

2015
Missouri Agricultural Extension
Professionals Agriculture Leadership Award

Bob and Andy Jackson, La Plata

Describe leadership contributions to Missouri agriculture:

Bob and Andy Jackson have enjoyed a lifetime of involvement in Missouri agriculture. During their early years as a young married couple, they managed a diversified livestock & row crop operation on their 400 acre family farm north of LaPlata. During their 40 plus years of active production agriculture, they were recipients of awards and recognition for good conservation practices, high crop yields, and alfalfa production with nationwide distribution of high quality hay.

They presently have a cash rent farming operation and are in their semi-retirement status of life. In 2008, they created and began developing Jackson Country Connection, which is an agritourism enterprise. This outdoor venue provides fun fall activities for about 5,000 guests who visit their farm during the months of September and October. The mission of the operation is to offer visitors an opportunity to make family memories with the traditional visit to the farm, to enjoy the bounty of the season, and to heighten their awareness of the agriculture industry. The Jacksons enjoy the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about food, fiber, fuel, and to emphasize the important source of food is healthy soil. Conversations with visitors include reminders that our nation is blessed to produce safe, affordable food with organic production or traditional production using GMO methods and that the consumer has choices in the food they eat. Their leadership in "telling the story of agriculture" is an essential component of consumer education.

Activities include mazes, straw pile, 40' slide, outdoor playground, wagon rides, corn cannon, interactive information about agriculture and farm animals, giant checkers, corn hole, and a country store offering locally produced jams, jells, fall decor, pumpkins, and mums. Each year, their 8 acre maze is created with GPS technology and has a theme, recognizing some aspect of agriculture or supportive organizations. In 2014, the maze featured 4-H and FFA organizations. 2015, the maze design paid tribute to University of Missouri Extension and Missouri Farm Bureau, featuring "MU and FB" logos--1915-2015-- in recognition of 100 years of support for agriculture and rural Missouri families by these two organizations. See attached maze aerial photos from UAV supported cameras.

Bob is a 1967 graduate of the University of Missouri with a B.S. in animal husbandry and is a lifetime member of the Mizzou Alumni Association. Andy also attended the University of Missouri, College of Education.

Bob served as Missouri Farm Bureau Young Farmer Committee Chairman and was a 10 year member of the board of directors of Missouri Farm Bureau. He served 6 years as vice-president of Missouri Farm Bureau, Chairman of the State Resolutions Committee, representative to the Interstate Producers Livestock Association (IPLA) Board, and is currently President of Adair-Schuyler Farm Bureau Board. Bob served 10 years on the Adair County Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Andy is currently Chair of the Missouri Farm Bureau Agritourist Committee which coordinates an annual statewide Agritourism Conference for agritourism operators and owners. She also serves as a member of the State Farm Bureau Resolutions Committee. Andy currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Missouri Livestock Symposium Committee which offers a two-day educational seminar and trade show to an audience of about 2200 people. The 2015 multi-state event will be the 16th annual Symposium. She was recipient of the Outstanding Woman in Agriculture award in 2009 and has served on the Governor's Advisory Council on Agriculture.

Andy is an alumna of the Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT) program and was a member of the inaugural class. She recalls the ALOT opportunity being "a life-altering experience with discussions, networking, and international travel that provided global understanding and vision."

Describe leadership contributions to University of Missouri Extension:

Andy has a lifetime Extension affiliation, as her father was an Extension specialist in Madison County for 35 years. She was chair of the State 4-H Advisory Council and both Bob and Andy have served on the Adair County Extension council, and are supporters of the NEMO District Fair. She has served as Adair County council representative to the Northeast Regional Council and is currently Vice-Chair of the Regional Council. She routinely participates in the "Council To Campus" annual event and enjoys the continual connection with the University.

Andy was a member of the Adair County Extension Council in 1969 and led support for important council decisions to accept a major financial matching gift from Dr. and Mrs. H.D. Rodabaugh, a retired Adair County veterinarian. That decision led to extensive community fundraising for the construction of a \$70,000 brick building, completed in 1972. That building continues to serve the community as a meeting and event center and houses the current University of Missouri Extension Center.

Both Bob & Andy were 10 year 4-H members during their youth and Bob was a delegate to National 4-H Club Congress. Bob was a charter member of the Oklahoma Indians 4-H Club, which continues as a leading 4-H club of Adair County. They have served as 4-H leaders and Bob served on the Missouri 4-H Foundation. Their three sons were nine year 4-H members and one of those sons attended National Club Congress in 1989.

In addition to the role of farmer wife & volunteer farm hand, Andy enjoyed a 20 year professional career with A.T. Still University. She served as Admission Counselor and was involved in nationwide recruitment of undergraduate students for healthcare doctoral programs, with the Department of Admissions on the campus in Kirksville, MO.

Bob and Andy are ruling elders of the Community Presbyterian Church. They have 2 sons & daughters-in-law and 6 grandchildren.