

# Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Annual Meeting Plans are in the Works

The SWCD Annual Meeting of Cooperators will be held November 21st at MU Extension in St. Charles, Missouri.

This meeting is held to thank the agricultural cooperators in the county and provide them with updates from the SWCD, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency and the Missouri Department of Conservation. A buffet style dinner is provided and a guest speaker entertains the group.

This year's theme is "Eighty years and still growing." Watch for your post card invitation in the mail in early November.

*"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." — Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac, 1949*

## FOLLOW



ON FACEBOOK

@ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND  
WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## District Marks 80th Anniversary



This November marks 80 years of operation for the St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District. On April 8, 1944 SWCD elected its first Board of Supervisors to help pave the way for conservation efforts for farming, and to protect water and soil resources.

### What is a Soil and Water Conservation District?

A Soil and Water Conservation District is an organization of landowners that functions under state law for the purpose of saving, maintain and improving the soils of Missouri. The district operates under the supervision of a Board of Supervisors elected by local landowners. The preparation and following through of a soil and water district rests entirely with the farm people.

It enables famers to prepare their own soil conservation program and obtain technical assistance with soil management problems and with methods to those problems. It is a close co-operation between organized farmers and civic, industrial, county, state, and federal agencies, in the use of natural resources for the production of food without waste of soil and water.

## Terraces and Traditions: A Family's Farm Legacy

From the wise words of Albert Einstein, "Rejoice with your family in the beautiful land of life". That is what generational farmer and landowner Don Prestien has been doing and hopes to continue to do by applying conservation practices on his agricultural land.



Don Prestien and his wife Joan Prestien

Don Prestien is currently residing in St. Louis with his wife Joan. They are followed by his two children Ben Prestien and Kylie Brewer. Don is a retired excavator who has worked with the operating engineers. In his free time, he enjoys gardening and restoring tractors to their former glory. He has restored a 1936 Farmall F20 and some Ford tractors as well.

Prestien grew up on the farm of his father and mother, Clarence and Margaret Prestien, in Creve Coeur.

**Continue reading on Page 3.**

# Missouri Representation at International Envirothon in New York

Five students from the Rockwood Summit High School represented Missouri at the International Envirothon Competition in Geneva, New York. The competition was hosted by New York State Envirothon from July 28th– Aug 3rd. The team consists of Kari Koerner, Allison Moonier, Rylee Kyle, Sophie Pezzani and Shekinah Annin. Their coach is Sarah Moonier.

The International Envirothon Competition allows team from all over the United States, Canada, China, and Singapore to study and apply conservation-related knowledge to real-life environmental problems. This year's theme is Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future.

The week long event included tons of hands-on activities and excursions. The team participated in the annual trade event



which is a social event which it allows the students to socialize and trade items that represent their state. They participated in team trainings and testings to prepare for the final presentations.



In their free time they were able to visit Niagara Falls, attend a DJ and Dance social, and spend time outdoors playing corn hole and spending time around the fire pit, networking with other students.

Although they did not place in the International event, they had a great time and gained lots of experience. Thank you to all the businesses that donated trade items to the students!



The photo to the right shows all of the donated items that the team was able to collect for the trade event.

**St. Charles County  
Soil & Water Conservation District**  
330 Interstate Dr.  
Wentzville, Mo., 63385  
636-922-2833, ext. 3

The Reporter Newsletter is published by the St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District quarterly, in March, June, September and December.

**Editor—Theresa Strunk**

**Writer—Alexandria Hecht**

For advertising information or to submit news, call the district at 636-922-2833, ext. 3.

The district is supervised by a board of supervisors made up of farmers from St. Charles County and a UM Extension representative:

**Board of Supervisors**

- Adam Bonderer, Chairman
- Jim Petersen, Vice-Chairman
- Eli Isele, Secretary
- Bob Feise, Treasurer
- Bruce Siem, Member

**SWCD Personnel**

- Theresa Strunk, Manager
- Charlie Perkins, Technician
- Alexandria Hecht, Info/Ed Specialist

**NRCS Personnel**

- Kevin Barber, District Conservationist
- Brandon Rivera Delgado, Soil Conservationist
- Elizabeth Hawkins, Resource Conservationist

The mission of the Soil & Water Conservation District is to conserve the soil and water resources of the county; promote the wise use of these resources through education; protect residents from undue hardship caused by erosion, sedimentation and flooding; protect the agricultural soil base to ensure continued productivity; and preserve the quality of water and water courses within the county.

## St. Charles County Stream Care Guide is Online

The St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) worked with City of Wentzville Stormwater staff to produce a new county-wide Stream Care Guide. The guide is sponsored by the SWCD, the City of Wentzville and St. Charles County government.

This guide highlights the watersheds we live in and the activities within our watersheds that can harm water quality. It explains the functions of a stream and the natural and human influences that affect stream ecosystem changes. St. Charles County has made it available online to all residents. You can visit the county website's **Stormwater Management and Watercourse Protection** page to link to the new Stream Care Guide, or click on the QR code at right.

**NEW**  
**Stream Care Guide Available**

Educating St. Charles County Residents About Local Streams and How to Protect Waterways and Private Property

To help the community better understand our impact on waterways, landscaping and stream stabilization tips, St. Charles County—in partnership with the City of Wentzville and the St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District—has created a unique and engaging Stream Care Guide. In this guide, residents will find out how they can:

- Prevent or minimize erosion issues.
- Avoid flooding impacts.
- Protect property values.
- Preserve water quality.
- Contribute to the survival of fish and wildlife.

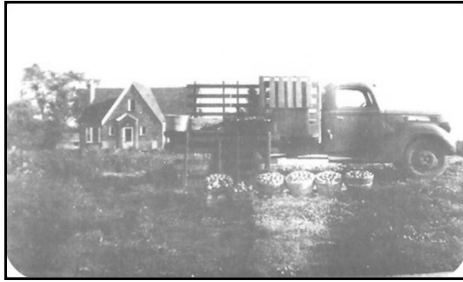
As stewards of the two mightiest rivers on the North American continent, everything we do has the potential to affect our county's tourism, flooding, tax dollars, and the beauty of life's most important natural resource: water.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to begin reading the Stream Care Guide to learn more about the county's local waterways and what you can do to protect them and your property.



Continued Farm Feature from page 1.

Prestien has continued the family farming tradition that began in the 1850's. His late father was not only a farmer but served 20 years in the Agricultural Stabilization



Fruit stand of John & Clarence Prestien at 13342 Olive Street Rd Fall, 1949.

Conservation Service, currently known as the modern-day Farm Service Agency (FSA) "religiously putting in conservation practices on their family farm in Creve Coeur". One land management practice that his father put into action were terraces.

Terracing is a soil conservation practice applied to prevent rainfall on sloping land accumulating and causing serious erosion.

Prestien bought his current farm located in Boone Township, Missouri from his brothers about four years ago, but it has been in the family since 1995.

With the help of the Rehmeier Brothers, the farm produces corn with a rotation of soybeans.

The Prestien farm began construction just a little under two years ago to build terraces to



A drain tile partly uncovered.

help with erosion. On his farm, he received cost-share for 10 broad base terraces with underground tile outlets.

Charlie Perkins, St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation

District Technician states, "By building the terraces, Don solved about 85-90 percent of the sheet and rill erosion problems on the property."

Prestien feels he is paying homage to his late father by following in his footsteps and continuing to preserve the land. As far as his legacy, he hopes to leave the farm to his son and daughter and that the land will continue to be passed down within the family.

As a landowner, a piece of advice he would like to give to anyone interested in owning land or farming is to continually pursue knowledge. Agriculture education can be attained through resources such as books and workshops, but Prestien stressed the importance of

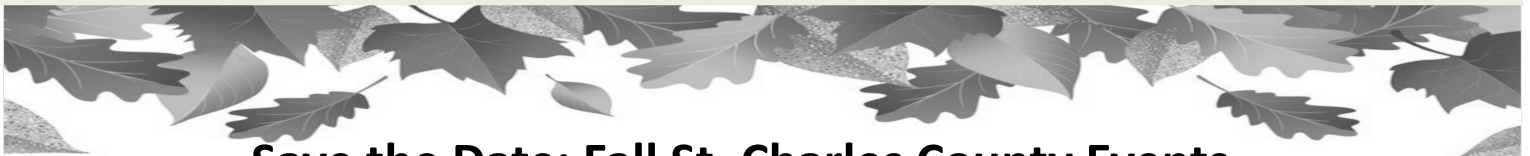
observing and listening to those who worked the land before us. He noted, "Everything that I have learned has been passed down to me."

If you are new to owning land or farming, there are resources out there available to you. Prestien worked with St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to make sure his farm does well and continues to do well for generations to come. "It was fun working with everyone at Soil and Water and NRCS last year. Some really good people work there", he mentions.

If you are interested in learning about the programs that SWCD and NRCS offer or have any questions regarding good farming and land practices, give us a call at 636-922-2833, x3.



A water inlet used to drain the water collected by the terraces.



## Save the Date: Fall St. Charles County Events

Enjoy some of these fall events in St. Charles County!

- Sept. 28: Nature's Nightshift at Broemmelsiek Park, 7p.m.—8:30p.m.
- Oct. 5: St. Charles Paw Parade at Historic Frenchtown, St. Charles, 10 a.m.—1p.m.
- Oct. 5: Fall Harvest Festival at Broemmelsiek Park, 9 a.m.— 3 p.m.
- Oct. 5-6: Duckfest at Knights of Columbus-St. Paul—9a.m.
- Oct. 9: Heritage Museum Lecture Series, 6 p.m.—7p.m.
- Oct. 11: Ranger Guided Bird Walks at The Park at New Melle Lakes, 8:00a.m.—9:30a.m.
- Oct. 25: Artisan Days at The Historic Daniel Boone Home, 10:00a.m.—2p.m.
- Oct. 25-26: Pumpkin GLOW at Main Street St. Charles, 8:00 p.m.
- Dec. 6-14: Christmas Candlelight Walk at The Historic Daniel Boone Home, 6p.m.—10p.m.





# Camping with the Environment in Mind

It's the end of summer and the perfect time for camping. It's not as hot, but you can enjoy a warm fire while camping at your local park's campsite on a fantastic night. Camping allows us to appreciate nature while taking a vacation from the real world. It's essential to take care of our surroundings while enjoying the fresh air and connecting with nature; however, in doing so, we can bring stress right into the ecosystem. Conscious camping includes not contributing to litter, pollution, erosion, and other environmental degradation. How can you protect the environment while enjoying your time outside camping?

## Setting Up Camp

The first important decision you make while camping is where to set up your tent and supplies during your stay outside. That highly desired spot by the lake might not be as environmentally friendly as you think. When spontaneously camping in a state park or a public area, stick to designated and established campsites. Do not camp in a blooming meadow or near a water source. Some additional ways to be environmentally conscious when choosing a campsite are:

- Reuse campsites instead of finding a fresh area
- Look for areas that don't have many plants or vegetation
- Choose sites that have more soil and flat ground
- Choose sites away from water sources

While it is challenging to find the perfect camping spot, it's important to consider these factors to protect the ecosystem and prevent additional

environmental harm.

## Leave No Trace

While camping, you should consider the "Boy Scouts Rule" of leaving your campsite better than how you found it. This means you should clean up your trash and keep your waste to a minimum. Simply put, leave no trace that you were there. Don't



**Grey Water-** the relatively clean waste water from baths, sinks, washing machines, and other kitchen appliances.



litter while on the campsite; even consider picking up any litter you see along the way (even if it wasn't from you). If you bring your pets camping with you, make sure to pick up their poop. It is so important to keep any nearby water sources clean. Any grey water from cooking or cleaning should be disposed of properly in a utility sink or disposal unit when a campground has one. If those are not options, grey water should be thrown across a wide area. This prevents concentrated damage in one location. Following the rule of leaving no trace can go a long way in protecting the surrounding environment and ecosystem.

## Leave Bambi Alone

It's awe-inspiring to see wildlife while camping— catching sight of a moose, deer, or beaver can be a rare and exhilarating moment. While seeing these animals from afar is exciting, do not interfere with the wildlife. Feeding animals on your campsite could put them in danger by consuming the wrong foods or developing a dependency on being fed by humans. Wildlife could also become accustomed to humans if fed often; creating dangerous situations for both wildlife and humans. Some of those dangers include the increased possibility of disease transmission and animal aggression. Make sure not to feed or interact with the wildlife for your sake and theirs. You can appreciate them from afar but keep your hands to yourself.

## S'more Power in Sustainable Campfires

Creating a better and more sustainable campfire is also significant in reducing your

**Continue reading, next page (5)**

**This place is intentionally left blank.**



**Continued from Previous Page**

environmental impact while camping. A sustainable fire protects the environment, helps maintain better air quality, and can prevent some health issues. First, all fire districts, including Wentzville, O’Fallon, Lake St. Louis, Central County, Cottleville, and St. Charles, issue their own burn permits. If you live outside those fire districts, you must obtain a fire permit from St. Charles County Building and Code Enforcement Division. So, make sure you have a permit before opening those marshmallow bags. To create your sustainable campfire, make sure you keep it contained in a fire pit and keep it at a manageable size. Flammable items should be kept away from the fire in a safe location. Consider the “Buy it Where You Burn It” rule for firewood to avoid introducing invasive species. Make sure to use dry wood for your fire because burning wet wood creates a less efficient and less sustainable fire because it takes longer to start, which increases the amount of smoke and releases more air pollutants.

Burning trash can also pollute the air. These toxins are dangerous not only for humans, but also for vegetation, wildlife, and the atmosphere. All in all, burn dry wood only while creating your campfire to protect the environment and make the best possible s’mores.

**Additional tips to help lower your environmental impact while camping:**

- Consider buying gently used gear, repairing your old gear, or renting gear instead of buying a new

- Get biodegradable and natural body products, such as soap and toothpaste
- Use reusable water bottles and dishes
- Make your snacks and meals instead of buying ones in plastic packaging
- Bring organic and locally sourced foods to eat
- Keep hydration packs in the freezer between camping trips to prevent mold growth

Camping is a great way to have fun and relax with the whole family, and immerse yourself in nature. But remember, we are just visitors to a campsite’s ecosystem, and by limiting your impact, you can enjoy an eco-friendlier camping trip.



**Book your next camping trip at a campsite in our own Missouri State Parks. They offer easy online reservations at [www.icampmo.com](http://www.icampmo.com) or by phone at 877-422-6766**

**USDA Now Accepting Farm Loan Payments Online**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced that most farm loan borrowers will soon be able to make payments to their direct loans online through the Pay My Loan feature on [farmers.gov](http://farmers.gov) in early February. Pay My Loan is part of a broader effort by USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) to streamline its processes, especially for producers who may have limited time during the planting or harvest seasons to visit a local FSA office; modernize and improve customer service; provide additional customer self-service tools; and expand credit access to assist more producers .

The Pay My Loan feature can be accessed at [farmers.gov/loans](http://farmers.gov/loans). To use the payment feature, producers must establish a USDA customer account and a Login.gov account. This initial release only allows individuals with loans to make online payments. For now, borrowers with jointly payable checks will need to continue to make loan payments through their local office.

Other recent improvements that have been made to streamline services are:

- Online loan applications
- An online, interactive loan assistance tool
- A simplified direct loan paper application

**This place is intentionally left blank.**

# This Issue is Dedicated to “Mr. Ben”

The first issue, Volume 1, No. 1, of the “Reporter” was written 80 years ago. The first issue was dedicated to Ben H. Feldewert. At the time he was Chairman of the St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District since it’s founding over 100 years ago. Mr. Ben paved the way for St. Charles County Soil and Water District, helping students and farmers understand the need for conservation. According to Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts website, “The German Catholics of his District had always a high regard for the techniques of good farming, so they were a little easier to sell on Soil and Water Conservation than others in Missouri.”

Some of his accomplishments included, putting into practice the first conservation poster contest (which is still put into yearly action). Since his accomplishment, thousands of students have learned about conservation through this program. He served on many State Soil District advisory committees, helped organize Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and he was the second president of Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation District. He planned and introduced the ‘Fish for Fun’ program that inspired Missouri Department of Conservation to host yearly kids’ fishing day events.

Ben Feldewert truly lived and breathed conservation. He was one of the first landowners in the country to build terraces, waterways, and ponds. In his spare time he helped with many other activities such as: chairman of the Federal Land Bank Association, member of the Fair Grounds Board, President of the O’Fallon School Board and a member for 15 years, and was a member of the Selective Service Board. Besides his work as State President, his leadership has brought many honors to St. Charles County, such as the Goodyear Award in 1962.

All of these accomplishments have left a legacy of conservation practices and must be naturally recognized. Ben Feldewert, in the first issue of the “Reporter”, was described as, “Always helpful and always a leader. He taught and carried the gospel of conservation to other conservation leaders”. So, it’s only natural that we dedicate Volume 63, No. 3 of the “Reporter”, on the 80th anniversary of the St. Charles Soil and Water Conservation District to Ben. H. Feldewert.



**B. H. Feldewert opening the 1954 annual meeting of Soil District Cooperators.**

## Missouri Climate-Resilient Crop and Livestock (CRCL) Project

The Center for Regenerative Agriculture at the University of Missouri has received a grant from the United States of Department of Agriculture (USDA) of about \$25 million. This grant will lead the Missouri Climate-Resilient Crop and Livestock (CRCL) Project. Over the next five years, this project will aid Missouri producers by providing incentive payments that encourage adoption of a wide range of climate-smart practices to create more resilient crop and livestock systems. There will be a total of eight-tailored incentive payment initiatives.

**The eight incentive payment initiatives include:**

- Rye-Soy Cover Crops
- Diverse Covers
- Late Termination
- Cover Crop Grazing
- Silvopasture
- Regenerative Grazing
- Nutrient Management and 4R Approach

• Climate-Smart Fieldscapes  
Each practice will have its own deadline and application process. Farmers who meet the eligibility criteria can apply for their program of interest.

**General Eligibility:**

- The farm/fields you wish to enroll are located in Missouri
- The fields you wish to enroll in are not currently enrolled in any other publicly funded financial incentive program for the same practice on the same field. This includes, but is not limited to, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Missouri Soil & Water Conservation Cost-Share
- You have a Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm number (also including tract and field numbers) established for the land in which you wish to enroll
- You have forms AD-2047 and AD-1026



on file with the FSA office.

- Confirm that you are a current citizen of the U.S. or a lawful alien possessing a valid I-551
- Have full operational control of the field you wish to enroll

**If you are interested in learn more about each program, visit:**

<https://cra.missouri.edu/mo-crcl/>

The soil and water conservation district does not endorse nor recommend any of the vendors/contractors advertised in this newsletter; furthermore, any contractor/vendor that wishes to be added to the district’s contractor/vendor list can be added upon request. For information, call 636-922-2833, ext. 3

# Prepare for Winter by Getting a Head Start on Fall Chores

It's finally autumn. The pumpkins are growing. Shorter days and crisp mornings signal winter's approach. Getting a head start on fall chores and maintenance around the house and farm can help you from dealing with future headaches and hundreds of dollars this winter. This is your reminder to:

## **Around the house and Outbuildings:**

- Properly dispose of or store pesticides and fertilizers.
- Clean out rain gutters and spouts and make sure they drain to a stable area— a garden, grass field, healthy lawn, etc.
- Unhook and store garden hoses along with any patio furniture, umbrellas and toys.
- Check the insulation on outdoor water well tanks and pumps.
- Seal the windows and cracks of your home by re-caulking if needed.
- Have chimneys and flues inspected and cleaned if necessary.
- Clean out dryer exhaust and make sure exterior vent door closes tightly when not in use.
- Schedule fall furnace inspection and change filter.
- Drain sediment for hot water heater.

## **Around the yard**

- Cover your wood pile to assure dry wood for home heating.
- Clean up garden beds and feed the compost pile.

## **On the farm**

- Clean livestock pens and prepare winter bedding.
- Check shelters for damage and assess areas that may need insulation.
- Assess winter food and water sources. Are insulation or heat required?
- Check gates and fences for needed repairs.
- Check all indoor and outdoors lights and bulbs.
- Perform routine maintenance on all farm equipment, including cleaning, lubricating, checking tires and batteries, air filters and clamps and seals.
- Call your local Soil and Water Conservation District for best farm practices.



**This place is intentionally left blank.**



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. SWCD is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Wentzville, MO 63385

330 Interstate Drive



PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID

# Reporter

## Interns & SWCD Employees Continue Training and Learning New Skills

St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District employees and two NRCS Pathway students spent a morning outside with Jerry Busch, NRCS, learning new skills. They learned how to capture and manage geospatial data with advanced surveying technology using a Trimble. They tracked three points and then had the task of locating the “treasure” within less than 1 inch horizontally.

Another tool the interns learned how to read is called a Clinometer. The Clinometer is an instrument used for measuring percent of slope. So, what do these skills allow SWCD employees to do? It will enable them to plan with landowners and operators to control erosion and improve overall soil health.



Technician Charlie Perkins (left) works with Intern Dee Harris.



NRCS Pathway students, Racheal Voss and Dee Harris, (2nd and 3rd from left) use the clinometer to measure the angle of slope.



NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Jerry Busch (center) provides training on a Trimble