

# District works to help protect natural resources

Over the past 62 years the Decatur County Conservation District has worked to help protect the natural resources in the county.

Over the years many county residents have served as district supervisors helping with conservation in the area.

Diana Solko, district manager for the conservation district, said the district is a political sub division of the state. The district is governed by five board members, who are called district supervisors. The supervisors are elected at the annual meeting and then serve for three years.

Currently the supervisors include Chairman Carl Wahlmeier, Vice Chairman Elden Huff, Treasurer Bruce Larue and members Brett Jennings and Amanda Sowers.

The supervisors meet monthly on the second Tuesday.

The conservation district, said Mrs. Solko, works closely with a number of federal, local and state agencies.

Local groups too, she said, can identify conservation concerns and implement plans to protect the natural resources including water and soil.

“Conservation districts, in Kansas,” said Mrs. Solko, “are the only grassroots local unit of government that is charged with protection and conservation of natural resources. Kansas conservation districts have long been a leader in soil conservation, water quality and envi-

ronmental education activities,”

The district helps to promote the wise use of natural resources for future generations, she said.

“They also assist landowners in Decatur County with cost-share assistance thru the State Conservation Commission at Topeka,” said Mrs. Solko.

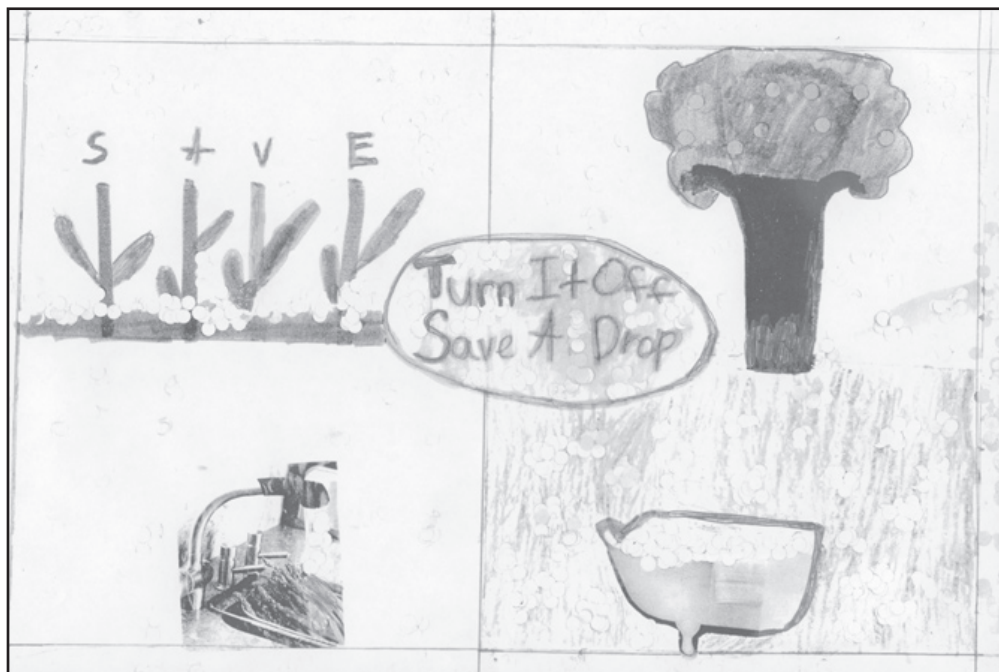
For the past 28 years, said Mrs. Solko, she has worked with the district assisting landowners with cost-share applications through the water resource conservation program and the non-point source cost-share program.

She is a member of the Alliance Group which is in charge of the Conservation Kids Round up for fourth graders which is held in Colby in the spring. That group also will plan and host the Women in Denim event in the fall.

Mrs. Solko said she serves as a district representative on the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development.

She said she also completes the financial needs for the district and numerous reports for the state.

In Decatur County, she said, several landowners have benefited from building terraces, completing livestock pipelines and tanks, planting trees and drilling grass. With the district they have also been able to upgrade septic systems that were failing.



Madelaine Johnson, 3rd grade, first place, state entry



Genna Randel, 4th grade, first place



Kennedy Jensen, 2nd grade, second place



Zachery Corbett, 3rd grade, second place