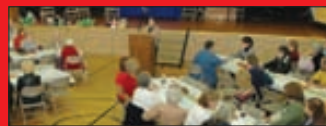


MISSOURI RURALIST

A FARM PROGRESS PUBLICATION MIDWEST GROUP EDITION



The new landlady
Page 8



MU unveils new variety of wheat
Page 22

Early-season grass hay is best
Page 40

Common ground

By JERILYN JOHNSON

BECKY Plattner carries the spirit of both conservation and cooperation. It's a powerful combination that serves her well on the Missouri Conservation Commission.

Former Gov. Matt Blunt appointed Plattner to a six-year term on the conservation commission in August 2007, recognizing those strengths, along with her public service record, financial experience and management expertise. She now serves as a policymaker, approving wildlife code regulations and participating in strategic planning, budget development and major expenditure decision-making for the Missouri Department of Conservation.

As a partner in her family's Saline County farm, Plattner brings to the MCC many experiences and economic lessons in land stewardship. She serves as chief financial officer for Plattner Brothers LLC, a soybean, corn and custom farming operation. Plattner works alongside her husband, Russell, and his brother and wife. They live in a 100-year-old farmhouse in Grand Pass, and own a Missouri Century Farm in Lafayette County.

"Every bit of land we work has some kind of conservation partnership involved," she says. "Having participated in the Conservation Reserve Program for many years, I appreciate the hand-in-hand cooperation displayed between Missouri agriculture and the conservation commission."

As presiding commissioner of Saline County, Plattner brings to the MCC the

ability to work both governmental and physical landscapes. "I can work with communities and political entities because I understand their perspective," she says. "I always try to educate myself on the issues before I go to meetings, and listen when I get there. But I'm not afraid to speak my mind, or make a decision if it's in the best interest of our citizens."

State Sen. Bill Stouffer, R-Napton, says he respects Plattner for her "independent, forward thinking and for her strong passion for rural Missouri and agriculture."

That passion comes through when she shares stories about Saline County and the Missouri River. She can show you remnants of salt licks, the origin of her county's name. She recounts stories of surviving major floods. Like others who farm in the floodplain, she understands that the river gives and the river takes.

She is a neighbor of, and frequent visitor to, the Grand Pass Conservation Area, which includes more than 5,000 acres of wetlands, adjacent river islands, agricultural units and timber tracts. It was established with the 1/8-cent Missouri Parks and Soils Tax that she now oversees as conservation commissioner.

To Plattner, seeking common ground is not a weakness. Her goal is to grow the cooperative culture between MDC and producers, and other true environmentalists who shepherd the state's natural resources.

"Land management and river uses are being scrutinized more than ever," she says.

"It's important that we work together to protect our way of life."



CONSERVATION SPIRIT: Becky Plattner takes a strong stand — whether it's preserving the state's natural resources and wildlife, the agriculture industry, or historic landmarks, such as the 128-year-old Saline County Courthouse shown behind her.

Need help with your subscription?
Call 800-441-1410
or e-mail
circhelp@farmprogress.com

Register Online
Chance to Win
\$1,000
Cash!

**Make it yours
and WIN!**

We're celebrating our Web upgrades!
Check it out and register!

REGISTER NOW!
Drawing Registration
Online:
www.MissouriRuralist.com

No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited or restricted. Open to active farmers who are legal U.S. residents, 21 years or older. Drawing ends 3/31/10. Complete rules available online. Sponsor: Farm Progress.