

42nd National Land Judging Contest

OKLAHOMA CITY--One thousand and fifty contestants from thirty-two states came to Oklahoma City to compete in the National Land Judging Contest May 4-6. The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts is the main sponsor of the annual contest and OACD President Bill Wilson is contest cochairman. Wilson said the contest is an educational event that stresses soil production and conservation.

The teens, 4-H and FFA members, qualified for the national event by placing among the top five teams at contests held in their home states. Wilson says the teens match their skills in judging the adaptability of the land for various purposes including farming, pasture and range management and homesite construction. He notes the skills the teens apply at the contest involve principles they can apply in career fields like environmental and agricultural management, natural resource conservation, home building and construction.

As soon as the contestants arrived, they went to a practice site where several pits had been dug to give them a chance to analyze and learn more about Oklahoma soil conditions.

The actual contest site remains a secret until contest day, so no one has an unfair advantage. Contestants gathered on contest morning to find out the official contest location. Coaches and contestants then traveled in a caravan to the site.

The event ended with an awards ceremony Thursday night at the state fairgrounds. National championship trophies were awarded to team and individual winners in each category of competition including land judging, range and pasture judging, and homesite evaluation. Each category included FFA, 4-H and adult divisions.

First place winners were the following: Land Judging, 4-H

In Land Judging, 4-H category, the first place individual winner was Isaiah Johnson of Ocala, FL, and team winner was Gilmer County, WV. In the FFA category Sharlet Slough of Gruver, TX, was the individual winner and Renseelaer, IN, was the team winner. The adult winner was Jim Wells, Rogersville, TN.

In Pasture and Range Judging, 4-H category, the first place individual winner was April Woodruff of Pauls Valley, OK, and the team winner was Garvin County, OK. In the FFA category the winner was Josh Wooten of Delaware, OK, and the team winner was Delaware County, OK. The adult winner was Jim Hollan, Marlow OK.

In Homesite Evaluation, 4-H category, the first place individual winner was Seth Ray Svaty of Ellsworth, KS, and the team winner was Marion County, FL. The FFA individual winner was Jason King of Emmetsburg, IA, and the team winner was Lincoln County, NV. The adult winner was Carlie McCowan, Cookeville, TN.

Wilson credits the OACD Auxiliary and Oklahoma conservation districts for helping make the contest a success.

"I would like to thank all the conservation districts who sent financial contributions to cosponsor this national educational activity," Wilson said. "It takes a tremendous amount of time, effort and money to put on an event like this."

"A special thanks goes to the OACD Auxiliary for the assistance they gave during the Social Hour of the National Land, Pasture and Range Judging Contest," Wilson said. "They also assisted in the very vital contest tabulating."

The OACD Auxiliary will be raffling a quilt during the 1994 OACD state meeting next February and funds raised will be applied to an education scholarship. Sally Sawyer, West Caddo Conservation District, is making the quilt from blocks handmade by auxiliary members from various conservation districts across the state. She hopes the quilt can be shown and tickets sold at the NACD South Central Meeting in San Antonio. Tickets will also be sold at 1993 OACD Area Meetings and at the 1994 state meeting.