

# SWCD Annual Training Conference

The 61st Annual Training Conference provided a great opportunity for 8 agencies and organizations involved with SWCD's to get together as a Partner Forum. The Conference was held at Tan-Tar-A November 31st through December 2nd 2009. There were workshops every day for Board members, employees and partner agencies and organizations to help each understand their role in the partnership better and gain some specific training for their job.

During our employees meeting Debbie Gudgell; District Manager was recognized for her 10 years of Service with the Soil and Water Conservation Program. This certificate recognizes devotion to the cause of soil and water conservation and service dedicated to improving our soil and water resources for this and future generations. Congratulations!

Tuesday evening of the conference was our banquet, were awards were given out and we had a speaker Chad Pregracke. Merle Doughty and Amber Kieffer were recognized for their

awards. Merle Doughty received the 2009 Distinguished Service Award, and Amber Kieffer was recognized for the 2009 10th through 12th grade State Poster winner. After the awards Chad concluded the banquet. Chad, who founded the "Living Lands and waters" foundation, talked about his mission to clean up trash from major rivers including the Mississippi and Missouri River. He spent the last ten years working on his mission. There will be a cable television show in the Discovery Channel this year about Chad and his work.

This was the 65th anniversary of MASWCD. In honor of that, special recognition was given to those who have served as president of MASWCD. The organization started in 1944 with 14 District members and has evolved over the years due to the time and leadership of those who have served as a board members and officers. More information about the history of the organization can be found on our Web site at [www.maswcd.net](http://www.maswcd.net).



## Livingston County Residents named Distinguished Service Award and State Poster Contest Winner

Two Livingston County residents were honored at the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation District 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Training Conference at Tan-Tar-A November 30<sup>th</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Meralle Doughty, resident of rural Chillicothe, and Amber Kieffer a senior at Chillicothe High school received awards recognizing their work and dedication to conserve soil and water.

Merle Doughty a resident of Chillicothe received the Distinguished Service Award. Merle began his farming career in Livingston County in 1950 and has served on various farm and agriculture committees, commissions, and boards. This includes 20 years as a Soil and Water District Supervisor with the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District, two terms as President of the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation District and two terms as an MASWCD Area Director. Merle has done a great deal of things to serve Livingston County, and the Soil and Water Conservation District. Merle and His wife Mildred celebrated their 54<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this past year.

Amber Kieffer a senior at Chillicothe High School was recognized as the 2009 State Poster Contest Winner for the tenth through twelfth grade. Amber was a student of Mrs. Meneely art class who participated in our county poster contest. Last year was the first year Livingston County had a seventh through twelfth grade poster division, and was very pleased with the great turnout of poster that we received back. Last years theme was "Dig It! The Secretes of Soil" and Amber's poster was selected as the seventh though twelfth grade County winner. Her poster then advanced on to the state level to be judged against all the other SWCD counties. Her poster was selected as the state winner for her division. Amber's poster advanced to the National Contest to be judged. The Livingston County SWCD is very proud of Amber's great work and wishes her the best of luck in the National Contest.

**Congratulations!!**

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