



2012 Photo Contest Winner in the Youth Trees & Plants Division this year is Ella Hollis.

**Upcoming Events:**

May 1—Safety Day in Vienna

May 10—Safety Day in Belle

May 10 & 11—Grazing School in Owensville

Please note: The office may be closed at times while Amy is on maternity leave. Please call 573-422-3342.

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# Maries County Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter

## CONTEST AWARDS PRESENTED AT DISTRICT'S ANNUAL MEETING

The highlight of the Annual Meeting of the Maries County Soil and Water Conservation District is the presentation of awards for the district's annual photo, poster and essay contests. Over 160 people attended this year's event.

After the dinner, that was provided by the district, the program began with the photo contest awards. In the Youth Division, winners were Ella Hollis, Jena Schwartze and Annie John. Winners in the Adult Division were Lisa Garro, Keith Hollis and Marietta Brune. Gavin Snodgrass won the People's Choice Award from the 56 photos that were entered this year.

Awards were then presented to participants in the Essay Contest. 111 essays were entered in this year's contest.

Angela Tapia, Olivia Shanks, Cassandra Rutledge, Dustin Byrd and Chandra Markert all from Maries R-II and Katie Milnes from Maries R-I took home top honors.

A total of 334 students submitted posters for this year's contest. Certificates and prize money were presented to: Paige Breeding, Klaire Tappel, Sarah Backues and Kelly Hale all from Visitation Inter-Parish; from Belle Elementary: Kenzi Cetroute, Chloe Krause and Elizabeth Stoner; and from Maries R-I: Magnolia Porter, Caid Stockstill, Alexis Hawkes, Christi Kern and Malerie Meier. The year's top Grand Prize County Winner was awarded to Christi Kern.

The speaker for the evening was Melinda Barch who  
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## NEW NO-TILL DRILL ADDED TO DISTRICT'S RENTAL EQUIPMENT

The district will soon have a new 7 foot no-till drill available to rent. The Great Plains 706NT is replacing the 1997 model which has logged over 5,000 acres. In addition to seeding cool season grasses and legumes, the new drill will be equipped with an additional warm-season grass box for those interested in seeding that species of grass.

The rental rate will remain at \$9.00 per acre with a 10

acre minimum. If over 50 acres is drilled, the rate is \$8.00 per acre. The expected delivery date is early April.

In addition to the other two no-till drills, the district also has a square bale mulcher, ATV seeders, ATV sprayer and burn equipment. If anyone is interested in renting the equipment, they should contact the district office at (573) 422-3342.

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discussed the many federal program available to Maries County landowners.

The event ended with everyone getting a flowering dogwood tree seedling ready for planting. The district thanks all those that participated in this year's contests and looks forward to next year's entries!



People's Choice Winner in the 2012 Photo Contest was taken by Gavin Snodgrass. He titled it *Singing Cicadas*.

## STAY IN COMPLIANCE FOR USDA FARM PROGRAM BENEFITS BY MELINDA L. BARCH, DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST



With the passing of the Farm Bill in 1985, Congress put a strong emphasis on the Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Compliance Provisions. Many of you may remember receiving an HEL and/or WC Determination on your farm or farms in the late 80's or early 90's. This provision is still around twenty seven years later as part of the current Farm Bill and will probably be part of any future farm bills.

So, if you are still planting a commodity crop on highly erodible land you need to be following an approved conservation plan to remain in compliance for USDA benefits. However, my biggest concern is the land that is coming out of grass and going to crop. The majority of this ground has never had a Highly Erodible Land determination completed on it. It is in your best interest to have a determination completed PRIOR to cropping a converted grass field rather than after the fact. By having the determination completed prior to cropping you can ensure you will remain in compliance for USDA Program Benefits.

If you participant in any USDA program with the Farm

Service Agency, FSA, or Natural Resources Conservation Service, NRCS, then conservation compliance with the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland provisions is required. So, if you plan to crop land that has not received an HEL/WC determination and you participate in any USDA program(s) you need to have a determination completed. Again, it is in your best interest to have this determination completed before you crop the land. If the ground is determined to be Highly Erodible, and you participate in USDA programs without following a conservation plan, you may be out of compliance on all participating farms, not just on the new one you are cropping.

If you are thinking about cropping land that has not been farmed in the last twenty seven years it is in your best interest to stop by the USDA office in Linn and request a Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Determination. Even if you are not breaking out new ground but have existing highly erodible ground you are cropping you may want to stop by and review or update your conservation plan to remain in compliance for farm program benefits. If you have questions at any time feel free to stop by the USDA office in Linn.

## 2012 MISSOURI WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

Nearly 200 busy women from across Missouri will travel to Chillicothe, *The Home of Sliced Bread*, for this year's Women in Agriculture Conference. The dates are set for September 10 to 12, 2012 at the Days Inn.

The planning committee is busy finalizing details of the exciting workshops, speakers and tour stops. If you have never had the

opportunity to attend, you should consider joining us. Details on the hotel cost and registration will be coming soon. If you are interested, call the office at (573) 422-3342 .

Once the registration is online you will find it at [www.maswcd.net](http://www.maswcd.net) and clicking on the Meetings and Events tab. Hope to see you there!





# CONGRATULATIONS POSTER & ESSAY WINNERS!



Third Grade Poster Winners: Chloe Krause and Kenzi Cetroutte  
(Not pictured Elizabeth Stoner)



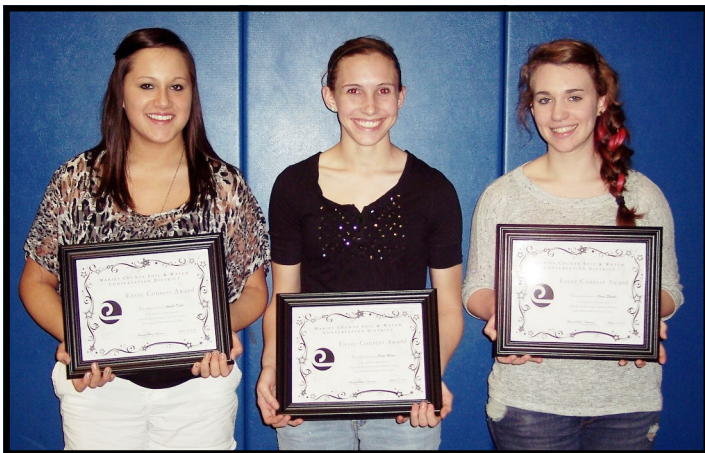
Fifth Grade Poster Winners: Alexis Hawkes, Sarah Backues and Caid Stockstill



Fourth Grade Poster Winners: Magnolia Porter, Klaire Tappel and Paige Breeding



Sixth Grade Poster Winners: Christi Kern, Kelly Hale and Malerie Meier



Freshman/Sophomore Essay Winners: Angela Tapia, Katie Milnes and Olivia Shanks



Junior/Senior Essay Winner: Dustin Byrd (Not pictured Cassandra Rutledge and Chandra Markert)



## EMPLOYEE NEWS



Grant Phillips recently joined the staff at the Linn USDA Service Center as the new NRCS Soil Conservation Technician. He will be assisting landowners in Maries, Osage and Gasconade Counties.

Grant earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture with an emphasis in business while attending Truman State University and Southwest Missouri State University. He worked as the Adair County District Technician and as the NRCS Soil Conservation Technician in Kirksville.

He enjoys taking his kids hunting and fishing as well as working with his wife on their small farm in Adair County. Welcome aboard Grant!



Melinda Barch, NRCS District Conservationist received a Certificate of Merit for her work for the Field Office Service Area (FOSA) which includes Maries, Gasconade and Osage Counties.. J. R. Flores, Missouri NRCS State Conservationist made the presentation at the Area 2 Awards Program.



Amy Neier and Sandy Hutchison were both recognized at the NRCS Awards Program with a Conservation Partnership Award and was inscribed: *For your dedication to promoting the State Cost Share Programs for landowners in Maries County through cost share and two AgNPS SALT projects during FY2011.*

## 2012 GRAZING SCHOOLS

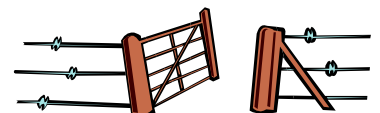
The central Missouri Grazing Schools have been scheduled and if you have not had the opportunity to attend, one of these dates may work for you this year. The next school will be on May 10 and 11 and will be held at the Owensville Lions Hall.

The Tri-County School will cost \$75 for one attendee and \$100 for two with one set of materials. This cost also covers the snacks and lunches provided each day. There will be classroom training as well as field visits.

This course meets the requirements for application

for the State SWCD Intensive Grazing Management programs as well as gives ranking points for applying for the federal EQIP programs. There is an Advanced Grazing School set at the Wurdack Farm on June 14 and 15 and another basic school is scheduled for Maries County on September 6 and 7 if needed.

If you are interested in any of the schools, you can contact the Maries SWCD office at (573) 422-3342. Deadline is May 1st.



## FEDERAL PROGRAMS

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program:** EQIP provides financial technical assistance to install and implement structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

**Conservation Stewardship Program:** CSP provides many conservation benefits including improvement of water and soil quality, wildlife habitat enhancements, and adoption of conservation activities that address the effects of climate change. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, and non-industrial private forest land.

**Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program:** WHIP provides financial and technical assistance on private agricultural land, non-industrial private forest land, and Indian land to assist eligible producers establish and manage fish and wildlife habitat.

**On-Farm Energy Initiative:** NRCS and producers develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS then uses audit data to develop energy conservation recommendations. Each AgEMP has a landscape component that assesses equipment and farming processes and a farm headquarters component that assesses power usage and efficiencies in livestock buildings, grain handling operations, and similar facilities to support the farm operation.

**Organic Initiative:** NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification and install conservation practices for organic production. New for fiscal year 2012, applicants will be evaluated continuously during the ranking periods. Applications meeting or exceeding a threshold score may be approved for EQIP contract before the end of ranking period. Applications rating below the threshold score will be deferred to the next period. A new threshold score will be established at the beginning of each ranking period. This new scoring process allows organic producers to implement conservation practices in a timelier manner.

**Seasonal High Tunnel Pilot Initiative:** NRCS helps producers plan and implement the steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops.

*Reprinted with permission from the January 2012 Gasconade County SWCD Newsletter*

**2012 Photo Contest Winner in the Youth Wildlife Division this year is Jena Schwartze. She titled her photo *Bunny!***



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**Vienna, MO 65582**

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**Office Hours**

**7:30 a.m.— 4:00 p.m.**

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Melinda Barch, District Conservationist

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Megan Ordway, Soil Conservationist

Grant Phillips, Soil Conservation Technician

**Missouri Department of Conservation**

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**Maries County Soil & Water**

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