Clear Creek Watershed** which feeds our Lake. We have also made contact with an outside consultant to help with grant writing, administration and project management.

We continue to receive more Voluntary Lake Management Program (**VLMP**) data to factor into the analysis of our Lake's characteristics. We are hopeful that we can get all of the data from the various state organizations by the end of March. The **RCD** is going to be able to avoid the cost of having the sediment at the silt basin tested at a cost of \$600 due to having been able to get the **IEPA's Bureau of Water** involved through the **VLMP** program.

We have contacted the state to inquire when last year's shocking report would be available. Unfortunately, the **State** has been unable to replace the district biologist who retired two years ago. They know we are anxious for the report and will do their best. We will use this data in conjunction with the **Fishing Club's Creel Reports** to make stocking recommendations to the **RCD**.

## Taxes

*(Continued from page 1)*

sadly, their combined efforts are not enough to fill the requirements of the ever-growing list of District projects. Our efforts to motivate the membership have produced only a fraction of the new volunteers needed to staff new projects and, more importantly, to provide relief for the existing volunteers who need and deserve a break.

The **Lake Management Committee** is one that is in great need for volunteers to help with the implementation of its plan to bring the District properties into the realm of viability and sustainability. It is our goal to keep these properties well-maintained so as to provide valuable assets that keep property values stable.

The bottom line is that if the **RCD** cannot marshal enough people-power to help with its projects at all levels, we will be forced to get out-of-house, so to speak, and hire professionals to do the work. This means that our budget will necessarily need to expand and we may find ourselves in the unfortunate position of having to increase taxes in order to pay for the added expenses. Our charter is to main-

## Shoreline Improvement Update

by Dan Dummett, Vice President

A meeting of the **Shoreline Improvement** sub-committee of the LMC was held in January to further discuss guidelines and requirements which continue to be a focus of the Lake Management committee. We are now in the process of completing a draft to be incorporated into the **RCD Ordinances**. This draft will be designed to be a part of both preserving the Lake, our greatest asset and creating the most natural aesthetic that is practical.

The Committee is targeted to have a draft for consideration in front of the full Board no later than the April meeting of the **RCD**. Both the development of the content of the ordinance and the evaluation of individual shoreline properties will involve professional consultation so we are certain that the best long term solution to preserve our shoreline is put forth. The Committee further believes that this the most efficient way to accomplish this major project, since professional designs, plans, advice and assistance will required to execute each individual property owner's plan in a cost-effective manner.

*Editor's Note: Dan Dummett is retiring from the RCD board after 5 years of volunteer service. During his tour of duty, he has presided over many projects. His wit and ability to grasp complex issues quickly and accurately has been a boon for the District. It is with sad resignation that we await his departure from the RCD on April 30, 2008. We wish Dan and his lovely wife Linda all the best in the future. We will miss you, Dan!*

tain the Lake and all other amenities under our jurisdiction. We can and will do all that it takes to fulfill this charter. Given the current state of apathy toward volunteerism, we very likely will have to make the necessary adjustments in our budget.

There is a mistaken impression that the **RCD Board Of Trustees** should be doing all of this work and not have to bother the membership. This may have been the culture many years ago when relatively few things needed to be done to maintain the Lake. Today's reality, however, is quite different. The Board's job is to be visionaries and leaders. We have the responsibility of making the decisions that define **RCD** policies and practices that serve our constituents. We take this responsibility very seriously. It is a time-consuming task. It therefore begs for volunteers to help with the implementations. The Board members cannot do it all. Call the office today to volunteer. It may be the best decision you make in 2008. Call **652-2006** today and get involved!