

15th Annual Women in Agriculture Conference

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What do a lawyer, doctor and ventriloquist all have in common???

They all entertained the 160 Lady Landowners who attended Missouri's Women in Agriculture Annual Conference held in Kirksville, MO on September 14-16th.

While I did not have anything to compare this conference to (this was my first one), I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to attend. I heard from other participants, though, this was the BEST ONE YET! After attending, I'm wondering now why I have never attended before? From the vendor booths to the tours and workshops, I cannot imagine the work and time these ladies spent preparing for this conference. My compliments to this year's sponsor, the Northeast Missouri Women in Agriculture!

Speaking of workshops, here is a list of what was offered and a brief explanation of each workshop:

Companion Planting — Ever want to know what plants to grow together to control disease and insects, naturally? Through years of experience and research, several strategies have been proven successful.

Life Balance Challenges — Too much to do? Identify contributing causes for lack of balance in your life. Learn strategies and solutions to put balance back in your family's life.

Quick, Easy, Cheap, Healthy Meal Planning — Ever run short on time or ideas for quick means that are healthy? Learn some helpful hints from a registered dietician to make meal planning easier.

Reintroducing Native Plants — Protecting local plant ecotypes through planned plantings of native species.

Dealing with Stress — Cut Stress and Reclaim Joy! Learn effective ways to deal with stress — identify stressors, warning signs and strategies to reduce stress and reclaim joy in your life.

Estate Planning Basics — Farm estate planning is a challenge for farmers who are trying to balance keeping the farm in the family and making enough from the farm to live on through retirement. Trusts and Non-probate transfers are two tools farmers can use, but will likely not solve all the transfer issues. Come learn about what you can do to protect your farm assets.

Fall Flower Arranging — Create your own flower arrangement using fall flowers and foliage. Learn which plants growing in your farm you can use to create arrangements. Learn the basics of floral design as you create a table centerpiece to take home and enjoy.

What's Type got to do with it? Using Personality Type in Your Professional and Personal Relationships — Using the Myers Briggs Personality Type Instrument (MBTI), participants will examine their personality type. In addition, type strategies will be discussed

for enhancing participants' personal and professional relationships.

Update on Animal Health Issues — Learn the latest on health care issues affecting farm livestock and pets. Get your animal care questions answered by a local vet.

I'm sure you will agree it was a hard choice to only be able to attend three. Such a variety, too!!!

At the evening banquet, the "Outstanding Woman of the Year" State award was presented to Andrea Jackson, an Adair County landowner. The evening ended with entertainment by Mechelle Matthews, a professional ventriloquist.

The next morning, three chartered buses, loaded with lady landowners, headed South of Newark, MO for an all day tour of the Heartland Community founded by Charles Sharpe. Some of you may recognize this name as the founder of Ozark National Life Insurance Company.

All funding for the Heartland Community comes from donations — no state or federal funds.

Heartland is a place of refuge where men, women and children can come and find hope. The Heartland Community includes Heartland Children and Youth Homes, Recovery Programs for adults, a K-12 Christian Academy and a two-year Bible College. The Heartland Community consists of a Goat Dairy (1200 goats milked morning and evening), a Cow Dairy (over 2000 dairy cows milked three times a day), a

Creamery (processing and bottling milk and producing cheese plant), a 35-acre garden, an Egg Farm, Medical Center, Laundromat and Dry Cleaning, Construction Company, Auto Repair, Ozark Lodge and Steakhouse, Scribbles and Scribes Ink company (website design and hosting, etc.) a Solid Rock Café and Ford Museum. ALL PROVIDE JOBS AND/OR JOB SKILLS for community workers and students.

For someone that grew up with cow's milk from a neighboring farm, the carousel milking machine was indescribable! This machine milks 360 cows an hour. Since I returned from the conference, I noticed that our local stores sell milk from the Heartland Dairy. For those of you who have purchased their milk, you might be interested in knowing they are in the process of adding root beer flavored milk to their products for sale.

That evening, all loaded buses again, for the Twilight Tour to see a 500 acre native prairie with beautiful wildflowers and native grasses. AWESOME!

The conference ended with updates from representatives from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI). I'm sure you will agree it was a wonderful, very informative, conference.

I can't wait for next year's conference to be held in Branson, MO. I hope you will plan to attend.



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